

**Türkiye-Germany Joint Economy and Trade Commission
(JETCO) Meeting – 4th Session**

26 October 2023, Ankara

Minister of Trade Prof. Dr. Ömer Bolat,

**Minister of Economic Affairs and Climate Action of the Federal
Republic of Germany Dr. Robert Habeck,**

Dear Representatives,

On behalf of Foreign Economic Relations Board of Türkiye - DEİK, I am delighted to be with our German friends in our capital.

First of all, I am deeply saddened by what happened between Israel and Palestine, and I hope that the inhumane process in which civilians, healthcare workers, women and children are targeted will end, and permanent peace will be established in the region as soon as possible.

I would like to congratulate our 4th term JETCO Meeting under the leadership of our Trade Ministry. I hope we are going to take important steps for our economic relations today.

Türkiye and Germany share deep cultural and social ties due to millions of Turkish originated citizens in Germany.

Besides solid social relations, we have deep economic ties. Germany is Türkiye's most significant trading partner within the EU. In

2022, the bilateral trade volume between Türkiye and Germany exceed \$45 billion. Between January to September 2023, Germany continues to stand out as the second biggest trade partner of Türkiye with a total volume more than 37.2 \$ billion. Our goal is to increase this figure to 50 \$ billion as soon as possible. Here the main responsibility belongs to business representatives. Our ministers are here with us. They will pave the way for us, and we will work harder.

There are some points to further enhance the development of our cooperation, such as;

- First of all, we believe that there is an urgent need for the **modernization of the Customs Union**; not only in agriculture, services or public procurements, but also as an urgent need for integrating the twin transformation to keep up with today's priorities and requirements. We firmly believe that this will be the driving force for an enhanced and sustainable integration.
- Secondly, addressing **visa-related challenges** faced by Turkish businesspeople is vital to fostering closer ties. These challenges include difficulties in securing appointments and lengthy visa processing times. Ambassador H.E. Jürgen Schulz mentioned the visa issue during his visit to DEİK on 19th of October, and we appreciate the outstanding efforts of the diplomatic mission representatives as the highest number of Schengen visas have been granted from Germany in Türkiye. Although, this number accounts for the highest number among other German diplomatic missions in the world,

streamlining visa processes and enhancing people-to-people dialogue will contribute significantly to overcoming these barriers and further promoting the deep-rooted relationship between Türkiye and Germany. We believe there is room for progress in increasing the efficiency of the visa processes.

- Another important issue; both Türkiye and Germany are deeply committed to the twin transformations of **green and digital initiatives**. Türkiye currently ranks fifth in Europe and twelfth globally in installed renewable energy capacities, making significant strides in renewable energy adoption. This growth underscores Türkiye's potential to collaborate with Germany in the context of the European Green Deal, which is set to revolutionize the global economic landscape. Türkiye recognizes the need to embrace digitalization to remain competitive in the global market, and we eagerly seek to draw upon Germany's expertise and best practices in this domain.
- **The European Chip Act** holds the promise of creating a robust semiconductor supply chain, and Türkiye is keen to play a pivotal role in this endeavor. Türkiye's strategic location as a bridge between Europe and Asia, combined with its membership in the Customs Union with the EU, solidifies its position as a reliable partner.

“Experience is the mother of wisdom” says our German friends.

I hope we will have more experiences of these areas that I mentioned now to deepening economic collaboration between Türkiye and Germany.

I would like to extend my gratitude to esteemed Ministers, and all those whose support that has made this event possible.

Thank you for your attention.

Nail OLPAK

President of DEİK