

There's an old Turkish proverb that goes "Dost Kara Gunde Belli Olur." When translated, it offers a maxim that the Turkish people try to live by, as it says, "a real friend is with you on your bad day."

The international community always seems to seek proof from Turkey that it is acting as the strongest partner possible to our NATO allies across the globe. Right now, in this shared emergency, I hope that skeptics can see those partnerships on display during these, our toughest of days.

On Tuesday, April 28, a [Turkish military cargo](#) carrying voluminous supplies provided by Turkey for the United States arrived at Andrews Air Force Base. Turkey donated half a million surgical masks, 40,000 hazmat suits, more than 500 gallons of disinfectant, nearly 2,000 N-95 masks and goggles and 500 face shields.

Our friendship with the United States is strengthened by us standing together when it matters most. Standing by one another isn't always easy: an act of generosity to help fill another's urgent need amid a pandemic, despite every country facing anxiety over their own PPE supplies, isn't easy. Yet the collective conscience of our citizenry recalls with deep appreciation the aid that Turkey has received from the United States as far back as 1948, and it is in the same spirit of collaboration and compassion that we continue to return that support to this very day. The shared spirit of the Turkish and American people is one of selflessness and resilience.

But the Turkish people's focus on giving doesn't end with a single flight to Washington. In the past month, Turkey has aided 55 nations across the globe, including the United Kingdom, Spain and Italy, which has bravely fought some of the harshest conditions the world has seen during this health crisis. We have also provided significant humanitarian assistance to Israel, the people of Palestine and the Balkan republics, and we're prepared to provide further aid as the situation warrants.

Our ability to produce, collect and deliver this aid is also a remarkable testament to the collaborative efforts between private businesses and suppliers and the government agencies tasked with managing each respective sector of our economy. As the Chairman of the Turkey-U.S. Business Council, I could not be prouder or more willing to speak out to the depth of our private-public partnerships working together to help confront this global emergency. These collaborative programs are of the type the U.S. also believes in deeply, and the results of our efforts are proof positive of what can be achieved when governments and businesses work side-by-side in earnest to address the world's most fearsome challenges.

While social distancing locally is still the order of the day, there has never been a time in the past 100 years when humanitarian proximity has been more important to the world's next century. Turkey is willing and able to provide the aid that our international brethren need to withstand this terrible and tragic threat and the Turkish people will be there for our global community, while we fight our own outbreak at home, until these bad days start turning good again.

There is another – perhaps better known – proverb we are also familiar with in Turkey. This one says that “Together we stand, divided we fall.” We are all seeing how very true this is in our world today.

- *Mehmet Ali Yalcindag is the Chair of the Turkey-U.S. Business council (TAIK) in Istanbul.*

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