

Speech at the Victory Day Reception by Ambassador Egemen Bağış  
Prague, 30 August 2023

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Today, on August 30th, we are celebrating the 101st anniversary of our Victory Day, one of the great achievements in our national history. I would like to thank you for sharing our special day with us here in Prague.

We remember Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, the founder of the Republic of Türkiye and the Commander in Chief of the Great Offensive, and his comrades with admiration, gratitude and respect.

The victory of August 30th is evidence of what a nation can accomplish to save its independence and its dignity, proving to the world its cohesion and capacity for statehood.

The Great Offensive, launched under the command of Gazi Mustafa Kemal Atatürk on August 26th, 1922, was crowned with the victory in Dumlupınar that we observe today. This great victory paved the way to establish the state of the Republic of Türkiye, now a NATO ally with our Czech hosts.

Just like all our victories in history, it was the courage of our heroes, who made the ultimate sacrifice, that was behind our victory on August 30th. The heroes of the Turkish army also joined the efforts of search and rescue as well as delivering humanitarian aid to the survivors of the devastating earthquakes this past February. I also would like to take this opportunity to extend our sincere gratitude and appreciation to the Czech Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) team for their immediate aid offer and devotion to rescuing those trapped beneath the rubble. Our nation never forgets those who help us in times of need.

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Türkiye, unlike many countries in that period of history, escaped foreign occupation and gained control of her destiny through diplomatic outreach while Mustafa Kemal Atatürk led the War of Independence. The War of Independence emerged as the first successful national liberation movement in the 20th century and became a source of inspiration to peoples around the world during the inter-war period.

Although he had a long military career and became an outstanding front-line commander, Atatürk stated that "Unless a nation's life faces peril, war is murder." Moreover, the 1930s saw the dissemination of his famous principle "Peace at home, peace in the world."

Today Türkiye's efforts to end the war, to open grain corridors, to organize hostage swaps and aid to Ukraine demonstrates that this is still the main guiding principle of Turkish foreign policy.

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As we are celebrating the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of our Republic we are approaching the centennial anniversary of the establishment of our diplomatic relations in 1924 under the leadership of the two visionary statesmen, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk and Tomáš Masaryk. Let us hereby honor the memories of the founders of Türkiye and then Czechoslovakia.

I would now like to read a message by President Erdoğan on the occasion of this historic day.

MESSAGE OF HIS EXCELLENCY RECEP TAYYİP ERDOĞAN,  
PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF TÜRKİYE, ON THE OCCASION OF  
AUGUST 30 VICTORY DAY, TO BE READ IN 81 PROVINCES AND  
REPRESENTATIONS ABROAD

Dear Citizens,

Distinguished Guests,

I greet you with my most heartfelt feelings, deep affection and respect.

On this proud day, as we reach the 101st anniversary of the Great Victory, I would like to congratulate the August 30 Victory Day of our honourable nation, of the Turkish Cypriots, and of more than 7 million Turkish citizens living all across the world.

On behalf of myself, my country and my nation, I would like to thank all our friends who share our joy of celebration.

The August 30 Battle of the Commander-in-Chief is one of the most critical milestones in our nation's centuries-long struggle for survival.

In the words of Ghazi Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, the Great Victory is "a great achievement that once again exemplified in history the enormous might and heroism of the Turkish Army, Turkish Officers and Command Staff".

With this victory, which is the "immortal monument of the Turkish Nation's idea of freedom and independence", our nation declared to the whole world that it would not let its will be subjugated and its independence and future compromised.

The love of freedom, which is the most distinguished characteristic of our nation, still exists very strongly today.

The epic resistance, first and foremost, against the July 15 betrayal and the response of our nation to the attacks on our survival in recent years have repeatedly demonstrated how our will remains alive and strong.

The same unwavering will is behind our determination to build the Century of Türkiye, which we announced at a time when the world was shaken by deep crises.

We created the infrastructure towards this end with the initiatives we brought to life in every field in the last 21 years, and provided our country with every capacity for this great ascent.

With the elections of May 14 and May 28, which were a full celebration of democracy, we passed another critical threshold on the path towards our goal.

As a result of the elections, where we once again witnessed the strong support of our nation, we expedited our policy to provide more services and achievements.

We will make Türkiye more powerful and raise it above the level of contemporary civilizations with the new steps we will be taking in the upcoming period.

We will definitely turn our vision of the Century of Türkiye into reality.

And we will achieve this as 85 million people coming together hand in hand and heart to heart.

As a nation that overcame many difficulties, endured many attacks and thwarted many conspiracies, we strongly believe that our future will be much brighter and more prosperous than today.

May Allah remove the obstacles in our path and grant us success.

With these thoughts in mind, I commemorate once again with gratitude Ghazi Mustafa Kemal, the founder of the Republic of Türkiye and the Commander-in-Chief of the Great Offensive, and his comrades-in-arms. I wish Allah's mercy upon all our martyrs and ghazis.

Happy August 30 Victory Day!

**Recep Tayyip ERDOĞAN**

**President of the Republic of Türkiye**

Please allow me to congratulate my citizens on their Victory Day in Turkish as well:

Değerli Vatandaşlarımız,

Büyük Taarruz'un zaferle taçlandırılışının yıldönümünü sizlerle birlikte idrak etmekten memnuniyet duyuyorum. Hepimizin Zafer Bayramı kutlu olsun!

Ne mutlu Türk'üm diyene!

Dear Guests

I would like to take this opportunity to thank 2 of our colleagues who will soon be departing from Prague. Our First Counsellor Ms. Isil Gürler and our First Secretary Mr. Ahmet Çelik who is also the Director of our Consular Section have been serving with us for more than 4 years and it is time for them to move forward to new responsibilities and promotions. I thank them both and I would like to invite them here to present them our traditional Czech glass gifts so that they will remember us.