
ARMENIA, CYPRUS, GREECE AGREE ON 'TRILATERAL PARTNERSHIP'

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The foreign ministers of Cyprus, Greece and Armenia pledged to deepen relations between their countries at a first-ever trilateral meeting held in the Cypriot capital Nicosia on Tuesday.

The purpose of the trilateral cooperation between our countries * is the promotion of peace, stability and prosperity through enhanced political dialogue and cooperation among the three countries, Cypruss Foreign Minister Nikos Christodoulides said after the talks.

Today's meeting reflects very clearly our joint determination to further expand and deepen our cooperation and to develop synergies that will benefit our countries and our peoples, he told a joint news conference with Foreign Ministers George Katrougalos of Greece and Zohrab Mnatsakanian of Armenia.

Christodoulides said they agreed to explore opportunities for cooperation in a wide range of areas, including trade, agriculture and tourism. The three nations will also step up their cooperation in international organizations and coordinate the action of our diasporas in important decision-making centers worldwide, he said.

Our three countries are very like-minded, peace-loving countries and believe that international law and respect for multilateralism form the basis of international relations, Katrougalos said for his part. And, of course, we share a long history together.

The next step is going to be the trilateral summit among the leaders of our countries, he added.

The Greek and Cypriot ministers also voiced strong support for Armenias efforts to forge closer ties with the European Union. We intend to help, as much as we can, Armenia in its European perspectives, said Katrougalos.

The three countries share a long history of mutual animosity with Turkey. Meeting in 2016 with then Armenian President Serzh Sarkisian, Greeces Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras said the Armenian and Greek peoples were both victims of genocide perpetrated by the Ottoman Turks during World War One. Ankara condemned that statement.

Turkey refuses to establish diplomatic relations and open its borders with Armenia because of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. The Karabakh issue was also on the agenda of the Nicosia meeting, according to Christodoulides.

Christodoulides said he also briefed his Greek and Armenian counterparts on Turkey's escalated illegal activities in the Exclusive Economic Zone of the Republic of Cyprus. In that regard, Katrougalos condemned Turkish provocations against the east Mediterranean island partly occupied by Turkish troops.

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