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Greek, Turkish FMs meet in Athens in ‘upbeat atmosphere’; bilateral recognition of ‘vax certificates’ by either country



A meeting between Greek Foreign Minister Nikos Dendias and his visiting Turkish counterpart, Mevlut Cavusoglu, concluded in Athens earlier today. The one-on-one and expanded meetings, as well as the subsequent press statements, were held in a very positive setting, although no press questions were fielded by either minister.

The two newsworthy items from the Dendias-Cavusoglu meetings were that either country will recognize Covid-19 vaccination certificates issued by the other for travel of Greek citizens to Turkey, and vice versa.

Additionally, Greek Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis will meet with Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan next month on the sidelines of a NATO summit.

On Monday morning, Cavusoglu was received by Mitsotakis at the Maximos

Mansion government house in central Athens. Greek government sources cited a positive atmosphere at the talks, with a “…mutual desire to promote a positive agenda being ascertained”.

Nevertheless, as mostly expected, on Sunday afternoon a Greek foreign ministry spokesman issued a swift and stern response to provocative comments by Cavusoglu, during the Turkish minister’s private visit to a city in the Thrace province earlier on that day.

The Greek foreign ministry spokesman reminded that Athens fully respects its obligations as arising from the 1923 Lausanne Treaty, which refers clearly and explicitly to a Muslim minority in Thrace.
Cavusoglu on at least three occasions referred to a so-called “Turkish minority” in the Greek border province.

The Greek foreign ministry spokesman noted that the Muslim minority in Thrace numbers some 120,000 Greek citizens and indicated that constant efforts by official Turkey to distort this reality, and its persistent claims of bias against them are without any merit and wholly rejected.

