



MARIETTA GIANNAKOU

MEMBER OF THE HELLENIC PARLIAMENT – NEA DEMOKRATIA

Athens, 2nd of April 2020

Dear President, Dear Colleagues,

I hope my letter finds you, your families and your fellow citizens in good health and spirit. The world is facing an unprecedented health, economic and social crisis. The invisible enemy “coronavirus”, continues to ruthlessly strike the global community, knowing no borders and limits. It is then, under these circumstances, for all of us to show responsibility, solidarity and unity and take actions, in order to combat this enemy and overcome this terrible situation.

At the same time, we can continue our work as Parliamentarians and communicate via all means of technology, staying at home and following all measures taken by our governments for protecting each other and ourselves, supporting each other, showing courage and strength and hoping that soon we will be all back, healthy and strong.

Consequently, I take this opportunity to share with you some facts regarding the so – called “Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of Turkey and the Government of National Accord – State of Libya on delimitation of the maritime jurisdiction areas in the Mediterranean ”, which was signed by the two sides in Istanbul on 27th of November 2019. As you may be aware of, during the Joint meetings of NATO PA in Brussels last February, under the presidency of the Hon. Lord Campbell, we, members of the Hellenic delegation, came up with an unfortunate event, I want to believe an unfortunate misunderstanding, that did not allow us continuously and unjustifiably, to speak and present our points.

In this context, I would like to underline upfront that this agreement was concluded in bad faith and in violation of the rules of the International Law of the Sea on maritime delimitation because, first and foremost, Turkey and Libya have neither overlapping

maritime zones nor common boundaries and consequently, there is no legal basis to lawfully conclude a maritime delimitation agreement.

Likewise, the agreement disregards the presence of the Greek islands in that maritime area, including the island of Crete, and violates their right to generate maritime zones, as any land territory, as Article 21 of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, clearly stipulates.

Furthermore, the boundaries of the purported “continental shelf and exclusive economic zone”, as they are defined in the text of this agreement, are fictitious, unlawful, arbitrary and provocative and openly infringe on Greece’s sovereign rights in that maritime area, thus seriously endangering regional peace and stability.

What is also striking in the said agreement is that, in spite of the declared position of Turkey that Greek islands in the Eastern Mediterranean have no weight for the delimitation of the maritime boundaries in that area, the drafters of this agreement have used Turkish islands and rocks as base points for the construction of the purported “equidistance line”, as stated in article 1, paragraph 3, of the said agreement and shown in the annexes thereto. This shows the hypocritical and contradictory stance of Turkey, concerning maritime delimitation in the Eastern Mediterranean.

In addition, this agreement is null and void, since it was not endorsed by the House of Representatives of Libya, as required by Article 8, paragraph 2 (D of the Libyan Political Agreement of 2015, approved by the United Nations Security Council through Resolution 2259 of 2015). Likewise, this agreement was unequivocally rejected by the President of the House of Representatives of Libya, Aquila Saleh Issa, in a letter sent to the United Nations Secretary General.

The Greek Government has repeatedly expressed its strong opposition to the unlawful delimitation aimed at by the above agreement, which illegally overlaps on zones of legitimate and exclusive Greek sovereign rights.

Let me also stress, that the European Council, has clearly stated, in its December 2019 Conclusions, that the said Memorandum infringes upon the sovereign rights of third states, does not comply with the Law of the Sea and cannot produce any legal consequences. Furthermore, several other countries condemned it outright and expressed their concern about the destabilizing effects on the region.

On this occasion, I would like to underline once more my country’s strong commitment to resolve any delimitation issues with neighbouring countries in the Eastern Mediterranean by peaceful means, in good faith and in accordance with the International

Law of the Sea. It is in that spirit, that negotiations are currently taking place between Greece and other neighbouring states, regarding the delimitation of common maritime boundaries.

Finally, thinking of those who lost their lives by the virus and to those who are hospitalized and fight for their lives, I express my admiration and deep gratitude to all people involved to the common battle. We, together, can win this war, with unity and cooperation.

Dear President, Dear Colleague,

Please accept, the assurance of my highest consideration,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Marietta Giannakou', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Marietta GIANNAKOU

Member of the Hellenic Parliament

Head of the Greek Delegation to the

NATO Parliamentary Assembly