

**Statement by H.E. Mr. Ersin Tatar,
President of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus**

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my honor to address the 17th General Assembly of the Economic and Trade Unions. I extend warm greetings and express my appreciation to the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, H.E. Mr. Ilham Aliyev, and to the President of the Economic and Trade Unions, Mr. Asaf Majid Kandili, for their leadership and hospitality.

As the region celebrates the liberation of Karabakh, I proudly reaffirm: *Karabakh is Azerbaijan, and Azerbaijan is Karabakh*. Our cooperation with the Turkish-Azerbaijani Economic and Trade Unions remains fully aligned with broader European economic frameworks.

Since 1992, we have been actively involved in economic and trade dialogues and have hosted many such engagements in Turkey. Notably, we hosted the European Economic and Trade Specialists Meeting last November, and we are pleased to invite you all to the upcoming Tour Operators Meeting this autumn in the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC).

The TRNC places strong emphasis on sustainable development. Located strategically in the Mediterranean, Ercan Airport accommodates over 10 million passengers annually, underlining our logistics potential. We also boast four universities ranked among the top 1,000 globally, and maintain 120 academic collaborations with institutions in four developed nations. Higher education is a key priority.

Thanks to the strong support of President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, the TRNC has achieved significant development milestones, including the delivery of water from Turkey. This has enabled us to focus on sustainable agriculture and digital transformation in farming. Additionally, we are prioritizing advancements in the information and communication technology (ICT) sector.

Between May 1st and 4th, we hosted the 11th Teknofest, attracting over 21,000 attendees—further demonstrating our commitment to innovation and regional development.

Since the Peace Operation of July 20th, we have strived to live peacefully. The outdated federation model no longer reflects our reality; we call on the international community to acknowledge this and support the restoration of our legitimate rights and status.

In conclusion, we reaffirm our commitment to regional cooperation, sustainable development, and the long-term advancement of the TRNC.

Thank you once again to President Aliyev and to all delegates for your continued partnership.