

Türkiye-North Macedonia Business Forum

12 June 2026, Grand Cevahir Hotel, 09.30

Minister of Trade Prof. Ömer Bolat,

**First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for European Affairs
Bekim Sali,**

**Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Transport and
Communications Aleksandar Nikoloski,**

**Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade Prof. Timcho
Mucunski,**

Minister of Economy and Labor Besar Durmishi,

**Minister of Energy, Mining and Mineral Resources Sanja
Božinovska,**

**Deputy Regional Director, UNDP Regional Bureau for Europe
Nick Hartmann,**

**Chair of DEİK/Türkiye-North Macedonia Business Council Bilal
Kara,**

Honorable Participants,

On behalf of DEİK, I warmly welcome you all to our Business Forum,

Let me start with a phrase which Macedonian friends says: “**Вера планини поместува**” (*Vera planini pomestuva*). That means “**Faith moves mountains.**” This is exactly the spirit with which Türkiye and North Macedonia built their relationship, and it is the spirit we need to take it to the next level.

DEİK is a business organization with 41 years of experience, working with the understanding of "Business Diplomacy", with voluntary based membership and without using public funds. With 153 business councils across the world, we're working to translate political goodwill into concrete commercial results. DEİK/Türkiye-North Macedonia Business Council, established in 1995, also works with this capacity with it's counterpart Economic Chamber of Macedonia. I extend my thanks to Chairpersons Bilal Kara and Branko Azeski for their efforts.

Economic relations between us are considered one of the strongest economic partnerships in Balkans. Strong political ties, FTA and Turkish investments form the basis of this economic cooperation.

Bilateral trade volume between our countries is close to 1 billion USD. But we believe we can double this number in a short period of time.

North Macedonia's GDP grew by 3.5 % in 2025, reaching 19.1 billion USD, with per capita income crossing 10,500 USD for the first time. The country's EU accession process is advancing, and new infrastructure projects are transforming North Macedonia into a regional logistics hub of growing strategic importance.

And now allow me to say a few words about Türkiye's investment opportunities. Our total trade volume, including services, exceeds 820

billion USD. We offer opportunities across energy, industry, agriculture, infrastructure and defense, and our high-technology manufacturing and export capacity, is increasingly attracting global attention. I warmly invite North Macedonian firms to invest in our economy to benefit from our diverse investment opportunities.

There are some areas stand out as the most promising drivers of a deeper partnership between Türkiye and North Macedonia.

- First, trade, industry and supply chains: North Macedonia's manufacturing base, particularly in electrical equipment, chemicals and textiles, offers natural entry points for Turkish industrial companies seeking to diversify their European supply chain footprint.
- Second, infrastructure and logistics: the Free Economic Zones, the expanding road and rail network and the country's position along Pan-European corridors create real opportunities for Turkish construction and logistics firms, as today's panel will explore in depth.
- Third, energy transition: North Macedonia's commitment to move away from coal and towards renewables is an area where Turkish expertise in solar, wind and energy efficiency can create lasting value.

Faith moves mountains but it must be backed by action. Today's forum, its panels and the B2B meetings that follow are precisely that: action. I extend my sincere gratitude to the ministers, our sponsors Halkbank, Gülermak, Tav and all participants who made this forum

possible. Let us make this forum the beginning of a significantly more ambitious chapter.

Thank you.

Nail OLPAK

President of DEİK