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NOTE FOR THE RECORD

RECORD OF A MEETING BETWEEN THE SECRETARY OF STATE  
AND HE MR ULUSU, PRIME MINISTER OF TURKEY,  
HELD IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE  
AT 0950 HOURS ON 18TH OCTOBER 1983

## Present:

The Rt Hon Michael Heseltine MP  
Secretary of State for Defence

His Excellency Mr Bülend Ulusu  
Prime Minister

His Excellency Mr R M Russell CMG  
HM Ambassador, Ankara

His Excellency Mr Haluk Bayülken  
Minister of Defence

Mr J N H Belloch  
DUS(P)

Brigadier General M Okçu

Mr N H R Evans  
APS/Secretary of State

1. The Prime Minister said that he was very glad to see Mr Heseltine. His visit would contribute to the excellent relations between Britain and Turkey. The Turkish government was grateful for the support which they had received from Britain since they had come to power on 12th September 1980. Britain had adopted a more friendly disposition towards Turkey than had the rest of Europe. The Turks sometimes had difficulty in presenting themselves internationally. These problems stemmed from Turkey's geo-political situation. He often used the analogy of a game of football with players and spectators. For example in Western Europe the game was played on grass and when, for example, the Netherlands were playing, the French applauded. Turkey however played on a field of soil and her neighbours, the USSR, Bulgaria and Greece would boo and throw bottles. There were differences of culture and background between the Western European and Turkish situations. Britain understood this and he wished to express his thanks for the understanding which Britain had shown since 1980, in connection with Turkey's EEC application, in the OECD and elsewhere. There had been connections between Britain and Turkey for 400 years.



2. Continuing the Prime Minister said that the political situation in Turkey was now stable. The need now was to achieve economic stability. So far as external relations were concerned he recalled that he had spoken with a high placed Soviet official at the funeral of President Brezhnev. The official had said that he was responsible for Afghanistan, Iran and Turkey. Iran was becoming ripe fruit for Russian picking. Greece had not been mentioned. He also recalled that King Fahd had said to him that the Saudis saw Turkey as a strong bastion against aggression and subversion. Turkey had a very important role to play in NATO with her armed forces of over half a million men. The need for strong defences was not in doubt. But strong defences had to be based on a sound economy and Turkey wished to be part of the Economic Community of Europe. They co-operated well with Europe on military matters within the NATO alliance. But economic co-operation within the EEC was not satisfactory. Turkey's exports to the EEC were blocked by France and Greece. It was necessary to get a better balance between economic and military co-operation.

3. The Secretary of State said that he was grateful for the exposition of Turkey's place in the world which the Prime Minister had given. Britain was sympathetic to Turkey's problems. In particular we recognised the importance of Turkey's contribution to the NATO alliance and the pivotal position of Turkey on the Southern Flank. It was inevitable that there would be pressure from those countries with secure democracies on those countries where the democratic system was less soundly based. He was glad that Turkey was now taking steps to begin to restore her democratic system. But she would not avoid criticism from Western nations until democratic freedoms had been fully restored. There was no doubt that controls on the number of parties who were allowed to participate in the forthcoming Election would not help. But, equally, there was a great opportunity for Turkey to articulate the significant steps she was making to return to full democracy. He accepted the Prime Minister's geographical analysis of Turkey's position and he was very glad to be able to come to Turkey to see and listen. He had already discussed with Mr Bayülken the opportunities which existed for greater military and industrial collaboration between Britain and Turkey. Britain could not afford to be a charity but there was certainly scope to see what more we could do to assist Turkey and members of his delegation were meeting with Turkish officials that morning with this in mind.

4. The Prime Minister said that the primary goal of government was to ensure the welfare of the people. He had recently visited Malaysia and Singapore. Singapore had a GNP of \$50 billion and an advanced infrastructure. This was based on a period of nearly 30 years of stable government under Mr Lee Kuan Yew who had originally been a Communist. Every country developed systems and institutions appropriate to its own circumstances. Turkey had to develop her own democracy. As Ataturk had said "we always look like ourselves". Greece was a democracy. But he had heard it said that Colonel Qaddafi had invested a lot in Mr Papandreou's Election victory and had offered to do what he could to mend relations between Greece and Turkey. It was incompatible to



have democracy and support from Colonel Qaddafi. He was glad to hear of the discussions that were taking place between British and Turkish officials. He had served in Lord Mountbatten's Headquarters and had great respect for British military officers. We should do all we could to develop bilateral relations between the UK and Turkey.

5. The Secretary of State said that he also hoped that links would improve. The recent exercises in the Mediterranean had been an open demonstration of alliance unity. He hoped to foster training and procurement collaboration between Britain and Turkey. Britain would do all she could to assist with the modernisation of Turkish armed forces: he had learned with pleasure of the purchase of the Rapier and Sea-Skua systems by the Turkish armed forces. These provided evidence of the opportunities for mutual trade and co-operation. The essence of the matter was to establish what the real requirements of the Turkish forces were. Collaboration was not just a matter of Memoranda of Understanding or pieces of paper. He would want to review this question himself. There were areas such as chemical warfare training where he knew that we would be able to help. On his side he would naturally be glad, as he had already mentioned to Mr Bayülken, if the Turks would decide to purchase the Tornado system.

6. The Prime Minister said that he had no doubt that bilateral relations in the defence, economic and cultural fields would continue to develop. He repeated that he was grateful for Mr Heseltine's visit and he asked the Secretary of State to convey his best wishes, and those of the Turkish people, to the Prime Minister of Great Britain, for whom they had great respect and admiration.

7. The meeting ended at 1030.

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Ministry of Defence

21st October 1983



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HM Ambassador, Ankara