

To the Editor:

On June 10, 2020, *Bloomberg* published an opinion piece, “Turkey’s Veto in the Eastern Mediterranean Isn’t Enough,” which mischaracterizes Turkey’s role in the Eastern Mediterranean region. The Turkish “veto power” to protect national interests in the region is none more than hostile “gunboat diplomacy.”

On both fronts referenced in the piece, diplomatic and off-shore, Turkish action has been unhelpful and provocative. Turkey has continuously disregarded international law and has further exacerbated tensions with its neighbors. The Turkey-Libya Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) highlights this trend as there is no legality in its claims to deprive Greek islands of their continental shelves. Along with the MoU, Turkish offshore actions have played a destabilizing role in the region. Turkey has frequently violated sovereign Greek territorial waters, proceeded with illegal drilling in the Exclusive Economic Zone of the Republic of Cyprus, and has pledged to conduct drilling operations in the Greek continental shelf.

As a result of these provocations, Turkey cannot be rewarded by the European Union, nor can it nefariously use the pain and suffering of migrants to blackmail its way into an agreement. The heightened tensions of the region are not the solution to Turkey’s long-stalled accession prospect, but rather the cause of it. Contrary to the claim that Brussels must reform to be viewed by Ankara as credible, it is Ankara that must reform to be viewed as credible by Brussels.

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