

JOINT DECLARATION
OF THE PRIME MINISTERS OF GREECE AND PORTUGAL
11 APRIL 2016

We, Alexis Tsipras, Prime Minister of the Hellenic Republic, and António Costa, Prime Minister of the Portuguese Republic, have met on April 11th, 2016 on the occasion of the official visit of the Portuguese Prime Minister to Athens.

Following our meeting, we reaffirm the excellent level of our bilateral relations and our commitment to further strengthen them in all areas, in particular trade and investment. Greece and Portugal are determined to enhance their close cooperation in the EU and other multilateral fora, in order to deal with the challenges increasingly faced on a European, regional and global level.

Europe is currently in the midst of major crises that test its capacity to uphold its values and cohesion, while dealing with challenges collectively and effectively: the economic crisis, the security crisis in the broader region and the refugee and migration crisis.

1. A European response to the refugee and migration crisis

We underline that the unprecedented refugee and migration flows that Europe has faced since last year constitute an international and European challenge, which demands a comprehensive approach that addresses its root causes, including war, violent conflicts and poverty. In this context, Greece and Portugal will cooperate to ensure that the EU steps up its efforts in its broader neighborhood to effectively support the external dimension of European Migration Policy.

We underline that the EU and its Member States must confront the challenge of refugee and migration flows collectively, in solidarity and on the basis of its values and European and international law.

We believe that the building of walls and fences, the unilateral and uncoordinated implementation of measures or the unwillingness to participate in commonly agreed actions, such as resettlement and relocation schemes, undermine European solidarity as well as the humane and effective management of migrant flows.

Europe must remain open to hosting people in need of international protection, by replacing dangerous, irregular migration routes with legal processes of resettlement of refugees from countries neighboring Syria and by accelerating the relocation processes of refugees already in Greece and Italy. At the same time, the EU must enhance efforts to establish readmission agreements with the countries of origin of economic immigrants.

In this context, Greece and Portugal commit to enhance joint efforts for the reform of the Dublin process so that refugee flows are distributed in a fair way throughout the EU.

2. European Economic and Monetary Union

We assert our commitment to a democratic, cohesive and social Europe. We underline that the ongoing Eurozone crisis has its origins in the hitherto asymmetric process of European integration, as well as in the design flaws of the Eurozone – notably the lack of the adequate instruments to face the shocks experienced. In addition, macroeconomic policies in the Eurozone have been unbalanced.

We, as Prime Ministers of two countries with a similar policy experience in the context of their respective adjustment programs, share the conviction that austerity-only policies are wrong and insufficient to overcome the existing challenges. Six years after the first bailout program in Europe, we can safely confirm that austerity alone is failing in its own terms and has had a social and

economic impact that has gone far from what was anticipated. These policies should be reviewed.

Austerity policies, are keeping economies depressed and societies divided. They have already reduced significantly the social safety net that enables equitable growth. They are affecting the social fabric through unacceptably high levels of unemployment, in particular, long-term unemployment among the young and women, producing high levels of poverty and social exclusion while failing to reduce levels of debt ratios. With inequality and poverty rising, our countries and Europe are now facing a long period of economic stagnation.

Europe is now at a critical crossroads. We have to decide if our road to the future runs through closer political, fiscal and social integration or take the path of fragmentation with a gradual return to controlled forms of protectionism in the pursuit of narrow national interest. We have to decide whether we will forge a new European social contract or, with scant regard for the lessons of the past, we will continue with the policies of reversion with the risk of falling into nationalism, hatred, xenophobia, extremism and populism.

We abide by the common rules for common targets, with full respect to the democratic right of elected governments to decide themselves on the specific policies in line with those targets. We need to balance our societies along with balancing our budgets.

Six years after the first bailout program, European institutions have now better conditions and technical competence to design and review Member States' programs.

In addition, more should be done to protect financial stability in an integrated financial market and prevent deposit transfer within the Eurozone banking system, with the introduction of a European deposit guarantee.

Greece and Portugal believe that there is room, in the current European framework, for better coordination of economic policies in order to overcome structural bottlenecks and thus increase investment and boost growth and employment.

Europe has to change course. Instead of merely adjusting to self-defeating competitiveness and austerity measures, our two countries take the decision to closely cooperate at all levels, bilateral and European, to put forward a progressive program of democratic Eurozone Governance, economic revival, employment creation, centered on quality jobs, and socially just and environmentally responsible growth in Europe and in our countries. This program should be launched without further delays.

3. Peace and stability in our broader region

We express our grave concern about ongoing political instability, violent conflict and the rise of terrorism in our broader region. We reaffirm our active support and engagement with diplomatic initiatives that aim at ensuring peace and stability in the broader Mediterranean, Middle East and Black Sea regions.

Greece and Portugal will cooperate to ensure that the EU scales up its efforts and engagement in diplomatic initiatives for peace and stability, taking into consideration the lessons learned from past international interventions and their consequences. The unprecedented refugee and migration flows Europe has faced during the last year, as well as terrorist attacks, including in European capitals, testify to the need for a more active and comprehensive Common Foreign and Security Policy.

We underline our full support for a comprehensive, collective and focused response of the international community to terrorism, also in view of the recent terrorist attacks in Europe, the Middle East and Africa.

Greece and Portugal strongly support the unity and territorial integrity of Syria and the eradication of terrorist networks in the country, as well as all efforts of the UN Special Envoy for Syria, Stefan de Mistura, for peace and stability. We are encouraged by the preservation of the cease-fire agreement and underline the need for full humanitarian access to those in need.

We express our serious concern about the security situation in Libya which affects security and stability in neighboring countries. We support the efforts of the UN Special Representative Martin Kobler and we call upon all parties to work constructively towards a swift formation of a Government of National Accord on the basis of the Political Agreement of Skhirat.

As regards the Middle East Peace Process, we reiterate our strong commitment to a two state solution which will guarantee for the Palestinian people a viable and sovereign State, living in peace and security side-by-side with Israel. We underline that direct, reliable negotiations must start as soon as possible, since the current impasse has grave humanitarian consequences and undermines peace and stability in the region.

We reaffirm our support to the territorial integrity, sovereignty and unity of Iraq and we support all efforts of the Iraqi government to fight terrorism and ensure political cohesion and national reconciliation.

We express our concern about the worsening security situation in Afghanistan. The international community has a responsibility to do its utmost in order to support stability and security in the country.

We express our full support for the Minsk Agreements, whose full implementation offers the only way of reaching a solution to the crisis in Ukraine. At the same time, the EU and Russia need to engage in an ambitious and frank political dialogue for the future of our relation.

Greece and Portugal fully support the ongoing negotiation process, under the UN Good Office Mission, for a just, viable and comprehensive settlement of the Cyprus issue based on international law, the relevant UN Security Council Resolutions and the status of Cyprus as an EU member state. Such a settlement, based on the respect of democratic principles and the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all Cypriots, would not only benefit the people of Cyprus as a whole, but would contribute to peace and stability in the region.

Greece and Portugal commit to enhancing their joint efforts in promoting the external relations of the EU with non EU Mediterranean Countries, as well as regional cooperation in the Mediterranean on the basis of International Law, which is more necessary than ever. In this context we also welcome the strengthening of regional co-operation initiatives in the Mediterranean, such as the Union for the Mediterranean and the Mediterranean Forum, that cultivate a climate of political dialogue and mutual trust and commit to increase our cooperation on this level for the benefit of Europe and its neighbors.

Done in Athens, 11th April 2016

Alexis Tsipras

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Prime Minister of the Hellenic Republic

Prime Minister of the Portuguese Republic