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**PRESS STATEMENT ON CHP'S ASSESSMENT OF THE EUROPEAN COUNCIL CONCLUSIONS ON
TURKEY 3**

Press Statement on CHP's Assessment of the European Council Conclusions on Turkey

We welcome that the European Council reaffirmed in its meeting of 10 and 11 December in Brussels to maintain a cooperative and mutually beneficial relationship with Turkey. The fact that a positive EU-Turkey agenda is kept on the table shows that common sense has prevailed in EU circles and it appears to be agreed that maximalist approaches would not be helpful to either side. Although it is observed that the conclusion is penned in a partial manner with the motive of preserving the EU's collective integrity, it can be read in between the lines that Turkey's just arguments are recognized. This attitude would prevent the EU-Turkey communication channels from being shut down.

The conclusions of the European Council do not go beyond a call for the extension of the scope of the restrictive measures brought against our energy sector on 11 November 2019. On the other hand, the European Council will reassess whether to extend these restrictions further or not in its meeting in March 2021.

Although the conclusions state that the EU will continue to defend its and its member states' interests, the wish to keep a positive agenda on the table indicates that Turkey's rightful and justified arguments are also taken into consideration. This requires Turkey to defend its arguments persistently. To be able to do that, we need a foreign policy vis-à-vis the EU, EU member states, and European leaders that is rooted in the long-held traditions of diplomacy and that does not allow the sort of discourse we do not want directed against us to be used for anyone else, prioritizes dialogue, and puts into action the peaceful methods we inherited from Atatürk. What needs to be done now is to start a comprehensive and constructive mobilization of dialogue and diplomacy.

It is unacceptable that, Turkey, despite being right, allows its relations with the EU to a protracted and conflictful escalation, especially to a point where it is threatened by sanctions. A successful foreign policy would have enabled us to achieve results before coming to this point.

As CHP, we will continue to be at the foreground of such a foreign policy mobilization.