



3 September 2020

Mr Bill Papastergiadis OAM
President, the Greek Orthodox Community of Melbourne and Victoria
Level 3, 168 Lonsdale Street
Melbourne VIC 3000

Dear Mr Papastergiadis

Thank you for your letter of 21 August 2020 regarding Turkey's exploration activities in the Eastern Mediterranean. As the matters raised in your letter relate to the responsibilities of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, I am replying on behalf of the Prime Minister.

The Government is aware of tensions between Turkey and Greece, including over Turkey's exploration activities in the Eastern Mediterranean. We share the international community's concern about the potential for the escalation of the situation and support a peaceful resolution, through dialogue and negotiation, in accordance with international law, including the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. Australia regularly reaffirms with Turkish counterparts the importance we attach to the rule of law.

The Government supports the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Cyprus and recognises the Republic as the only legitimate authority on the island. Australia does not recognise the 'Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus'.

Australia and Greece have a warm and enduring relationship built on strong people-to-people links and bonds forged in war. Australians of Greek descent have made a special contribution to developing and enriching contemporary Australia, across many areas of Australian society, including politics, sports, the arts, food and fashion.

Thank you for bringing your community's views on this matter to the attention of the Government.

Yours sincerely

Dougal McInnes
Assistant Secretary
EU Political and Strategy Branch