



“The Voice of Business in the Black Sea and Caspian”

**THE SPEECH DELIVERED BY
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UNION OF BLACK SEA AND CASPIAN CONFEDERATION
OF ENTERPRISES (UBCCE)**

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Sayın Bakanım,
Urfa ilimizin değerli yöneticileri,
Sayın Başkanlar,
Karadeniz ve Hazar Bölgesi ülkelerinden gelen yabancı konuklarımız ve
Değerli Basın Mensupları,

TÜSİAD ve Karadeniz ve Hazar Girişim ve İş Dünyası Konfederasyonları Uluslararası Birliği, UBCCE adına öncelikle hepinizi saygıyla selamlıyorum. Bugünkü Forumun uluslararası niteliğinden ötürü izninizle konuşmama İngilizce devam etmek istiyorum.

Good morning and welcome to this Second Business Forum of Union of Black Sea and Caspian Confederation of Enterprises, UBCCE, following our successfully held first forum organized in Baku, Azerbaijan last October.

First of all, let me express that it is a big pleasure for me to be in Şanlıurfa again following the Presidential Council of Turkish Enterprise Confederation, TURKONFED that was held earlier in April this year. It is always exciting for me to be in this future promising part of our country. With this occasion, I would also like to express my heartfelt gratitude and sincere thanks to Southeast Anatolia Regional Development Administration who are hosting us today and Federation of Eastern and Southeastern Industrialists and Business Association, DOGUNSIFED who has supported today's event together with Turkish Enterprise Confederation, TURKONFED.

Today, I am here among you not only as the President of Turkish Industrialists and Business Association, but also as the President of Union of Black Sea and Caspian Confederation of Enterprises, UBCCE, the first non governmental business organization of this emerging part of the globe, aiming to become overtime the voice of the business community of the Region.

Dear Participants,

As we all know, the Eurasian Region is becoming an emerging and vital part of the world in the changing global balances. The economic and political landscape of Eurasia is rapidly changing, to say the least. The countries of our Region are positioned very strategically at the crossroads of East and West and they present high potential of growth with their unsaturated and complementary markets especially in certain sectors like energy, transport, manufacturing, trade and services.

However at this stage, we, unfortunately, have to accept that although the countries of the Black Sea and Caspian Region have complementary economies and have the possibility to cooperate in various sectors, they do not perform very well in terms of economic relations among themselves. We do not look at our economic prospects with a perspective that goes beyond our borders. Trade and investment between the countries of our region account only for a small portion of our total exchanges.

Within this context, I strongly believe that the group formed by the countries of this region can have some weight to expose and ideas to express in the changing global equation, as they are in a privileged location at the crossroads of East and West. A platform like UBCCE, created by the private business and employers' organizations of the region can make very

significant and positive contributions in the sense of creating a very useful basis for developing trade and investment, thus an environment of peace and stability. The business community can help ease the transformation of our region and to secure its integration to the global economy. The past century showed to us all that businesses were the true dynamos of societal transformation. As our regions' businesses grow and mature the time will come when they will take the lead in the transformation of their countries.

Therefore, defining a target strategy dealing with the specific needs of the Black Sea and Caspian Region represents an excellent tool to help create a common language among the business organizations of the Region. This will enhance our cooperation and collaboration. The key word to attain this goal should definitely be "Partnership." All these efforts will surely increase the credibility and influence of the private sector in the Region.

With this occasion, I must mention that UBCCE's strategic goal is to place itself as a reliable and effective international union in the eyes of the European Union and the business community and become the counterpart organization of *BUSINESSEUROPE* in the Black Sea and Caspian Region.

The High level visit of UBCCE Presidents to Brussels last year which included meetings with *BUSINESSEUROPE* officials and European Union's Energy, Environment, Enlargement and Neighborhood Policy Commissioners was a good first step in the direction of increasing our visibility in Europe and as an international organization representing the private businesses of our Region.

I sincerely believe that today's Forum will be a useful occasion to discover the investment opportunities of this part of Turkey within the GAP, Southeast Anatolia Project which is classified as the 4th largest regional development plan applied in the world worth more than 30 billion USD. At a time when the world is going through probably one of the most troubled economic periods in its history since 1930, your presence here is a clear confirmation of the strong belief in Turkey and in this ambitious project. I invite you all especially to benefit from the Regions considerable potential in key sectors as irrigation, hydraulic energy, agriculture, infrastructure, forestry, education, tourism and health. I believe that you will be able to see that potential this afternoon during the exploratory sight visits to existing investments in the Region. I am quite confident that Southeast Anatolia is destined to have a bright future thanks to its many advantages but most important of all to its young and dynamic population.

Well, thank you very much for your attention and I hope that this Second Business Forum of UBCCE will give us the opportunity to discuss with all the valuable speakers and participants here, the opportunities that Southeast Anatolia is providing to investors. I believe that your time here will be as enjoyable as it is productive and inspirational for the future of our region and we will have many more occasions to meet each other and share our views on developing cooperation by organizing common projects and events.