

The Hon. Scott Morrison, MP

Prime Minister of Australia

Parliament House

CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Prime Minister,

We write to you in response to the escalating tensions in the Eastern Mediterranean that have been widely reported in recent days through the world's media.

Specifically, Turkey has become increasingly active in the Eastern Mediterranean in its exploration of oil and gas, which has resulted in apparent violations of the existing Greek and Cypriot exclusive economic zones (EEZ).

Further, Turkey has attempted to establish its own EEZ between the Libyan and Turkish coasts; a move that is not only provocative but illegal as it ignores already established EEZs in the area.

The Turkish actions which include sending its navy into Greek and Cypriot waters has seen real tensions rise to the point of a recent collision between a Greek and Turkish ship.

Further, the Turkish inractions have resulted in am escalation of military tensions with France sending naval and air support to the Greek state whilst the Turksih actions remain universally condemned by the international community.

As such we feel that Australia cannot stay silent on this matter any longer. We should actively play our part to ensure that the delicate peace and stability in the region is preserved along with the agreed sovereignty of all the nations involved.

In addition, we believe that it is in Australia's interest to join the international community in defending the territorial rights of Greece and Cyprus which are based on the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea. This is of particular importance because if a precedence is set as a result of the territorial dispute in the Eastern Mediterreanean, this may have unintended consequences of other nations, including Australia.

We therefore respectfully encourage you to join the many other world leaders, including many in the European Union and the United States to encourage that all the countries in the Eastern Mediterranean respect the International law and the existing EEZs.

Yours faithfully,

Bill Papastergiadis

OAM

President

Greek Orthodox Community of Melbourne and Victoria