



Draft

Title: **Need to reduce tensions and build confidence in the Eastern Mediterranean**

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1 In the current geopolitical circumstances, with the war raging on the European
2 continent creating global repercussions, opening another front in a volatile
3 region would be utterly irresponsible, disruptive, and eventually suicidal for
4 anybody attempting it. The European Green Party is watching with grave concern
5 and condemns the intensifying escalations, including verbal aggression and
6 violations of national airspace and territorial waters in the Eastern
7 Mediterranean. We remain firmly convinced that sustainable dispute resolution
8 can only be achieved through dialogue, diplomacy, and respect for international
9 law by all sides.

10 The continued and extremely concerning deterioration of human rights, the
11 weakening of democratic institutions, the struggling economy, and the growing
12 climate emergency are real concerns that the Turkish government should urgently
13 turn its attention, energy, and resources to. Economic impasses and electoral
14 insecurities cannot be addressed through escalation of hostile attitudes and
15 provocations towards Türkiye's neighbours. The fact that those neighbours are EU
16 Member States makes even more untenable the attitude of Türkiye, a candidate for
17 EU accession and regional power which wants to be respected in Europe and
18 beyond.

19 For peace, security, and good neighbourly relations in Europe's south-eastern
20 region, it is necessary to intensify efforts to build trust and introduce a
21 regional green cooperation framework. The energy transition should be a common
22 priority, together with the goal of sustainable prosperity, for all countries in

23 the region. There is no more scope for new fossil-fuel extractions, neither by
24 confrontation nor by co-exploitation. And, of course, the use of nuclear energy
25 cannot be considered as a solution, especially in earthquake-prone areas such as
26 the Eastern Mediterranean. As the EGP clearly pronounced at its 35th European
27 Green Party Council in Riga (June 2022) on the case of the Turkish nuclear power
28 plant under construction with Russian funding at Akkuyu: "The impact of a
29 failure in the safety systems at such a plant or an earthquake is a high risk
30 with inevitably catastrophic consequences for the region... In case of a nuclear
31 accident, not only the area of Akkuyu would be in danger, but also Cyprus, the
32 Greek Dodecanese region and the whole of the south-east Mediterranean region."

33 We, as European Greens:

- 34 • **Stress the paramount importance of peaceful conflict resolution in the**
35 **Eastern Mediterranean** and urge the governments of Türkiye, Greece and
36 Cyprus to engage in constructive dialogue, stepping up efforts to finally
37 resolve disputes over land and maritime borders, to commit to good
38 neighbourly relations, international agreements and the peaceful
39 settlement of disputes in accordance with the United Nations Charter;

- 40 • **Call on all countries in the region to agree to a mutual freeze of any**
41 **plans for oil and gas exploration and extraction, as well as of nuclear**
42 **energy use.** We urge the Turkish government to abandon any plans or actual
43 drilling for hydrocarbon extraction in the Exclusive Economic Zone of
44 Cyprus and beyond. The future is in renewable energy sources and natural
45 gas is not one of them. Instead of wasting limited resources, the Turkish
46 government should focus on exploiting the huge renewable energy potential
47 the country has, like all countries in the region.

- 48 • **Stress that bilateral relations between Türkiye and its neighbours should**
49 **be based on respect for each other's borders and on confidence-building**
50 **measures,** such as cultural exchanges, trade, and joint ventures in the
51 economy but also in nature protection (coordinated management of protected
52 areas on land and sea that cross state borders). Cultivating good
53 neighbourly relations is the only viable long-term strategy for peace and
54 prosperity for all in the region and for regional resilience in the face
55 of interconnected crises, such as climate change, pandemics, food, and
56 water and energy insecurity. The first to benefit from friendly bilateral
57 relations should be the inhabitants of the border regions;

58 • **Call on all countries of the region to refrain from interfering with or**
59 **curtailing the enjoyment of rights of refugees and migrants**, who are being
60 instrumentalised to serve populist political objectives of governments and
61 political parties in the region and beyond.

62 The cost is too high for the very people, the desperate refugees and
63 migrants who are being used, but also for the local inhabitants in the
64 border regions. This is particularly the case for the inhabitants of the
65 Aegean Islands who, apart from the normal challenges of island life, find
66 themselves 'in the firing line', fortunately only metaphorically for now;

67 • **Stand in solidarity with the people of all Mediterranean countries in**
68 **their quest for peace, security, cooperation, and mutual respect anchored**
69 **in international law**. Today, the immediate neighbours of each country are
70 de facto its primary partners. Nationalism and intolerance harm everyone
71 but most of all the groups that promote them. We support the integration
72 into the European Union of our immediate neighbours, but without
73 concessions in terms of acceptance and implementation of the EU *acquis*.
74 External relations must be adapted to the new circumstances created by the
75 ecological and climate crisis;

76 • **Oppose the logic of military power and its mechanisms and support policies**
77 **to prevent conflicts and crises instead**. We are seeking agreements for a
78 mutual freeze or even a reduction in armaments, instead of a new arms race
79 that may lead to deteriorating living standards and instability in the
80 region.

81 Priority should be given to the definitive demarcation of maritime zones
82 within the framework of international law and the EU *acquis* with possible
83 recourse to the International Court of Justice in the Hague or to
84 international arbitration in case a settlement cannot be reached through
85 negotiations.

86 • **Reiterate that ending the Turkish occupation of the northern part of the**
87 **Republic of Cyprus remains a priority**. It should be done within the
88 framework of decisions taken by the United Nations and the EU *acquis*,
89 without military intervention by any country. We support the forces that
90 seek rapprochement, on both sides.