

Alberto Turkstra, Director of Projects at Diplomatic World magazine, extends his congratulations on Turkmenistan's State Flag Day and Constitution Day

I would like to sincerely congratulate the government and the people of Turkmenistan on the occasion of the State Flag Day and Constitution Day, May 18th.

For me, flags are an essential part of the identity of a nation. I've always looked with great interest at the meaning and symbolism behind flags. And here, the Turkmen flag, which I'm wearing today, represents, first of all, unity in diversity. It represents the five provinces, the five tribes, all united under one nation.

Also, a very interesting element of this flag is the olive branch that you see at the bottom — the same symbol you also find on the flag of the United Nations. And this is a reflection of Turkmenistan's commitment to peace, which is so badly needed these days, and which is reflected in the many initiatives that Turkmenistan has taken over the years, culminating in this year — the International Year of Peace and Trust.

Let me also congratulate the government and the people of Turkmenistan on the occasion of Constitution Day. This is the essential document that binds the country together, that forms the basis of domestic and foreign policy, and that puts human dignity at the center of the legal framework and all other policies that emanate from it.

Also, the later incorporation of neutrality into the Constitution forms the basis of Turkmen foreign policy, and for 30 years now, it has shaped the country's engagement with the world. This principle was adopted unanimously by the United Nations General Assembly, and it makes Turkmenistan a respected player, a respected mediator on the international scene.

And this will also culminate this year in the big conference on December 12th, where we will further discuss these issues that form the foundation of Turkmenistan.

**Thank you very much.**