**SAYIN CUMHURBAŞKANIMIZIN 9 MAYIS AVRUPA GÜNÜ VESİLESİYLE YAYINLADIĞI MESAJIN İNGİLİZCE ÇEVİRİSİ**

“May 9, Europe Day” is the anniversary of the publication of the declaration of the then French Foreign Minister Robert Schuman in 1950 which contained a proposal for a new organization for Europe.

Since the official recognition of Turkey’s candidacy status to the EU in 1999, we have been celebrating May 9, which marks the day when the foundations of peace, prosperity and stability were laid in Europe to which Turkey belongs inseparably in political, economic, social and cultural terms.

European Union, which guarantees fundamental values such as peace and solidarity along with economic and social development, constitutes the most advanced and successful example of integration in the world history.

Turkey and the European Union share the common universal values such as democracy, the rule of law, human rights and freedoms, gender equality and respect for justice and differences.

The said common values and ideals transform our full membership to the EU vision into a strategic choice. This is not only the choice of our immediate generation, but a consequence of the orientation of our nation for centuries. It is only natural that Turkey, which has always been present in Europe’s past, desires to sustain this place in its future. In other words, Turkey is unequivocally a part of the EU integration process in terms of its historical legacy and future vision.

In the context of our reform process that has been intensified since the recognition of our candidacy status to the EU, more and more progress is being achieved in line with the target to provide our citizens with the highest standards in all aspects of life. Turkey is resolved to become a country that totally adopts the norms and institutions of a modern democracy and puts them effectively into practice.

On the occasion of “May 9, Europe Day”, I would like to strongly emphasize that the decisive continuation of the reforms that Turkey is implementing in the EU membership process provides benefit for our citizens above all. Despite conjunctural difficulties and artificial obstacles that we face, Turkey moves forward with strong and resolved steps on this long and challenging road.

Concerns of certain misled and prejudiced circles that our membership will damage the EU’s internal harmony are impertinent. Turkey wants to accede to an EU, whose internal solidarity, cooperation and integration is at its peak.

Turkey has always played a decisive role in the history and construction of Europe. The recent developments that have unfolded at the shores of the Mediterranean and started to influence our region have once again manifested that Turkey’s accession to the EU is a strategic necessity.

Our rightful expectation from our partners in the EU is to fulfill their responsibilities in this process constructively on the basis of “pacta sund servanda” principle.

I am convinced that at the end of this process, Turkey will assume the position that it deserves within the EU and it will strengthen the prosperity, stability and global influence of the Union. This is also what the natural course of history and our common responsibility towards the future generations dictate.

With this understanding, I would like to sincerely celebrate the May 9, Europe Day of all Europeans including our citizens.