

**Intervention of the Minister of Foreign Affairs Nikos Dendias
at the virtual Launch of the Declaration Against Arbitrary
Detention in State-to-State Relations
(15.02.2021)**

«Excellencies,

It is my great pleasure to participate in the launch of the Declaration Against the Use of Arbitrary Detention in State-to-State Relations.

I would like to congratulate Canada for hosting the event.

Also, for taking the initiative to address such an important issue and coordinate this endeavor.

It is, unfortunately, a widely acknowledged truth that the arbitrary arrest or detention of foreign nationals has been used by states, as a means of coercive diplomacy.

And this, in order to compel action or to exercise leverage over a foreign government.

Undoubtedly, such abusive state practices are contrary to international law.

They pose an obstacle to the development of friendly relations and cooperation among states.

Moreover, they undermine, globally, the free movement of people.

At the same time, arbitrary detention threatens human security and dignity.

It constitutes a serious violation of human rights and fundamental freedoms of foreign nationals detained.

This includes their right to fair trial and consular protection.

Greece, a longstanding supporter of international law and the principles of the United Nations Charter, has already endorsed the Declaration Against the Use of Arbitrary Detention in State-to-State Relations.

In this respect, we welcome its growing support by States.

This initiative can serve as fertile ground for enhancing collective action:

- to prevent and combat abusive state practices,
- as well as to provide for adequate and timely protection to victims.

In this vein, Greece welcomes the launch of the Declaration.

Let me reassure you that we stand ready to join hands with likeminded partners for its implementation, in accordance with International Law.

Thank you very much for your attention. »