



# General Assembly

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### Oceans and the law of the sea

#### **Note verbale dated 14 August 2020 from the Permanent Mission of Turkey to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General**

The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Turkey to the United Nations has the honour to communicate the following:

Turkey has been informed of an agreement signed between the Arab Republic of Egypt and the Republic of Greece on 6 August 2020 concerning the delimitation of the exclusive economic zone.

Following a thorough examination of the agreement, Turkey has come to the conclusion that it violates Turkey's continental shelf in the Eastern Mediterranean, as declared to the United Nations on 18 March 2020 (see [A/74/757](#)), a section of which is delimited through the Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of the Republic of Turkey and the Government of National Accord-State of Libya on the Delimitation of Maritime Jurisdiction Areas in the Mediterranean of 27 November 2019, which was ratified by both countries and subsequently entered into force as of 8 December 2019.

The Turkish position on the delimitation of maritime jurisdiction areas, following the precedent of various judgments by international bodies of adjudication, is based on the principles that islands cannot have a cut-off effect on the coastal projection; the islands which lie on the wrong side of the median line between two mainlands cannot create maritime jurisdiction areas beyond their territorial waters; and the length and direction of the coasts should be taken into account in delineating maritime jurisdiction areas.

The Republic of Turkey is of the opinion that the so-called agreement clearly contradicts these principles. The Republic of Turkey, based on the principles laid out above, does not recognize the said agreement, as it infringes upon Turkey's rights in the region. Turkey exercises ipso facto and ab initio legal and sovereign rights to the north of the purported maritime boundary between Greece and Egypt. Furthermore, the so-called maritime boundary in question is subject to a future delimitation agreement between the Turkish and Egyptian mainlands.

Therefore, the Republic of Turkey strongly protests the signing of the said agreement and deems it null and void. Turkey would like to stress that the rights-refusing nature of the so-called agreement is not binding upon Turkey and will not



result in a waiver of its inherent rights. The Republic of Turkey reserves all its rights to continue to exercise its sovereign rights and jurisdiction within its continental shelf.

Turkey reiterates its persistent call for dialogue for the peaceful settlement of the current issues in the Eastern Mediterranean.

The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Turkey would be grateful if the present note verbale could be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 74, and published on the website of the Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea, as well as in the next edition of the *Law of the Sea Bulletin*.

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