**SAYIN BAKANIMIZIN 9 MAYIS AVRUPA GÜNÜ VESİLESİYLE YAYINLADIĞI MESAJIN İNGİLİZCE TERCÜMESİ**

It is a significant success to see today the architecture of peace, stability, law and democracy built on a continent that witnessed the most violent wars and the greatest sufferings in the history of mankind. Having united voluntarily, peoples of Europe manifested their will to live together and to share a common fate and thus, ideals of Europeans, such as Schuman, Adenauer, de Gaspari and Monnet have been materialised. In this respect, the vision that constitutes today’s Europe is not only an economic one, but predominantly a political one. Strategic, political, economic and social interests of Turkey and the European Union complement and reinforce each other in such a vision.

Our country’s resolve to accede to the European Union (EU) continues to be the main priority of the Turkish foreign policy. Despite certain obstacles we encounter from time to time, our faith and will for the accession to the Union are stronger than ever. Because our nation has always upheld universal values such as democracy, human rights and the rule of law.

Accession to the EU is a rational choice by the Turkish people. Our people’s acceptance of another option is not possible on this road that we have embarked with full membership goal.

The EU enlargement is essentially a natural component of the EU integration and an inevitable consequence of global developments. In this respect, the accession of Turkey to the EU is a part of this process and a phase of our country’s modernisation.

The progress achieved by Turkey in many fields, especially in terms of economic development, in recent years clearly manifests the added value that Turkey can bring into the European Union. The fact that we have become today a country that attracts migration from Europe is one of the examples of the remarkable change in Turkey**.** We believe that the Union will get stronger with the accession of Turkey.

We have assumed since 10 November 2010 the Presidency of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe to which we are a founding member. Great efforts have been made to reinforce the political role and visibility of the Council of Europe and in this framework, to highlight its relative superiority in the area of setting standards and monitoring them efficiently. While turning over the Presidency to Ukraine during the Council of Ministers Meeting on 11 May 2011 in İstanbul, we believe that we have rendered the Council of Europe more visibility and strengthened the political role it assumes in Europe.

Turkey’s accession to the EU is a dimension of the synthesis that contains the response to the current global problems as well as all the opportunities that we face.

A European Union that embraces Turkey will enlarge not only geographically, but also in terms of vision. Also it will grasp the opportunity to use most efficiently its potential to become a global power.

Today, our societies pass through a process ruled by different paradigms. International and individual relationships that are reshaped with the rapid development of technology and communication brings along new challenges. This change brings Turkey and the EU to a meeting point. I am hoping that our partners in the EU will make best use of this opportunity.

I believe that the EU can get stronger not by encircling itself into cultural boundaries, but to the extent that it can transform the individual richness of each country into the common richness of the Union. It is the only way to achieve the ideal of “Unity in Diversity”.

On this occasion, I would like to congratulate the May 9, Europe Day of all Europeans, including our citizens.