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## **GREECE SHOULD ACT IN LINE WITH INTERNATIONAL LAW**

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Anadolu Agency (23 January 2020)

Greece, arming 16 out of 23 islands with non-military status, in violation of agreements in the Aegean sea, should act in accordance with international law, Turkey's defense minister said.

Speaking in his visit to Turkey's missile producer Roketsan on Wednesday, Hulusi Akar said: "We expect Greece to act according to international law, agreements and good neighborly relations."

In addition to the fight against terrorism, Turkey's activities are ongoing in the Aegean, Eastern Mediterranean, off Cyprus, and Libya, Akar said, adding that they are carried out in accordance with international law and the territorial integrity of the countries.

Turkey is a guarantor country for the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC) and is committed to fulfilling its responsibilities, he said.

"The Cyprus issue is our national issue. Whatever we need to do there, we've done so far and will continue to do so. We will continue to protect the rights of both our own and Cypriot brothers," he noted.

Turkey, as a guarantor nation for the TRNC, is currently carrying out hydrocarbon exploration activities in the Eastern Mediterranean with two drilling vessels.

"It is our most sincere wish to resolve the issue within peaceful methods, based on rights and international law," he said.

Ankara has consistently contested the Greek Cypriot administration's unilateral drilling in the Eastern Mediterranean, asserting that the TRNC also has rights to the resources in the area.

In 1974, following a coup aiming at Cyprus's annexation by Greece, Ankara had to intervene as a guarantor power. In 1983, the TRNC was founded.

The decades since have seen several attempts to resolve the Cyprus dispute, all ending in failure.

The latest one, held with the participation of the guarantor countries -- Turkey, Greece, and the U.K. -- came to an end without any progress in 2017 in Switzerland.

Referring to Turkey-Libya deals on military cooperation and maritime boundaries of countries, he said: "Our NATO ally and neighbor Greece wants everything to be as they want."

Also, reminding a motion passed in the Turkish parliament authorizing sending of troops to Libya,

Akar said Turkey has a training and consultancy team in Libya, and it provides training support to its Libyan brothers and continues its consultancy services.

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