



**PRESS RELEASE**

**20 December 2016**

**Historical day for Turkish public works**

## **EURASIA TUNNEL, A SIGNIFICANT MILESTONE IN TUNNELLING, INAUGURATED**

**The Eurasia Tunnel connecting the Asian and European continents via a double-decked tunnel underneath the seabed for the first time, completed 8 months before the projected finish date, through the efforts of 700 engineers and more than 12,000 employees for over 14 million man hours, was opened on December 20, 2016 during an inaugural ceremony that included President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and Prime Minister Binali Yıldırım. This project is milestone in “tunnel construction” with its location, technical advantages and numerous other features that reduces the journey between the two continents to 5 minutes. Speaking at the ceremony, President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan said, “With the Eurasia Tunnel, uninterrupted land transport between the two sides of Istanbul has become possible independently from the climate conditions outside”. The Tunnel was officially opened after the ribbon cutting following the speech of President Erdoğan. Eurasia Tunnel will be opened to traffic starting from 07:00 on Thursday, December 22<sup>nd</sup>.**

The ceremony, held at the Kumkapı tunnel entrance on the European side, was attended by President Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, Prime Minister Binali Yıldırım, Transport Maritime and Communications Minister Ahmet Arslan, South Korean Ambassador Yun-Soo Cho, Istanbul Governor Vasip Şahin, Istanbul Metropolitan Mayor Kadir Topbaş, Yapı Merkezi Holding Chairman Ersin Arioğlu, SK E&C CEO Yong Chul Choi, ATAŞ Chairman Başar Arioğlu, ATAS CEO Seok Jae Seo and other guests.

In his speech at the opening ceremony, President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan underlined that the Eurasia Tunnel was completed with about four years of work and pioneered in many aspects. President Erdoğan continued as follows:

“100,000 vehicles per day will be using the Tunnel comfortably without being affected from the wheatear conditions outside. We will from now on be ignoring all those news articles such as “the ferries stop operation due to the storm”, “the traffic stops on the bridge due to fog”, etc. Thanks to the Eurasia Tunnel, uninterrupted land transport between the two sides of Istanbul has become possible independently from the climate conditions outside.”

**The tolls to be collected until January 1<sup>st</sup> will be donated to the families of the martyrs**

The tolls to be collected until 1 January to be donated to families of the martyrs

President Erdoğan who announced the toll of the Eurasia Tunnel as 15 TL adding that the tolls to be collected until January 1<sup>st</sup> will be donated to the Ministry of Family and Social Policy for being given to the families of the martyrs."



### **“The public has not paid a single penny for all this work”**

President Erdoğan underlined that no public resources were devoted to the construction of the Eurasia Tunnel, adding that “The public has not paid a single penny for all this work. The contractor for the construction and operation of the Tunnel provided the financing of the project partly as equity and partly as loans. The Tunnel will earn the government 180 million TL per annum as the public share in the project and in taxes for about 25 years, at the end of which the operation of the tunnel will be returned to the government completely”. Erdoğan continued as follows:

“The journey between Kazlıçeşme and Göztepe will fall to 15 minutes thanks to the tunnel between Harem and Çatladıkapı and the approach roads that have been improved under the project. I leave it to your discretion the savings in time and fuel thanks to the project. The Tunnel will be in service between 07:00 and 21:00 until the end of January and will start operations on a 7/24 basis as of 30 January god willing following the completion of the required system arrangements and integration of its operation with the other transportation networks.”

### **Eurasia Tunnel Museum also completed**

The museum displays the dizzying construction process of this magnificent work, the product of technology, human power and creativity, using the most advanced digital mapping techniques. The Eurasia Tunnel Museum will captivate visitors with its interactive touch screens, virtual-reality glasses and interactive touch surfaces. In an immersive "surround vision" projection environment, the process is digitally narrated.

The **documentary** about the breathtaking story of the Eurasia Tunnel, with its many firsts and successes, is expected to be broadcast in 2017.

### **FIRSTS AND RECORDS**

#### **Concrete for 18 stadiums, iron for 10 Eiffel towers**

- The seismic rings mounted for increasing earthquake resistance were “the first in the world” to be implemented at a depth of 106 meters and with a diameter of 13.7 meters.
- The construction materials would fill 788 Olympic pools. The amount of concrete used would be enough to build 18 stadiums and the amount of iron would build 10 Eiffel Towers. 80,000 cubic meters of segments were produced. More than 60 experiments were performed on the materials.
- Firefighting motorcycles as well as special towing, fire and patrol vehicles guarantee any incidents in the tunnel will be reached within minutes.
- During construction, work safety rules were fully implemented and the total process of 14 million hours was completed without any loss of life.



### **Mega Project has the feel of Mimar Sinan**

- The outer surface applications, inspired by motifs from Mimar Sinan's work such as 'gülbezek' and 'çarkifelek', were used in the architectural and lighting designs, the approach arches and portals of the Tunnel, illustrate the engineering success inherent in the work. The Tunnel presents a respectful approach to the history, 'green' concept, uninterrupted lighting and smart systems, raising the aesthetics and functionality to the highest levels.

### **Major contribution to the Turkish economy**

- The project, which was created with a workforce of 95% Turkish employees, provides employment for 1800 people per day and will provide a total of 160 million TL (38 million liters) of fuel savings annually. This will decrease emissions from cars by 82,000 tons per year.
- The reduction in travel times, thanks to the additional capacity the Tunnel will create in crossing the Bosphorus, will save about 52 million hours per year.
- The project will create a public revenue of about 180 million TL per year, including taxes, thanks to the sharing of the tolls to be collected.

### **World's most prestigious awards**

- Engineering News Record (ENR) 'The Best Global Tunnel Project of 2016'
- European Bank of Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) 'Best Environmental and Social Application Award 2015'
- The International Tunneling and Underground Space Association (ITA) 'ITA Major Project of the Year - 2015'

### **About ATAŞ ([www.avrasyatuneli.com](http://www.avrasyatuneli.com))**

Avrasya Tüneli İşletme İnşaat ve Yatırım A.Ş. (ATAŞ) was founded in 2009 by Yapı Merkezi (leader) of Turkey and SKE&C of South Korean in order to build the Bosphorus Road Tube Passage Project. Yapı Merkezi is among the leading construction companies of Turkey and the world, implementing universally recognized projects based on its 50 years of experience and knowledge in large-scale contracting works. SK E&C is the construction and engineering branch of SK Group, the third largest business group of South Korea. Yapı Merkezi and SK E&C are global companies that have implemented very successful infrastructure and transportation projects in diverse regions of the world.

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