

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-000454/25
to the Commission
Emmanouil Kefalogiannis (PPE)
(3 February 2025)**

Subject: The Crete-Cyprus electricity interconnection is an important project for the EU and has received significant EU funding

The Crete-Cyprus electricity interconnection is a significant priority project for the European Union under Regulation (EU) 2022/869 concerning trans-European energy infrastructure and is included in the Commission's list adopted in November 2023, having received a significant Community subsidy (EUR 657 million).

The coordinates for laying the electrical cable between Cyprus and Crete were set seven nautical miles north of Crete, with NAVTEX issued by the Heraklion Hydrographic Service. A Turkish warship was deployed to the area and sent a signal to the research vessels that 'they are outside jurisdiction and must request permission from Türkiye in order to carry out the work'. Laying an electrical cable between Cyprus and Crete is an activity that constitutes 'freedom of the seas' according to the Law of the Sea.

Türkiye's unacceptable tactics are deeply troubling. Interrupting activities without grounds pursuant to the Law of the Sea creates a negative precedent and we must be conscious of the dangers posed when the Law of the Sea is actively challenged.

In view of the above:

1. How does the Commission view Türkiye's action, which explicitly contravenes the Law of the Sea?
2. What actions does the Commission intend to take to ensure that Türkiye signs, ratifies and respects the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea?

Submitted: 3.2.2025

**Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Kallas on behalf of the European Commission
(12 May 2025)**

The Great Sea Interconnector (formerly known as 'EuroAsia Interconnector') is recognised as a project of common interest (PCI) of the EU in the field of energy, notably under the fifth EU list of projects of common and mutual interest adopted in 2021 ⁽¹⁾. The project has been received a EUR 657 million EU grant under the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) and has also been awarded a EUR 100 million grant from the EU's Recovery and Resilience Facility ⁽²⁾.

The EU has repeatedly expressed its expectation by Türkiye to de-escalate tensions in the interest of regional stability in the Eastern Mediterranean ⁽³⁾.

In particular, the Commission has underlined in the 2024 enlargement report on Türkiye ⁽⁴⁾ that, as stemming from obligations under the Negotiating Framework, Türkiye is expected to make an unequivocal commitment to good neighbourly relations, international agreements and the peaceful settlement of disputes including through the International Court of Justice. Türkiye must avoid threats and actions that damage good neighbourly relations and respect the sovereignty of all Member States over their territorial sea and airspace as well as all their sovereign rights, including *inter alia* the right to explore and exploit natural resources in accordance with EU and international law, in particular the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea.

This is essential to ensure a stable and secure environment in the Eastern Mediterranean and the development of a cooperative and mutually beneficial relationship between the EU and Türkiye ⁽⁵⁾.

⁽¹⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32022R0564&qid=1663087079030>.

⁽²⁾ https://commission.europa.eu/news/commission-participates-launch-euroasia-electricity-interconnector-2022-10-14_en.

⁽³⁾ <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/57442/2022-06-2324-euco-conclusions-en.pdf>.

⁽⁴⁾ https://enlargement.ec.europa.eu/document/download/8010c4db-6ef8-4c85-aa06-814408921c89_en?filename=T%C3%BCrkiye%20Report%202024.pdf.

⁽⁵⁾ https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_23_6157.