



**Speech by Mr. Selçuk Saraçoğlu
Vice-President of TUSIAD International
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“The SME System and the Industrial Cooperation”
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Dear Presidents, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to extend my gratitude to Confindustria, Istituto Nazionale per il Commercio Estero and Associazione Bancaria Italiana for initiating this big event around Mediterranean countries. It is a great pleasure for me to be with you in this meeting as the Vice-President of TUSIAD International. I believe this platform is a valuable occasion to develop mutually beneficial exchanges. These kinds of initiatives will help reinforce existing co-operation and create vast investment opportunities in the Mediterranean region.

With your permission, I would like to give you some information about our institution. TÜSIAD is one of the largest non-governmental organizations of the Turkish private sector, including industries and services. Its highly internationally oriented members represent Turkey’s most important companies being invested in a vast variety of different sectors and industries. TUSIAD’s members and their companies realize 80% of Turkey’s foreign trade excluding energy import, 65% of industrial production and 50% of the registered employees except agriculture and public servants.

TÜSIAD is a member of BUSINESSEUROPE (Confederation of European Business), BIAC (Business and Industry Advisory Committee of the OECD), UBCCE (Union of Black Sea and Caspian Confederation of Enterprises) and observer member of BUSINESSMED (Union of Mediterranean Confederations of Enterprises).

Through its representative offices based in Brussels, Paris, Berlin, Washington and Beijing, TÜSIAD, the counterpart of CONFINDUSTRIA (Confederation of Italian Industries), follows the economic and political developments in different parts of the world and promotes Turkey’s interests in these regions. As the voice of business in Turkey, TÜSIAD represents Turkey’s business world in G-20 activities as well.

Within TÜSIAD, I am the Vice President of TÜSIAD International, the “Strategic Business Development” unit of the Association. TÜSIAD International is committed to work for increasing Turkey’s bilateral trade and investment relations with foreign countries by building institutional ties with counterpart organizations such as Confindustria in Italy.

As TUSIAD, we also initiated TURKONFED (Turkish Enterprise and Business Confederation) and SEDEFED (Federation of Industrial Associations). TURKONFED represents mainly SMEs through 10 federations, 105 associations and more than 10.000 business people throughout Turkey. Apart from TURKONFED, SEDEFED has 19 sectoral associations representing again mainly SMEs in Turkey. TUSIAD is a full member of both institutions.

According to the figures of KOSGEB (Small and Medium Enterprises Development Organization in Turkey), almost 99 % of the companies operating in Turkey are SMEs like in many other countries. This striking figure clearly shows us the importance of cooperation between SMEs not only in national scale but also in regional and international scale. In the Mediterranean region, the private sector with all its active forces could and should be mobilized to reach a higher development level in the Mediterranean region through the cooperation of SMEs. All the Mediterranean business partners as well should be involved to have a better focus on investor potential and to encourage further investment in the region to promote foreign direct investment attraction.

At this point, we should mention the importance of clustering between the companies. As TUSIAD we support the clustering initiatives of the companies by giving our feedback and opinions to the government with regard to clustering process.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Improving the economical and political relations between the countries of the Mediterranean area and increasing the value of the industrial collaborations and partnerships as the major tool for the markets integration give the business associations a key role to play in this process.

We believe that the business associations' endeavors will also reinforce the cooperation and allow industrial co-operation to be a true engine for a better business environment in the region. Particularly, the bilateral business meetings to be held in the coming periods are of utmost importance for this aim.

By taking into account the limited time slot, I would like to finish my words here.

Thank you very much for your attention.