

**From Conversation with President of Turkey Turgut Ozal
Moscow, 25 August 1990**

Gorbachev. I would like to express my satisfaction that there is political interest in developing economic ties on the part of our neighbor—the government of Turkey. I would also like to note with satisfaction the responsible and wise policy of the government of our neighbor Turkey in connection with certain stormy events in our Transcaucasus. I think that we have favorable opportunities so that, in the spirit that has characterized the development of our relations in recent years, we can look at their further development with optimism. [...]

Ozal. I would like to propose one idea for your consideration. It is about creating a zone of economic cooperation in the Black Sea region. I believe that this idea will be of interest both for some of your republics and for such countries as Bulgaria, Romania and, of course, Turkey. [...]

Gorbachev. I welcome your idea, as it meets our interests, as well as the interests of the countries that you spoke about. It also meets our political and economic interests.

In this situation, in this context, I am concerned about what is happening now in the Persian Gulf region. The dangerous and adventurous policies being pursued there could have very dire consequences for all of us.

Ozal. Unfortunately, the wrong position adopted by Iraq has led to the emergence of a major problem for the entire world. I think that on this matter our opinion is in line with yours; Turkey, for its part, is fulfilling the decisions made by the UN Security Council, especially with regard to sanctions. As a result, we are suffering great losses, but we are doing so in the hope that a wise solution to this problem will still be found. In this regard, I have one proposal.

Gorbachev. I think that the arguments they put forward to justify their actions are unacceptable to anyone; for example, they say that Kuwait is their historical land. There is no evidence of this, and this thesis should be rejected. Therefore, all the requirements contained in the first resolutions of the Security Council must be carried out, and above all the restoration of Kuwait's independence and sovereignty.

With regard to our recommendations and views, which we regularly convey to the Americans – and we call each other, exchange messages – we are sticking to this position: we confirm all the fundamental requirements placed upon the Iraqi regime, and at the same time are advising our American partners not to succumb to any provocations and not to be involved in any kind of military actions that may have dire consequences. I suppose this is the right formula. [...]

Ozal. I hope, President Gorbachev, that at this critical hour it is still possible to solve this problem without military conflict. Turkey, for its part, is doing everything to fully implement the embargo and prevent the outbreak of war [...]

Gorbachev. I think that we really should continue the analysis and search for ways leading to a peaceful settlement of this enormous crisis, since any other way – and we are convinced of this – is certainly fraught with consequences that are difficult to predict at present.

I am pleased, Mr. President, that you and I have a mutual understanding regarding the need to find ways to solve this problem. Once again, I welcome your initiative.

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Translated by Sarah Dunn for the National Security Archive