

**PRESS CENTER  
OFFICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER  
OF THE REPUBLIC OF TURKEY**

**- Unofficial Translation -**

**STATEMENT ON THE APPOINTMENT OF  
H.E. MR. JORGE SAMPAIO, FORMER PRESIDENT OF PORTUGAL,  
AS THE HIGH REPRESENTATIVE OF THE ALLIANCE OF CIVILIZATIONS  
Ankara, 26 April 2007**

The work of the Alliance of Civilizations initiative, which is co-sponsored by the Prime Minister of Turkey, H.E. Mr. Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and the Prime Minister of Spain, H.E. Mr. Jose Luis Rodriguez Zapatero, and is advanced under the auspices of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, has undergone considerable progress since its official launch in 2005.

The High-Level Group of the Alliance of Civilizations, comprised of 20 world-renowned individuals, prepared a report after completing its anticipated work that was co-chaired by the Minister of State of Turkey H.E. Prof. Mehmet Aydın and former Director-General UNESCO H.E. Prof. Federico Mayor. The report includes tangible proposals for the establishment of a network of relations among distinct civilizations through dialogue which would be based on mutual respect, understanding and tolerance. As it will be recalled, the report was presented to H.E. Mr. Kofi Annan, the Secretary-General of the UN then, through a ceremony held on 13 November 2006 in Istanbul, following the last meeting of the High-Level Group.

Substantial progress has also been made in the process initiated at the beginning of 2007, under the leadership of H.E. Mr. Ban Ki-moon, the new Secretary-General of the UN.

Additionally, it has been decided that a world-renowned personality should assume the role of the High Representative of the UNSG in order to ensure the longevity of the initiative for success, as well as to provide leadership in the implementation phase which requires the broad support of the international community.

The Secretary-General of UN H.E. Mr. Ban Ki-moon has decided to appoint the former President of Portugal, H.E. Mr. Jorge Sampaio, after a diligent consideration of numerous candidates. H.E. Mr. Sampaio's appointment was supported by both Turkey and Spain, and it has been warmly welcomed.

H.E. Mr. Sampaio was elected to parliament in 1978. He became a member of the European Human Rights Commission, and Mayor of Lisbon in the ensuing period. He was then elected as the President of Portugal for two consecutive terms, serving a total of ten years until March 2006. Subsequently, he was appointed as the Special Envoy of the UNSG for the Global Plan to Stop Tuberculosis.

With his valuable knowledge and experience in the international domain, we strongly believe that H.E. Mr. Sampaio would fulfill his new mission in the best possible way. Turkey is ready to give him full support in this undertaking.