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**TURKISH REPUBLIC OF NORTHERN CYPRUS
WASHINGTON OFFICE**

Dear Sir/Madam,

I wanted to share with you a statement issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus. This latest statement outlines the Turkish Cypriot side's position vis-à-vis the natural resources in the Eastern Mediterranean. The Turkish Cypriot side's position has been that all drilling activities related to natural gas resources in the Eastern Mediterranean unilaterally commissioned by the Greek Cypriot side be ceased immediately in order to pave the way for a cooperation in the region on the basis of interdependence.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Ismet Korukoğlu', written over a horizontal line.

**Ismet Korukoğlu
Representative**

Regarding the Natural Resources in the Eastern Mediterranean

February 13, 2018

The natural resources in the Eastern Mediterranean provide a potential for cooperation not only between the two sides on the Island, but also among other actors in the region, while at the same time providing a potential for economic interdependence that would serve regional stability. The Greek Cypriot leadership, however, has opted to turn this area for potential cooperation into a source of regional tension by attempting to create a *fait accompli*.

We have most recently observed that Italian Energy Company ENI intends to extend its activities into the site referred to as "Block 3" of the Greek Cypriot administration's unilaterally-declared so-called exclusive economic zone. The persistence of the Greek Cypriot leadership to continue to escalate tensions in the area despite all of the warnings of the Turkish Cypriot side is unacceptable.

It is highly unfortunate that all of our statements and calls, which have been made in the spirit of cooperating to contribute to regional peace and reconciliation, are totally ignored by the Greek Cypriot leadership.

The Turkish Cypriot side's constructive proposals regarding the fair and equitable distribution of the natural resources surrounding the Island were not implemented solely due to the Greek Cypriot side's rejectionist stance and persistent objections.

This negative attitude of the Greek Cypriot side is not limited to the issue of natural resources, but at the same time it is damaging the reconciliation efforts between the two sides, such as those undertaken within the framework of the Cyprus issue.

The Greek Cypriot side has confirmed – not only through its attitudes during the Cyprus negotiations but also with their stance on the natural resources surrounding the island – that it is not ready to share power or wealth with the Turkish Cypriots. The recent developments have revealed that this assessment, which appeared in the UN Secretary General's report 14 years ago, remains still valid today.

Partnership, in whatever form it may be, can only be established through cooperation and sharing, and not in complete disregard of the legitimate interests and rights of the relevant parties. The absence of the said components and the Greek Cypriot side's inability to make any progress regarding the establishment of a partnership has manifested itself this time in the issue of natural resources in the Eastern Mediterranean.

Under these circumstances, as long as the Greek Cypriot side continues to take unilateral steps that disregard our legitimate rights over the Island's natural resources, the TRNC will not refrain from taking reciprocal steps together with the Republic of Turkey in order to protect the rights and interests of the Turkish Cypriot people. Taking into consideration the international agreements we have signed in the past, as well as the licenses granted regarding this issue, we would like to reiterate once again our determination to take concrete steps in the period ahead.

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