

(English version)

Priority question for written answer P-003085/24
to the Vice-President of the Commission/High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy
Yannis Maniatis (S&D)
(25 December 2024)

Subject: Possible conclusion of an agreement between Türkiye and Syria establishing an EEZ

According to statements by the Turkish Minister of Transport and Infrastructure, Abdulkadir Uraloğlu, broadcast by Turkish television channel TGRT Haber, Türkiye is in advanced talks with the new Syrian regime to establish an Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) between the two countries.

Bearing in mind the precedent of the illegal and invalid Turkish-Libyan Memorandum of Understanding establishing an EEZ, which violates both international law and the sovereign rights of Greece, a new agreement between Türkiye and the new Syrian regime aims to create a fait accompli and could have highly adverse effects on stability in the Eastern Mediterranean region.

In view of this, can the Vice-President of the Commission/High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy answer the following:

1. How will she protect the sovereign rights of Greece and Cyprus in the Eastern Mediterranean region?
2. Will she make respect for international law, in particular the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (Unclos), and for the sovereign rights of the Member States, among other things, a prerequisite for a future relationship between the EU and Syria?
3. What would be the consequences for relations between the EU and Türkiye and the EU and Syria if an agreement between Türkiye and Syria's transitional government was reached, violating both international law and the sovereign rights of Greece and Cyprus?

Submitted: 25.12.2024

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Kallas on behalf of the European Commission
(30 January 2025)

The EU has a strategic interest in a stable and secure environment in the Eastern Mediterranean and in the development of a cooperative and mutually beneficial relationship with Türkiye.

In this context, the EU continues to expect Türkiye to respect the sovereignty and the sovereign rights of all Member States, in accordance with international law, including the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (Unclos)⁽¹⁾, and to unequivocally commit to and promote good neighbourly relations and the peaceful settlement of disputes, having recourse, if necessary, to the International Court of Justice.

The European Council Conclusions of 12 December 2019⁽²⁾ clearly stated that the Türkiye-Libya memorandum of understanding on the delimitation of maritime jurisdictions in the Mediterranean Sea infringes upon the sovereign rights of third states, does not comply with the Law of the Sea and cannot produce any legal consequences for third states.

⁽¹⁾ https://www.un.org/depts/los/convention_agreements/texts/unclos/unclos_e.pdf

⁽²⁾ <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/41768/12-euco-final-conclusions-en.pdf>