

**Joint Declaration of the Seventh Meeting of the Ankara Forum
Ankara, 13 November 2007**

1. Ankara Forum for Economic Cooperation between Palestine, Turkey and Israel has held its seventh meeting in Ankara on November 13, 2007. Forum participants were private sector representatives from the Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey, the Federation of the Israeli Economic Organizations and the Federation of Palestinian Chambers of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture.
2. The Forum members have expressed their content for the support of the President of the Republic of Turkey, Mr. Abdullah Gül, President of the Palestinian National Authority, Mr. Mahmud Abbas and the President of the State of Israel Mr. Simon Peres. The three presidents kindly joined the Ankara Forum members in this meeting and declared their support for the successful continuation of the Forum activities.
3. The Forum Members have discussed the next steps for moving ahead with the industrial estate project in the West Bank and the ways in which the presidents can support and assist the Forum activities in the short and medium term. The Forum members have identified the following items as crucial for moving forward rapidly and requested the support of the three presidents.
 - a. **Ankara Forum has decided to establish its first West Bank industrial estate project in Tarqumia on the land shown by the Palestinian Authorities.**
 - b. **Signing of the concession agreement and granting developer status to the TOBB-BIS Co.** Upon completion of the site selection process, TOBB-BIS will finish the feasibility assessment and apply to the Palestinian Authority for a license for establishing operations as an industrial estate/free zone developer and operator. Parallel to this, the concession agreement will delineate the framework in which the TOBB-BIS Co. will develop and manage industrial estate, and also set the institutional/regulatory framework in which the companies will operate; which will require granting a “one-stop-shop status” to the developer company.
 - c. **Signing a security and trade facilitation protocol with the Government of Israel.** A written protocol will be crucial for ensuring effective movement and access for the industrial estate investors and also raise the attractiveness of the project for potential investors. The protocol shall be enforced with establishing the modus operandi, rules and operations for trilateral security cooperation and customs regulations.

- d. **Utilities provision and the use of Israeli infrastructure.** One of the key components of the project entails the building of off-site infrastructure. Electricity and water services are planned to be procured from the Israeli side on subsidized rates upon negotiations with the relevant agencies.
 - e. **Facilitating the investment promotion activities.** TOBB-BIS company aims to attract investors from Turkey to invest in the Palestinian territories. Turkish investors have recently shown great interest to investment opportunities in Turkey's greater region because of better positioning themselves in global competition. Turkish investors have also shown great level interest in investing in the Palestinian territories and consider such investments as a good vehicle to reach the US and Arab markets and also as part of their corporate social responsibility programs. In the first phases of the project, investments of Turkish and Palestinian exporters can contribute to reaching the critical mass of investors, which is required to show the concept and the project can be operational and successful. After reaching the critical mass, the project will aim at attracting investors from other countries.
4. The Forum members thanked the Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey for hosting the seventh Forum meeting at the TOBB Headquarters, TOBB University and TEPAV building, and for their hospitality.