

TAİK Board Meeting with the U.S. Ambassador to Türkiye

9 May 2025, Swiss Hotel, 11.00

Honorable Ambassador Thomas John Barrack,

Consul General Julie A. Eadeh,

Board Members and Participants,

On behalf of Foreign Economic Relations Board of Türkiye-DEİK-it is my pleasure also to welcome you all and express my gratitude for being here today with the new Ambassador of the United States.

Ambassador, your successful background in business, gives us confidence, hoping deeply understanding the priorities and dynamics of the business community. We hope your leadership will further strengthen trade and investment ties between our countries, with greater ease and mutual understanding, when I read your Nomination Hearing-Testimony at Senate.

I'm not going to speak too much at this very first meeting with details and numbers, but will try to give you an outlook of DEİK and TAİK, being a businessman myself, even though I believe your colleagues already briefed you.

As DEİK, we are committed fostering economic partnerships around the globe for 40 years. As a non-profit business organization, we pursued

our mission through principle of business diplomacy, and, while working on voluntary based membership, we do not use any public funds. We work through 153 business councils worldwide and all those business councils' chairs and boards have been elected each 2 years by council members. They decide themselves their individual road map and own budget, DEİK secretary collect the membership fee from the council members and spend according to each council's own decision. And also, DEİK board is being elected at each 4 years, by DEİK members.

TAİK, Türkiye-U.S. Business Council, being our first and one of the most efficient business councils since 1985, played and have been playing a vital role in advancing bilateral economic relations.

One of important those roles was, during first term of President Trump, when we had 20-billion USD bilateral trade, while now we have doubled, which shows the availability of 100-billion.

And the last point I want to mention is, structure of DEİK.

There are, hundreds of business organizations in Türkiye and each of them plays important roles. The main difference of DEİK is, the unique membership structure, while all the others have only private company members, where some of them even has mandatory membership, DEİK has 90 corporate business organizations as members, such as TOBB, Turkish Exporters Assembly, International Investors Association and so on, as well as private company members which are the main backbone.

So, having this structure, as a kind of umbrella organization which we do not name ourselves as this, because it may irritate the other organizations, if there is a bilateral meeting between 2 countries in or

abroad, leaded by Ministers or Presidents, and if there is a business part of that meeting, then, the unwritten but naturally addressed name of that meeting is DEİK. Because the main business organizations are also our members.

Let us use this soft power for all of us more. As the leading organization, representing Türkiye's private sector in foreign economic relations, DEİK and of course TAİK, stands and will continue to stand ready, to do its part, through more active and constructive business diplomacy.

Thank you all once again for being here today.

Nail OLPAK

President of DEİK