



**CANADIAN HELLENIC CONGRESS**  
**ΕΛΛΗΝΟΚΑΝΑΔΙΚΟ ΚΟΓΚΡΕΣΟ**  
**CONGRÈS HELLÉNIQUE CANADIEN**

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June 26, 2020

***Via electronic mail:***

***[justin.trudeau@parl.gc.ca](mailto:justin.trudeau@parl.gc.ca); [pm@pm.gc.ca](mailto:pm@pm.gc.ca)***

The Right Honourable Justin Trudeau, P.C., M.P.  
Prime Minister of Canada  
Langevin Block  
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A2

**Subject: The sale of military drone optics by Canada to Turkey despite arms embargo**

Dear Prime Minister,

We are writing to you on behalf of the Canadian Hellenic Congress about a serious concern that our community has regarding a recent decision taken by the Canadian government. Specifically, we are extremely disappointed and indeed disturbed to hear that your government has exempted the Turkish government from the arms embargo and has approved the sale of sophisticated drone optics to it. Your decision is contrary to Canada's philosophy of peace and respected history of peacekeeping. As you are well aware, Turkey regularly deploys drones in its conflicts with Syria and Libya. Canada should not be playing a role in these actions.

Prime Minister, drones are offensive weapons and are used for the destruction of property and human lives. As offensive weapons, they inevitably – and dramatically – undermine stability in the region. Is your government now in the business of providing military assistance and support to Turkey, as it aggressively carries out imperialistic plans through Canadian technology that is capable of inflicting destruction and death?

This concern is based on the reality that Turkey has a long history of aggression against not only its "enemies" but its allies as well. This well-documented aggression includes constant violations to Greece's (a NATO ally) sovereignty over the Aegean Sea. Turkey is the only country that violates the sovereignty of an ally, and Canada – a fellow member of NATO – remains silent.

Respectfully, you are certainly aware that when the United States attempted to bypass Canadian sovereignty in the far north, your father, the late Prime Minister Pierre Elliot Trudeau, took a principled stand and ensured Canada's sovereignty was protected. This decision was based on Canadian values and a strong belief in the rule of law. We feel compelled to ask; when do you plan to stand up for these same Canadian values and avoid complacency for the sake of financial benefit?

Furthermore, Prime Minister, the Turkish state has – once again – a well-documented history of serious human rights violations against its own people. These violations against Turkey's Kurdish community and others, display a total disregard for international law, including every nation's UNESCO obligations. Again sir, your government and you – personally – remain silent. Other examples of the Turkish state's discriminatory and indeed aggressive behaviour is the religious and  
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***The Canadian Hellenic Congress is a national democratic communal institution that represents, advances, advocates and promotes the interests and concerns of Canadians of Hellenic descent and Hellenism in general. The Congress is the national voice of Hellenes and their communities and/or organizations across Canada.***



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cultural desecration of Hagia Sophia, a major heritage site, yet we have heard nothing regarding this serious concern from the Canadian government nor have we seen a serious policy stance regarding Turkey's belligerence towards Canada's European allies, such as France.

In essence, these and other concerns are the reason that our organisation feels compelled to communicate with you at this time. We urge you and your government to recognise the Turkish state's policy of aggression and expansionism in the Middle East and the Mediterranean Sea. Finally, as Canadians, we must not, in any way, shape or form, assist Turkey by providing military weapons or technology. We strongly ask that the embargo be respected and that the sale of Canadian drone optics to Turkey be cancelled.

Prime Minister, we trust that you will do the right thing and we look forward to hearing from you on this matter.

Sincerely,

Dr. Theodore Halatsis  
President

Dr. Costas Pappas  
V-P, Administration and Secretary

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