



THE CANADIAN ORDER OF AHEPA
OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

Toronto, October 13, 2026

The Right Honourable Mark Carney

Prime Minister of Canada

80 Wellington Street

Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0A2

Via email: pm@pm.gc.ca | Fax: 613-941-6900

**RE: FORMAL CONCERNS AND REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION OF EXPANDED CANADA –
TÜRKIYE DEFENCE AND SECURITY COOPERATION**

Dear Prime Minister Carney,

On behalf of the Canadian Order of AHEPA, I write to express our profound concern and strong opposition to the proposed expansion of Canada's defence and security cooperation with Türkiye, particularly in anticipation of your official visit to Ankara and Istanbul on October 21–24, 2026.

Your government's announcement of October 6, 2026, identifying defence and security among the priority areas for elevating Canada–Türkiye relations, raises serious questions about the compatibility of such cooperation with Canada's longstanding commitments to international law, democratic governance, human rights, and the sovereignty and territorial integrity of allied nations.

We recognize the importance of constructive diplomacy, economic diversification, and mutually beneficial international trade, particularly amid the uncertainty affecting Canada's traditional trading relationships. We do not oppose diplomatic engagement with Türkiye or the development of legitimate commercial opportunities.

However, we firmly believe that expanding military, defence-industrial, and security cooperation with Türkiye, without first addressing its conduct toward neighboring countries and its record of compliance with international obligations, would represent a serious departure from the principles that have historically guided Canadian foreign policy.

Strategic Importance Does Not Equal Strategic Reliability

We are increasingly concerned by Canadian government statements describing Türkiye as an important strategic ally and partner.

Türkiye's membership in NATO since 1952 and its geographical significance are undeniable. Nevertheless, NATO membership alone does not establish a consistent record of reliability, adherence to international law, or solidarity with fellow allies.

History demonstrates the importance of distinguishing geopolitical convenience from enduring strategic partnership.

During the First World War, the Ottoman Empire fought against Canada and the Allied Powers. During the Second World War, Türkiye remained neutral for most of the conflict and concluded a friendship treaty with Nazi Germany in June 1941, while Canada and its allies were engaged in the defence of Europe.

Although contemporary relations should not be determined by historical grievances, neither should history be selectively invoked to construct a narrative of longstanding strategic alignment that overlooks significant periods of divergence.

More importantly, Türkiye's contemporary foreign and security policies present substantial concerns that demand serious examination.

1. Cyprus: Fifty-Two Years of Occupation and an Unresolved Violation of Sovereignty

The continued presence of Turkish military forces in northern Cyprus, following the invasion of 1974, remains one of Europe's longest-standing unresolved international disputes.

More than five decades later, the Republic of Cyprus remains divided, thousands of Greek Cypriots remain displaced from their ancestral homes, property rights remain unresolved, and concerns persist regarding settlement policies and demographic changes in the occupied territory.

United Nations Security Council Resolutions 541 (1983) and 550 (1984) unequivocally rejected the purported declaration of independence of the secessionist entity in northern Cyprus and called upon states not to recognize it.

Türkiye's continuing advocacy of a two-state solution further complicates international efforts toward a settlement within the established United Nations framework.

Canada has a particularly significant historical connection to Cyprus.

Beginning in 1964, thousands of Canadian military personnel served in the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus. Twenty-eight Canadian peacekeepers lost their lives during Canada's long peacekeeping commitment to the island.

Their sacrifice must not be forgotten, nor should Canada's historic contribution to peace in Cyprus be diminished by a new defence partnership that overlooks the continued division of the island.

Canada should use its diplomatic influence to demand meaningful progress toward a just and lasting settlement based on international law, United Nations resolutions, and the sovereignty of the Republic of Cyprus.

2. Greece: Threats Against the Sovereignty of a Fellow NATO Member

Greece is a longstanding and reliable NATO ally, a member of the European Union, and a nation with which Canada enjoys strong historical, political, cultural, and community ties.

Türkiye's challenges to Greek sovereignty and sovereign rights in the Aegean Sea and Eastern Mediterranean, recurring military tensions, and disputes over maritime jurisdiction have repeatedly threatened regional stability.

Of particular concern is the Turkish Grand National Assembly's 1995 authorization regarding the possibility of military action should Greece extend its territorial waters beyond six nautical miles in the Aegean Sea.

The continued existence of this threat is incompatible with the principles of peaceful dispute resolution and mutual respect expected between NATO allies.

Canada should not strengthen the military capabilities of one NATO member without considering the potential consequences for the sovereignty, security, and legitimate interests of another NATO member.

Any expanded defence cooperation must therefore be accompanied by clear Canadian expectations that Türkiye refrain from threats or the use of force against Greece and pursue peaceful settlement of disputes in accordance with international law.

3. Misuse of Canadian Military Technology in Nagorno-Karabakh

Canada has already experienced the consequences of inadequate assurances regarding the ultimate use of military technology exported to Türkiye.

Following the 2020 Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, Global Affairs Canada investigated the use of Canadian-origin imaging and targeting systems incorporated into Turkish-produced unmanned aerial vehicles.

The Canadian government concluded that the transfer and use of this technology in Azerbaijan were inconsistent with Canada's foreign policy and the end-use assurances provided by Türkiye.

As a consequence, Canada cancelled the relevant export permits in April 2021.

This was not merely a hypothetical risk. It was a documented failure of export-control assurances involving Canadian technology.

The subsequent mass displacement of the ethnic Armenian population from Nagorno-Karabakh in 2023 further highlights the serious humanitarian and regional-security concerns associated with these conflicts.

Before entering new defence-industrial arrangements, Canada must explain what has materially changed to justify renewed confidence in Türkiye's compliance with Canadian military export restrictions.

Without credible verification, enforceable safeguards, and accountability mechanisms, expanded defence cooperation risks repeating the very failures that prompted Canada's earlier restrictions.

4. Military Operations in Syria and Iraq

Türkiye's military operations in northern Syria and Iraq have generated significant international concern regarding civilian displacement, attacks affecting essential infrastructure, and the treatment of Kurdish and other vulnerable communities.

Human rights organizations have documented allegations of arbitrary detention, property seizures, forced displacement, and serious abuses involving Turkish-backed armed groups.

Such concerns cannot be dismissed as secondary considerations when assessing the appropriateness of expanding Canada's military relationship with Türkiye.

Canada must ensure that Canadian defence technology, intelligence cooperation, or military equipment cannot contribute to operations that violate international humanitarian law or facilitate abuses against civilian populations.

5. Democratic Backsliding and Human Rights

Türkiye's domestic political environment raises further questions about the wisdom of expanding security cooperation.

International human rights organizations have repeatedly documented restrictions on press freedom, prosecutions of political opponents, constraints on civil society, and serious concerns regarding judicial independence.

Canada has consistently maintained that democratic institutions, freedom of expression, respect for minorities, and the rule of law are fundamental pillars of its international engagement.

These values must remain meaningful even when commercial or strategic opportunities create pressure to overlook them.

Canada's commitment to human rights must be demonstrated through consistent policy, not merely through diplomatic statements.

6. NATO Solidarity and the Question of Strategic Trust

NATO is not simply a military arrangement. It is an alliance founded upon shared commitments to collective defence, democratic institutions, peaceful international relations, and mutual trust.

Türkiye's acquisition of the Russian S-400 air-defence system, its disagreements with other NATO members, and its divergent approaches to regional conflicts have raised legitimate questions regarding strategic coordination and alliance cohesion.

We acknowledge Türkiye's contributions to NATO and its role in certain diplomatic initiatives, including efforts relating to Ukraine. Nevertheless, such contributions do not eliminate the obligation to evaluate actions that undermine regional stability or the security interests of fellow allies.

Canada must distinguish between necessary engagement with a NATO member and the granting of expanded military cooperation without sufficient safeguards.

7. Canada's International Credibility and National Interest

Prime Minister, the issue before your government extends beyond Greece, Cyprus, or the broader Eastern Mediterranean.

It concerns the credibility and consistency of Canadian foreign policy.

Canada cannot credibly defend the territorial integrity of Ukraine, condemn violations of international law, and advocate respect for sovereign borders while remaining silent about the continuing division of Cyprus or disregarding threats directed toward Greece.

Although the circumstances of these conflicts are not identical, the underlying principles of sovereignty, territorial integrity, peaceful dispute resolution, and respect for international law must be applied consistently.

The credibility of Canada's international leadership depends upon its willingness to uphold these principles even when doing so is diplomatically or economically inconvenient.

Our country has built an international reputation through peacekeeping, principled diplomacy, respect for human rights, and support for the international rules-based order.

That reputation should not be compromised in pursuit of short-term economic opportunities or geopolitical accommodation.

Our Formal Requests to the Government of Canada

Considering these serious concerns, the Canadian Order of AHEPA respectfully but firmly calls upon your government to undertake the following actions:

First: Reconsider and refrain from concluding new agreements that expand military, defence-industrial, intelligence, or sensitive security cooperation with Türkiye until the identified concerns have been substantively addressed.

Second: Publicly reaffirm Canada's unequivocal support for the sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity, and international legal status of the Republic of Cyprus, and for a comprehensive settlement consistent with applicable United Nations Security Council resolutions.

Third: Raise directly with President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan the continued Turkish military presence in northern Cyprus, the rights of displaced persons, and the need for meaningful progress toward a negotiated settlement.

Fourth: Reaffirm Canada's commitment to the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Greece, and express clear opposition to threats or the use of force in resolving disputes between NATO allies.

Fifth: Require independently verifiable end-use guarantees, strict export controls, and effective accountability measures before authorizing any transfer of Canadian military technology, equipment, or sensitive defence systems to Türkiye.

Sixth: Ensure that human rights, judicial independence, minority protections, and compliance with international humanitarian law are incorporated into any future discussions concerning bilateral security cooperation.

Seventh: Consult with representatives of Canada's Hellenic, Cypriot, and Armenian communities before finalizing policy decisions that directly affect the legitimate concerns and historical experiences of these communities.

Eighth: Provide a clear explanation of how expanded defence and security cooperation with Türkiye would serve Canada's national interests without undermining its international legal commitments, NATO solidarity, or longstanding support for Greece and Cyprus.

We further request that no new binding defence or security commitments be announced during your forthcoming visit without an appropriate assessment of these matters.

A Matter of Principle, Responsibility, and Canadian Values

Prime Minister, the Canadian Order of AHEPA remains committed to strengthening Canada's international standing and advancing the values upon which our country was built.

Our concerns are not directed against the Turkish people, with whom Canadians of Hellenic heritage share a long and complex history. Nor do we oppose constructive relations between Canada and Türkiye.

Rather, our concerns relate to the policies and conduct of the Turkish government and the potential consequences of expanding military cooperation without adequate safeguards.

As Canadians of Hellenic heritage, we are deeply proud of our contribution to Canadian society and of Canada's historic role in promoting peace, democracy, and respect for international law.

We believe that Canada can strengthen its economy, diversify its international relationships, and protect its national interests without compromising its principles or overlooking the legitimate security concerns of Greece and Cyprus.

The sacrifices of Canadian peacekeepers in Cyprus, the obligations of NATO solidarity, and Canada's longstanding international commitments deserve more than symbolic acknowledgment. They deserve consistency in the decisions our government makes today.

We therefore strongly urge you to reconsider the proposed expansion of defence and security cooperation with Türkiye and to ensure that Canada's engagement remains firmly anchored in international law, democratic values, and respect for the sovereignty of allied nations.

We respectfully request a written response outlining your government's position on these concerns and the safeguards it intends to implement.

We would also welcome an opportunity to meet with you, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, or your respective representatives, to discuss these matters before or following your visit.

Thank you for your consideration of these important issues.

Sincerely,



Anastasios Moussas

President, Canadian Order of AHEPA

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