



ΓΕΝΙΚΗ ΔΝΣΗ ΠΟΛΙΤΙΚΗΣ ΕΘΝΙΚΗΣ
ΑΜΥΝΑΣ & ΔΙΕΘΝΩΝ ΣΧΕΣΕΩΝ
ΔΙΕΥΘΥΝΣΗ ΔΙΕΘΝΩΝ ΣΧΕΣΕΩΝ
Αθήνα, 09 Νοε 20

**Tripartite Meeting between the Defence Ministers of Greece, Cyprus & Israel
(Nicosia, 12th of November 2020)**

Joint Press Conference

**By the Minister of National Defence of Greece, Mr. Nikolaos
Panagiotopoulos, following the tripartite meeting**

Dear Ministers,

I am particularly honoured and delighted to be present today in Nicosia, together with my distinguished friends and counterparts, the Minister of Defence of the Republic of Cyprus, Mr. Charalambos Petrides, and the Minister of Defence of Israel, Mr Benjamin Gantz, for our Tripartite Meeting.

The strong ties of our three countries are based on common principles and values, and it is our **common vision** and **aim** to create an environment and conditions of **stability, security** and **prosperity** in the wider region of the Eastern Mediterranean.

It is our common goal to implement **a long-term, coherent, and substantial** strategic cooperation, in accordance with the International Law and the principles of good neighbourly relations **with all the countries of the region**.

Today, we had the opportunity to discuss the latest developments in the region, as well as the progress of our cooperation in the defence and defence technical sectors.

We strive systematically to enhance the **interoperability** of our Armed Forces and to make **full use of the capabilities and comparative advantages of our countries**, in areas of mutual interest, such as common training programmes, joint exercises, intelligence sharing, maritime security and cyber-security.

With my distinguished counterparts, we discussed the serious security threats and challenges in our wider region and reaffirmed our **common commitment and determination** to address them effectively.

I underlined that we condemn Turkey's **illegal, provocative and unilateral actions** in the maritime zones of Greece and Cyprus, which constitute a flagrant violation of the International Law of Good Neighbourhood Relations and **undermine regional stability and peace in the Eastern Mediterranean.**

We also agreed to further develop our now institutionalised **Trilateral Cooperation**, thus sending strong and clear signals, as well as to **explore the possibility of expanding it in a "3+" format** with the participation of other countries, with which we share the same values and aspirations for the future of our wider region.

In this context, the United States are of course included, as **their presence is of particular importance for the security and stability in the Eastern Mediterranean.**

Before closing, I would like to thank the Minister of Defence of the Republic of Cyprus and friend, Mr. Charalambos Petrides, for his warm welcome and cordial hospitality and to underline that we look forward to our next Tripartite meeting in 2021, to be held in Israel, which shall constitute **a new milestone** in the cooperation between Greece, Cyprus, and Israel.

Thank you.