

[Home](#) > ... > [Joint Statement on the U.S.-Greece Strategic Dialo...](#)

# Joint Statement on the U.S.-Greece Strategic Dialogue

**MEDIA NOTE**

**OFFICE OF THE SPOKESPERSON**

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The text of the following statement was released by the Governments of the United States of America and Greece on the occasion of the fifth Strategic Dialogue.

## *Begin Text*

The Strategic Dialogue serves to accelerate the deepening collaboration between the United States and Greece. Both countries utilized this fifth meeting of the Strategic Dialogue to underscore a growing bilateral and transatlantic relationship founded on shared democratic values and interests. On February 9, 2024, U.S. Secretary of State Antony J. Blinken and Greek Minister of Foreign Affairs George Gerapetritis held discussions that featured high-level interagency representation from both countries.

At this year's dialogue, Greece signed onto the Artemis Accords, becoming the 35th country to do so. Under the Artemis Accords principles, the United States and Greece affirm their shared commitment to a common vision for peaceful, sustainable, and transparent cooperation in space. Foreign Minister Gerapetritis signed the Accords on behalf of Greece. Greece and the United States reaffirm their will to continue and enhance cooperation in the following areas:

## **Regional Issues**

The United States and Greece renewed their commitment to promoting stability, peace, and prosperity in Europe and the region, particularly in the wake of the October 7 attack on Israel, violent actions by the Houthis that threaten shipping and navigational rights and freedoms in the Red Sea, and Russia's ongoing war against Ukraine. Both governments reaffirmed their shared values and commitment to democracy and the need to resolve disputes diplomatically, respect sovereignty, and abide by international law, including the law of the sea. The United States welcomed ongoing engagement between Greece and Türkiye, including the Fifth High-Level Cooperation Council on December 7, 2023, in Athens and the signing of a Greece-Türkiye Declaration on Friendly Relations and Good Neighborliness.

The United States and Greece intend to continue promoting regional integration, rule of law, good neighborly relations, stability and security in the Western Balkans and Eastern Mediterranean region, and cooperation through the 3+1 format (Greece, Cyprus, Israel, plus the United States). In light of regional developments, deepening cooperation of the 3+1 and linking it to other regional cooperation initiatives, will promote economic growth, sustainable development, and stability in the region. The United States expressed appreciation for Greece's humanitarian aid to Gaza; strong support of Israel; participation in Operation Prosperity Guardian, and commended Greece for its leading role in the new EU maritime operation EUNAVFOR Aspides. The two governments discussed the importance of support for Ukraine, emphasizing their unwavering commitment to and respect for the fundamental principles of sovereignty and territorial integrity of all countries. The two countries noted Greece's candidacy for the United Nations Security Council 2025/26 and planned on further enhancement of the already excellent cooperation in the UN.

## **Defense and Security**

Both countries reaffirmed the significance of expanding and deepening bilateral strategic defense cooperation. They reiterated their firm determination mutually to safeguard and protect the security, sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of their respective countries. They also stressed their commitment to enhancing security cooperation through Greece's military modernization efforts and looked forward to continued cooperation on the procurement of defense articles, such as the F35s and, as EDA grant transfers, C-130H aircraft and Littoral Combat Ships. The United States and Greece discussed possible mutual benefits of

co-designing and co-producing Constellation class frigates, including the economic benefits for Greece's shipyards and the cooperation between the defense innovation ecosystems of the two countries. The United States commended Greece for exceeding its Wales Summit pledge by spending over 3.5 percent of its GDP on defense with over 45 percent of this used for major equipment purchases and modernization. The United States noted the continuing success of the Mutual Defense Cooperation Agreement (MDCA), which increases NATO's ability to protect its southeastern flank and provides strategically important access, basing, and overflight for U.S. forces. In this context, they welcomed the infrastructure improvement projects in Souda, Larissa, Alexandroupoli, and other locations. Greece and the United States noted the growing number of U.S. forces working in solidarity with the Greek armed forces through combined multilateral training and exercises in support of the NATO Alliance. The United States and Greece underscored the strategic importance of the Port of Alexandroupoli as a vital logistics, energy, and supplies chain hub.

### **Humanitarian Challenges and Disaster Preparedness**

The United States and Greece discussed emergency planning and wildfire readiness, including Greek contributions to the EU Civil Protection Mechanism. The United States welcomed Hellenic Fire Corps involvement in a U.S. study tour and expressed interest in updating disaster response cooperation. Both underscored the need to find sustainable solutions to tackle migration and refugee flows affecting both Europe and the United States. The United States highlighted its Safe Mobility Initiative with the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) to establish access to services based on specific humanitarian and protection needs. Greece also emphasized the importance of offering more legal migration pathways, outlining relevant bilateral agreements. Greece underscored the challenges that frontline countries in the Mediterranean face when receiving large numbers of migrants and asylum seekers while ensuring effective protection of the EU external borders.

### **Energy and Environment**

Both countries stressed continued cooperation on energy security, emphasizing the shared goal of greater regional interconnectivity to diversify routes and types of energy, including renewable energy where Greece has emerged as a European leader. Collaborating on Greece's renewable energy infrastructure development is a shared priority to bolster Greece's future as a renewable energy exporter, including through the Green Aegean initiative. Furthermore, the United States

supports Greece's efforts to advance electricity interconnection projects in the Eastern Mediterranean, thus contributing to European energy security and the promotion of clean energy. The United States welcomes the accession of Greece to the Three Seas Initiative, as an important step towards enhancing the North-to-South Corridor, fostering regional energy cooperation. The United States commended Greece's leadership and preparation as host of the 9th Our Ocean Conference in April 2024 and reiterated the U.S. commitment to support of Greece's planning efforts and host priorities, including green shipping. The two countries emphasized the importance of integrating youth in climate change mitigation and resilience, including through a U.S. Embassy Athens-funded youth corps exchange program linking the California Conservation Corps with Greek non-governmental organization Ecogenia.

### **Law Enforcement and Counterterrorism**

The United States and Greece discussed ongoing law enforcement cooperation, with both committing to mutual legal assistance, extraditions, joint training, and subject matter exchanges to combat complex challenges, and reviewed successes in those areas. The United States commended Greece's role as the regional leader in strategically advancing aviation security through development of Passenger Information Units in several Western Balkan countries. The discussion further underscored Greece's successful efforts to counter new and emerging threats such as cybersecurity and threats to critical infrastructure, money laundering, and terrorism through issuance of new biometric IDs and passports, both countries affirmed their commitment to countering trafficking in persons, strengthening cybersecurity, advancing regional aviation security and information sharing within the Western Balkans, and cooperating through the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS.

### **Trade and Investment**

The United States and Greece celebrated a robust year of trade and investment, emphasizing the U.S. – EU Trade and Technology Council's progress. They discussed the U.S. International Development Finance Corporation's (DFC) \$125 million loan to ONEX Elefsis Shipyards, the first such agreement in Greece. Both nations acknowledged Greece's economic progress and ongoing efforts to institutionalize a foreign direct investment screening mechanism designed to protect Greek national security and as an entry way into Europe. Greece commended U.S.-supported workplace integration efforts, including a Women in Tech Network in Thessaloniki to support and empower women working and studying in technology fields, conduct recruitment and outreach,

and advocate for policy change at the local and national levels. The United States congratulated Greece on its record-breaking number of tourists, especially from the United States, in 2023 and recognized the importance of this key sector of the economy for continued economic growth and employment. Greece underlined the importance of ensuring high levels of air connectivity to maintain and enhance bilateral tourism flows.

## **People-to-People Ties**

The United States and Greece reaffirmed the deep and enduring ties between the people of both nations and our shared commitment to democracy, innovation and expanding educational opportunities for all people, regardless of background or ability. Both recognized the important role of education and culture as drivers of economic growth and underscored the need for upholding academic openness and transparency in international higher education and research cooperation. The United States and Greece reaffirmed their commitment to strengthen their cooperation in the field of education, including by offering more opportunities for exchange of American and Greek students. The two countries re-affirmed their commitment to promoting diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility in educational and cultural collaboration and highlighted opportunities to share best practices in inclusive education, including special needs education, universal design for learning and teaching, and early intervention. The United States and Greece welcomed the enhanced bilateral cooperation in returning to Greece illegally obtained artifacts. Both countries agreed to examine ways of further raising awareness against antisemitism and racism. They reaffirmed their commitment to Holocaust education, to include the establishment of a Holocaust Museum and Memorial Park in Thessaloniki, and to their shared oversight of the Arolsen Archives on Nazi Persecutions as partners on the International Commission, which Greece will chair in 2024. The United States and Greece discussed opportunities for partnering to protect cultural heritage from the effects of climate change. The United States welcomed Prime Minister Mitsotakis's pledges to legislate equality in marriage and continuing to implement the National Action Plan to expand protections for LGBTQI+ persons in Greece.

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[Strategic Dialogue](#)

[Trade and Investment](#)

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