

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002187/26
to the Vice-President of the Commission/High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy
Emmanouil Kefalogiannis (PPE)
(29 May 2026)

Subject: Latest inflammatory statements by the Turkish Minister of Defence and the direct challenge to Greek and Cypriot sovereignty

In provocative statements, the Turkish Defence Minister stressed the following: ‘Our rights and interests in the Aegean Sea, the Eastern Mediterranean and Cyprus are based on historical, legal and legitimate foundations. It should be well known that we will not remain indifferent to any initiative targeting our sovereign rights, our security and our legitimate rights and interests in our seas.’ ⁽¹⁾

These statements represent a blatant challenge against Member States and mark a return to Türkiye’s revisionist policy. By systematically violating international law, the Turkish Government is attempting to fabricate non-existent sovereignty issues in the Aegean, while continuing to maintain an active *casus belli* against Greece. Not only do these statements constitute provocative rhetoric, they also undermine regional stability, security and international legitimacy.

Greece has an inalienable and legitimate right to bolster its islands’ defences in the face of a country that retains landing capabilities on the coast of Asia Minor.

In view of the above, can the Commission answer the following:

1. Does it intend to condemn these statements, which directly target Member States?
2. How does it view the ongoing threat of war against a Member State, which is incompatible with the fundamental principles, values and obligations of a candidate country?
3. Does it intend to impose sanctions on Türkiye if its revisionist and aggressive policy against Greece and Cyprus continues?

Submitted: 29.5.2026

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Kallas on behalf of the European Commission
(20 July 2026)

The EU stands collectively, firmly and unequivocally with all Member States in the face of any threat and remains committed to defending its interests and those of its Member States, as well as to upholding regional stability and respect of international law.

As emphasised in the 2025 enlargement report on Türkiye ⁽¹⁾, the possible extension of Greek territorial waters to 12 nautical miles under Article 3 of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (Unclos) continued to weigh on the relationship. In this context, the 1995 declaration of the Turkish Grand National Assembly that any action by Greece to extend its territorial waters would be considered a *casus belli* still holds.

The EU expects Türkiye to make an unequivocal commitment to good neighbourly relations, international agreements and the peaceful settlement of disputes and avoid threats and actions that damage good neighbourly relations.

Commitment to the UN Charter and abstaining from unilateral actions that violate international law and the sovereignty and sovereign rights of Member States remain essential. They are necessary to ensure a stable and secure environment in the Eastern Mediterranean and to develop a cooperative and mutually beneficial relationship between the EU and Türkiye.

¹ <https://www.thetoc.gr/diethni/article/tourkos-upourgios-amunas-istorika-dikaia-kai-nomika-tekmiriomena-ta-dikaiomata-mas-se-aigaio-kai-kupro/>.

⁽¹⁾ https://enlargement.ec.europa.eu/document/download/4bb4ddd1-4f20-4ee0-92db-926996ec8dd1_en?filename=t%C3%BCrkiye-report-2025.pdf.