

PERCEPTIONS

JOURNAL OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

Globalization, Modernity and Democracy:
Turkish Foreign Policy 2009 and Beyond

E. Fuat KEYMAN

Economic Diplomacy for
Competitiveness: Globalization and
Turkey's New Foreign Policy

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Turkish Foreign Policy Towards
Afghanistan: 2009-2010

Sevinç ALKAN ÖZCAN



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Editorial

Perceptions has a new editorial board and with this new issue has changed its design as part of our tireless efforts to bring high-quality analyses to our readers' attention. The new editorial board consists of prominent academics specializing in Turkish foreign policy and different fields of international relations. In our future issues, the members of the editorial board will take an active part in the restructuring of the journal by soliciting first-rate research papers, preparing special issues, and assisting in the peer-review process. I would like to take this opportunity to extend our gratitude to the former board members for helping put together this journal; we will certainly continue to benefit from their knowledge and experience.

The new design and board of *Perceptions* is part of the overall reorganization of the Center for Strategic Research (SAM). *Perceptions* will continue to serve as the flagship publication of the SAM, which is poised to emerge as a leading research center. The coverage of the journal will be widened to reflect the emerging regions and issues of interests to the dynamic agenda of Turkey's new foreign policy. With its proactive and multidimensional foreign policy, Turkey has been the center of attraction in academic studies as well as in policy circles. In addition, Turkey's

scholarly community and policymakers have broadened their research interests as they are now studying myriad issues in international relations, regional studies and foreign policy analysis. *Perceptions* aims to make a double-edged contribution by providing a platform for the dissemination of high-quality articles examining the diverse universe of Turkish foreign policy practices in particular, and international relations studies in general.

Perceptions has been published as a semi-annual journal in recent years. Starting from 2011, it will be published three times annually. Another novelty in *Perceptions* is the editorial introduction, which will briefly outline the contents of the current issue and inform about the themes to be dealt with in the forthcoming issues. This particular special issue, consisting of six articles, examines various cases and issues from Turkish foreign policy. The articles are updated and revised from their earlier versions published in Turkish in *SETA Foreign Policy Yearbook 2009*. We would like to thank the SETA Foundation for their permission to publish the extended versions of these articles. This issue owes much to the guest editor Şaban Kardaş and managing editor Engin Karaca, as their valuable help was crucial in putting this collection together.

In his contribution to the current issue, Fuat Keyman focuses on the challenges presented to Turkish foreign policy by the growing salience of globalization, modernity and democracy in international relations. Adopting a political economy perspective, Sadık Ünay explains how diplomacy operates in an age of economic globalization and how economic considerations have transformed Turkey's foreign policy understanding. The following articles discuss different cases from Turkish foreign policy, particularly in 2009 and afterwards. After an historical account, Ramazan Gözen carefully traces the key issues affecting Turkish-American relations in 2009. Nasuh Uslu provides a comprehensive analysis of the major developments pertaining to the Cyprus problem and their implications for Turkish foreign policy and Turkey-EU relations. Mesut Özcan offers insights on the developments in Iraqi domestic affairs and the place occupied by Iraqi-related developments in Turkish foreign policy. Sevinç Alkan Özcan traces Turkey's policy on Afghanistan since 2001, providing a good account of Turkey's international

and regional diplomacy to find a solution to the Afghan conflict.

Overall, this issue features competing perspectives on different economic and security-related factors, as well as domestic determinants, influencing Turkish foreign policy, with a good balance of regional and global issues. While some contributors identify a desire for more independent and autonomous action on the part of Turkish decision makers, other contributors underscore how Turkey continues to coordinate its policies with its traditional partners in the West. The editorial team at *Perceptions* hopes this collection of essays will make a good read for our readers, and become a key reference source for researchers on Turkish foreign policy.

Soon, we will meet you with new special issues, looking among others at Turco-Italian perspectives on regional and global issues, and security in the Middle East. Stay tuned with us.

Bülent ARAS
Editor-in Chief

Globalization, Modernity and Democracy: Turkish Foreign Policy 2009 and Beyond

E. Fuat KEYMAN*

Abstract

The end of the Cold War meant the end of the 'buffer state' identity of Turkish foreign policy – an identity which was based mainly on the geopolitical position of Turkey in world politics. Since the 1990s, Turkey has been in search of a new identity, which has required a much more active and constructive foreign policy behavior. Furthermore, as the world has become more globalized, more interdependent, and more risky, having "strategic depth," this new foreign policy identity entailed the employment of not only geopolitics but also identity and economy. Thus, geopolitics, modernity and democracy have become the constitutive dimensions of Turkish foreign policy today. This development in Turkey's foreign policy identity and behavior has been perceived in global academic and public discourse as Turkey becoming a "key and pivotal actor of world politics." This paper explores the ways in which Turkish foreign policy would become effective and achieves its main aim, that is, to contribute to the creation of a fair, better, and democratic global governance.

Key Words

Pro-active foreign policy, the post-9/11 world, globalization, democratization, modernization, Turkey-EU relations.

Introduction

In his influential work on world politics in the post-Cold war era, *The Grand Chessboard: American Primacy and its Geostrategic Imperatives*, published in 1997, Zbigniew Brzezinski suggests that "Turkey and Iran are not only important geostrategic players but are also geopolitical pivots, whose own internal condition is of critical importance to the fate of the region. Both are middle-sized powers, with strong regional aspirations and a sense of historical significance."¹ Of course, there have been radical changes in Turkey, as well as in world politics, since Brzezinski penned this description of Turkey in 1997. Yet, as it will be elaborated in what follows, Brzezinski's diagnostic statement about Turkey, and his important reminder that there is a link between the 'internal conditions' of a country and its 'foreign policy behavior/identity' has remained true. Turkey's 'geopolitical pivot' and regional power

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role in world politics has become even more important in recent years. Turkey has been expected to initiate a proactive, multidimensional and constructive foreign policy in many areas, ranging from contributing to peace and stability in the Middle East to playing an active role in countering terrorism and extremism, from becoming a new “energy hub” to acting as one of the architects of “the inter-civilization dialogue initiative,” aimed at producing a better vision of the world, based on dialogue, tolerance and coexistence.² Thus, there has been an upsurge of interest in, and a global attraction to, Turkey and its contemporary history. Moreover, the global attraction to the country has stemmed not only from the geopolitical identity of Turkey, as a strong state with the capacity to function as a “geopolitical security hinge” in the intersection of the Middle East, the Balkans and the Caucasian regions, but also from its cultural identity as a modern national formation with parliamentary democratic governance, a secular constitutional structure, and a predominantly Muslim population.³

The Global Context

The end of the Cold War meant the end of the ‘buffer state’ identity of Turkish foreign policy – an identity which was

based mainly on the geopolitical position of Turkey in world politics.⁴ Since the 1990s, Turkey has been in search of a new identity, and, as Ahmet Davutoğlu has correctly pointed out, this new identity has required a much more active, constructive foreign policy behavior. Furthermore, as the world has become more globalized, more interdependent, and more risky, having “strategic depth,” this new foreign policy identity entailed the employment of not only geopolitics but also identity and economy.⁵ Thus, geopolitics, modernity and democracy have become the constitutive dimensions of Turkish foreign policy today. This development in Turkey’s foreign policy identity and behavior has been perceived in global academic and public discourse as Turkey becoming a “key and pivotal actor of world politics.”⁶ What is

important here is that it is the increasing role and visibility of ‘soft power’ – rather than ‘hard power’ stemming from its military and geopolitical capabilities – that has framed the proactive, constructive and multidimensional activism in Turkish foreign policy, and has given meaning to its ‘strategic depth,’ at the same time creating a global interest in, and global attraction to, Turkey.⁷ Of course, the soft power-quality of Turkish foreign policy has been derived from Turkey’s interesting and important journey

The end of the Cold War meant the end of the ‘buffer state’ identity of Turkish foreign policy – an identity which was based mainly on the geopolitical position of Turkey in world politics.

in modernity, despite its continuing deficits in making itself multicultural, democratic and plural; from its political commitment to democracy, despite its deficit in making itself consolidated and deepened; from its economic dynamism, despite its deficit in making itself an economy which is sustainable in terms of its success in human development; and from pro-active, problem-solving and dialogue-based good neighborhood diplomacy, despite its deficit in making itself also realistic and effective. All of these qualities of the recent Turkish foreign policy, as it will be elaborated in the following pages, have not only given rise to an upsurge of interest in Turkey, but also paved the way for the country to be perceived as a key and pivotal actor whose regional power status involves strong soft power capabilities in addition to its traditional geopolitical importance. As has been pointed out by many foreign policy analysts, there is no doubt that today Turkey is a regional power and a pivotal actor in global politics, with its geostrategic importance, its modernity, its democracy, and its economy – all of which have constituted the political and discursive basis of the proactive, multi-dimensional and constructive identity of Turkish foreign policy.⁸

The global context in which Turkey has become one of the key actors of world politics is what has come to be known as the ‘post-September 11 world.’ In fact, if the post-Cold War era constitutes the historical context in which Brzezinski wrote *The Grand Chessboard*, it is “the

post-September 11 era” that gives meaning to the global changes and transformations which have also made Turkey an important player in world politics.⁹ As Lenore Martin suggested in her introduction to *The Future of Turkish Foreign Policy*,

[t]he tectonic forces that reshaped international relations at the end of the twentieth century – the collapse of the Soviet Union, ethnic conflicts in the Balkans and Eurasia, the growing stridency of Islamic fundamentalism, globalization of national economies, and increasing demands for democratization and civil society – also thrust Turkey into an increasingly pivotal role on the geopolitical stage. The aftershocks at the beginning of the twenty-first century, the events of September 11, 2001, the global spread of anti-Western terrorism, the U.S. invasion of Iraq, and the cracking of consensus in NATO and the UN threw up additional challenges for Turkey that have confirmed and complicated its critical role.¹⁰

Similarly, Graham Fuller, in his work entitled *The New Turkish Republic*, defines Turkey as a pivotal state in the Muslim world, and argues that, with its proactive foreign policy drawing global attention and attraction, Turkey is becoming a regional power in the post-September 11 world.¹¹

It should be noted, however, that global changes and transformations have brought about risk and uncertainty in our globalizing world, and led Stephen Larrabee and Ian Lesser to title their work on Turkish foreign policy *Turkish Foreign*

Policy in an Age of Uncertainty.¹² This means that the proactive, constructive and multi-dimensional Turkish foreign policy, and the global attraction to Turkey that has emerged with it, do not necessarily lead Turkey to become more democratic, more globalized, or more closely integrated to Europe. It is likely that Turkey functions, and will continue to function, as a “globalized pivotal state” on the grand chessboard of the post-September 11 world. Yet it is also possible that Turkey, in the post-September 11 world, could become a more nationalist and inward-looking strong state in its reaction to risks and uncertainties, as in the case of the recent rise of nationalism, the increasingly security-based foreign policy discourse concerning the Kurdish issue and the problem of Northern Iraq. Larrabee and Lesser suggest in this context that:

Turkey may be a pivotal state in Western perception, but uncertainties in transatlantic relations may make the very concept of the “West” unclear as seen from Ankara. Above all, Turkey faces daunting political, economic, and social pressures, with implications for the vigor and direction of the country’s foreign and security policies. The range of possibilities is now quite wide, from a more globalized Turkey, more closely integrated in Europe and the West, with a multilateral approach toward key regions, to a more inward-looking and nationalist Turkey, pursuing a more

constrained or unilateral set of regional policies.¹³

Relying on Larrabee and Lesser, it can be argued that whether Turkey becomes globalized or an inward-looking nationalist state is a choice that Turkey and domestic forces in Turkey make in terms of democracy and modernity. A Turkey with a consolidated democracy and multicultural modernity can maintain its soft power and pivotal state status in the post-September 11 world. On the contrary, a Turkey focusing solely on geopolitics, security and unilateralism in its foreign policy behavior, as well as in its domestic politics, would be a more inward-looking and nationalist Turkey.

A Turkey with a consolidated democracy and multicultural modernity can maintain its soft power and pivotal state status in the post-September 11 world.

The recent discussions about Turkish foreign policy have also involved the question of whether or not there is a need to have a ‘main axis’ on which the proactive state behavior would gain realism, effectiveness and efficiency. Four options are worth emphasizing here: (a) a proactive foreign policy with Turkey-EU relations as its main axis (integration); (b) a proactive foreign policy with Turkey-US relations with its main axis (security); (c) a proactive foreign policy with Turkey-Eurasia relations as its main axis (autonomy and security); and (d) a proactive foreign policy without a main axis (autonomy and pragmatism).¹⁴ These options have been put forward,

EU-full membership anchor should still be considered and taken into account by the Turkish state and the AKP government as the main axis of a viable Turkish foreign policy.

voiced and defended by a number of actors having different visions of Turkey and Turkish foreign policy. To be realistic and effective, a viable Turkish foreign policy, relying more on Turkey's soft power, as well as attempting to make Turkish modernity multicultural and plural, and with Turkish democracy consolidated and deepened, should accept and put into practice Turkey-EU relations as the main axis of proactiveness and constructiveness.¹⁵ Compared with the other options, Turkey-EU relations are economically, politically, historically, culturally and geographically-constructed relations of deep integration with a system-transforming capacity in the areas of democracy, identity, security and economy. Today, despite the existing problems of the lack of trust and the increasing feeling of ambiguity and insecurity about the future of these relations, the EU-full membership anchor should still be considered and taken into account by the Turkish state and the AKP government as the main axis of a viable Turkish foreign policy.

The Post-9/11 World

To substantiate this brief analysis of the changing identity and behavior

of Turkish foreign policy in which the AKP has played the dominant role, it is useful to pause and look at the basic characteristics of the post-September 11 world, which in fact constituted the foundation for the increased global attraction to Turkey. This attraction to Turkey can also be observed in the emergence of a number of identity-based perceptions that have been attributed to Turkey in the global academic and public discourse in the post-September 11 world. All of these identity-based perceptions have entailed expectations from Turkey to become proactive, constructive and multidimensional in its foreign policy behavior and orientation. Moreover, these identity-based perceptions of Turkey, and the expectations that have occurred in them, concerning the "soft power role" of Turkey in the post-September 11 world, have created increased support and a strong legitimacy for the AKP experience on a global scale in international relations.

It would be no exaggeration to suggest that the current state of international relations has been increasingly marked by the September 11 terrorism and its devastating impact on our world. Today it is possible and necessary to define the world in which we live as the post-September 11 world. A quick glance at the recent discussions on global politics about the impacts of the 11 September 2001 terrorist attack reveals that there have been important ruptures, which this terrorist act has created in world affairs. These ruptures brought about

a number of fundamental and radical ambiguities in world affairs and global politics which have altered the current state of international relations or the existing structure and dynamics of the international system so much that it is possible to define the nature of the present as international relations in the “post-September 11 era.” A point of clarification is worth emphasizing at this stage. Unlike the neoconservative ideology of the Bush administration that has tended to characterize the post-September 11 era as a totally ‘new stage,’ ‘new condition’ or ‘new epoch’ in international relations, I suggest that to speak of the nature of the present world affairs and global politics as the post-September 11 era should entail the recognition of ‘continuities and changes’ in international relations. In other words, to speak of the post-September 11 era is to recognize the novelty of the crucial impact of the September 11 terrorism on international relations without losing sight of the continuing fundamental problems of the existing international system in terms of security, social justice and democratization.

These ruptures are namely those of “the emergence of the world risk society” and “the changing nature of American hegemony.”¹⁶ In what follows, I will briefly delineate these ruptures. Today we live in a world risk society which involves the feeling of ambiguity, uncertainty and ontological insecurity about the nature, as well as the future, of international relations; such a feeling

has also been derived from the fact that terrorism is a serious and real danger that operates as a globalized act of violence and intimidation directed mainly toward the innocent. The September 11 terrorist attack and its continuation in Istanbul, Madrid, London, Bali and Egypt have given rise to the idea of the world risk society. It should be pointed out, however, that the idea of a risk society is not new. The recent environmental hazards and accidents on the one hand, and the increased number of devastating financial crises in different parts of the world on the other, have already demonstrated that we live in a globalizing world in which modern societies are becoming risk societies.¹⁷ Likewise, the September 11 terrorism generated an important change in the way in which the American foreign policy acts with a hegemonic vision of the world. It has resulted in the reconstruction of hegemony on the basis of the privileged status of (a) military power and security over economic power and social justice, (b) unilateralism over multilateralism, (c) politics as a friend-foe relationship over politics as negotiation, (d) hard power over soft power, and (e) community and security over liberty and freedom. With this change, the new American foreign policy operated as a neo-conservative ideology of power and domination, and has attempted to reorganize global politics and world affairs through the acts of war and occupation.¹⁸

These radical transformations have constituted the “post-September 11

world.” It is in this historical context that there has also emerged an upsurge of interest in, and a global attraction to, Turkey and its modern history – a history that has demonstrated that a secular, democratic, constitutional democracy is possible in a social setting where the population is predominantly Muslim. The post-September 11 world involved not only the rapid spread of inhuman and deadly terrorist attacks throughout the world, but also their link to Islam and, thus, the codification of Islam as a foe, as a dangerous other, and as a potential terrorist. Moreover, in this world, we have seen that war and occupation have become the main strategy of the US foreign policy in its global war on terrorism. Thus, not only have international relations since 11 September 2001 been framed increasingly by a ‘clash of civilizations’ discourse, war and occupation have brought about the increasing power of state-centric politics in global affairs. The codification of Islam as the negation of secular modernity and liberal democracy is fundamental to this discourse, and has led to the suggestion that success in the ongoing global fight against terrorism depends to a large extent on the possibility of articulating Islam with modernity and democracy. In political and academic discourse, this suggestion has been formulated in a variety of forms, ranging from the idea of ‘exporting democracy through war and occupation, leading to necessary regime change in failed states’ to calls for ‘global democratic governance’ capable of establishing an effective foundation for

the coexistence of different cultures and civilizations in a manner that involves tolerance, respect, and responsibility as the guiding principles of social interactions in international, regional, and intranational relations.

In the post-September 11 world, Turkey and its historical experience of modernity has constituted a significant case for the possibility of the coexistence of Islam and democracy.¹⁹ As a social formation with a large Muslim population, Turkey has succeeded in establishing itself as a modern nation with a strong secular state structure, transforming its political system into a multiparty parliamentary democracy and creating a free-market economy. Moreover, as a social formation located at the intersection of the East and the West, Turkey’s identity has always been marked by its will to reach the contemporary level of civilization, understood as Westernization and Europeanization.²⁰ In other words, even though Islam has remained a significant symbolic reference in the formation of cultural identity in Turkey, its modern history has been characterized by Westernization as a site of secular modernity, economic progress, and democracy. Moreover, despite the existence of a number of regime breakdowns and democratic-deficit problems in its multi-party system, Turkey has nevertheless persisted in its commitment to parliamentary democracy and its norms. It is this commitment that accounts for the ability of political Islam to not only find for itself a place in the

The Turkish experience of modernity and democracy has not been without serious problems and recursive political, economic, and cultural crises.

multiparty parliamentary democracy in Turkey, but also to enlarge that place so as to allow social forces that emphasize their Islamic identity to become the governing party of a strongly secular state, as in the case of the recent majority governments of the AKP and its increased societal support and political power.

As will be elaborated in detail, of course, the Turkish experience of modernity and democracy has not been without serious problems and recursive political, economic, and cultural crises. In fact, the history of modern Turkey can be described as one of “success and failure” – successful in establishing the necessary institutional structures of modernity, such as a nation-state, modern positive law, parliamentary democracy, market economy, and citizenship, but at the same time a failure in making modernity multicultural, consolidating democracy, creating a stable and sustainable economy, and enshrining rights and freedoms in the exercise of citizenship. Yet, it is precisely because of its constant and persistent commitment to secular modernity and democracy, as well as to Westernization and Europeanization, that Turkey has become one of the crucial actors in global politics. The deepening of Turkey-EU relations, the European Council’s

historical decision at its December 2004 summit to begin full accession negotiations with Turkey, and finally the start of these negotiations on 3 October 2005 cannot be explained without taking into account the increasing importance of Turkey in today’s highly insecure world. Similarly, Turkey’s ability to experience the coexistence of Islam with modernity and democracy in a generally peaceful manner has also been central to Turkish-American relations in the recent years. In its unilateral act to restructure the Middle East region through war and occupation, the Bush Administration has approached Turkey and its experience of modernity as a ‘model’ for the region.²¹ The recent interest in Turkey, especially in terms of the possibility of Turkey’s full accession to the EU, can also be observed in most of the Islamic countries. In fact, a quick glance at the growing study and debate about Turkey in the global academic and public discourse reveals that Turkey is perceived as an important, even pivotal, actor in international relations, both regionally and globally.²²

Indeed, in the post-September 11 world, Turkey has been playing a proactive and pivotal state role in numerous and varying areas of world politics, each of which constitutes a crucial domain of global conflict and security, global governance, and global political economy.²³ These areas of conflict, governance, and political economy can be listed as follows: i) The occupation of Iraq and the Kurdish question in relation to Northern Iraq; ii) the Iran problem

and the future of the Middle East region; iii) the Russia question and the future of Eurasia; and, its implications for Europe, iv) the crisis of multiculturalism and the question of Islam in Europe. The country has a central position also in the discussions about the clash of civilizations in global politics, the global democratic governance and the question of Europe as a global actor, and Mediterranean politics and identity. One should also mention the global political economy and global energy politics as among the areas where Turkey's ascending presence and role can be felt. The country's presence and influence is also to be

augmented in most of these areas parallel to its membership of the Security Council of the United Nations in 2009-2010. Moreover, these roles have brought about a number of identity-

based perceptions that have been attributed to the role of Turkey in the post-September 11 world. Firstly, as a modern nation-state formation with democratic governance and a secular constitutional structure, Turkey is a 'model country' for the possibility of stability and peace in Iraq in particular, and in the Middle East and Islamic world in general. In fact, with its more than a century-long modernizing reform and constitutional democracy experience, Turkey is the most successful example in the world today of a secular democracy within a Muslim society. Secondly, Turkey's modern

history constitutes both an 'alternative to the clash of civilizations thesis' (as in the case of the *Inter-Civilization Dialogue Project*, led by the United Nations, Spain, and Turkey), and a 'significant historical experience' from which the Islamic world, in particular countries such as Malaysia, Morocco and Indonesia, can learn in their attempts to democratize themselves. Particularly instructive may be the AKP and its ability to establish an electoral victory through its claim to be a 'conservative-democratic center-right party'. Thirdly, with its ability to sustain, and even deepen, its secular democracy

in a peaceful manner, along with its 'dual identity as both a Middle Eastern and European country,' Turkey's recent governance by the AKP has made Turkey a 'pivotal state/regional power'

in the process of fighting against global terrorism without making Islam the focal point of opposition. Fourthly, parallel to the deepening of Turkey-EU relations after the beginning of full accession negotiations, there is an increasing perception, especially among economic and foreign policy actors, that Turkey is a 'unique case in the process of European integration' with the ability to help Europe to become a multicultural and cosmopolitan model for a deep regional integration, and a space for the creation of a post-territorial community on the basis of post-national and democratic

There is an increasing perception, that Turkey is a 'unique case in the process of European integration' with the ability to help Europe to become a multicultural and cosmopolitan model for a deep regional integration

citizenship, as well as a global actor with a capacity to contribute to the emergence of democratic global governance. The possibility of Europe gaining these qualities depends to some extent on its decision about the accession of Turkey to the EU as a full member. Fifthly, with its dynamic economy, recursive growth rates, and young population, Turkey has become one of the important, but not pivotal (such as India, Brazil), 'emerging market economies of today's economic globalization.' Moreover, although Turkey does not produce oil or natural gas, it has recently begun to act as an "energy hub" for the transmission of natural gas between the Middle East, the post-Soviet Republics and Europe.

Modernity and Democracy: Success and Failure

All these perceptions of Turkey and its proactive foreign policy have to do with the concept of soft power, which is the fact that Turkey is the most successful example in the world today of a secular democracy within a Muslim society. In fact, it is through its commitment to secularism and democracy, as well as on the basis of its success in economic dynamism, that Turkey has presented a significant historical experience for the coexistence of Islam, democracy and liberal market values in a time when the modern world has been experiencing a growing suspicion toward multiculturalism in general, and toward Islam in particular, as in the case of

Europe and America. Turkey in its recent experience has proved that coexistence rather than clash is possible, and it is through coexistence that not only can a secular constitutional and democratic system be possible in a national formation with a large Muslim population, but that the national formation can also play a proactive and constructive role in the creation of peace and stability in global politics. To appreciate, as well as learn from, this experience, it is useful to attempt to analyze Turkish foreign policy from the perspective of modernity and democracy. The global perception of Turkey as an important soft power and pivotal state derives from the suggestion that Turkey's alternative route to secular modernity and democracy makes the Turkish experience interesting and important, especially in the recent restructuring of world affairs, in which the question of how to face Islam has been brought to the fore. Turkey's experience of alternative modernity and democracy constitutes only one answer, but an effective one to this question.

The perspective of modernity, in this sense, provides a useful analytical device to demonstrate in a sociological and historical way not only the peculiar nature of Turkish modernity but also its recent democratic transformation. In employing the perspective of modernity in the analysis of Turkish foreign policy, we could learn from three important theoretical accounts of modernity. First, by relying on Charles Taylor's

Two Theories of Modernity, in which he differentiates between what he calls 'cultural' and 'acultural' theories of modernity, one could employ "a cultural theory of modernity."²⁴ Whereas cultural theory recognizes cultural differences and the peculiar nature of each culture, and therefore maintains that the association of modernity with the West does not result in the idea that other cultures can modernize by following and imitating Western modernity; acultural theory, on the other hand, sees modernity as the development and growth of Western reason, secularism, and instrumental rationality. By employing a cultural theory of modernity, one sees that since its inception, Turkish modernity was mainly a project of political modernity aiming to establish a modern nation-state, a modern national economy, and modern national law, but lacking a social ethos in terms of creating a secular/individual-based national identity.²⁵ Thus, Turkish modernity has achieved the establishment of political modernity, but this did not mean the demise of the role of Islam in everyday life as a main symbolic reference for identity-formation. Secondly, by relying on Gerard Delanty's analysis of modernity, we could suggest that alternative modernity emerges from within the conflictual nature of modernity, involving a tension between political modernization (state and economy) and cultural modernization (identity), or between autonomy and fragmentation.²⁶ Following Delanty, alternative modernities can

be approached as historically and discursively constructed societal claims, embedded in cultural modernization and its recent fragmentation and aiming at altering the state-centric and secular model of Turkish modernity. Thirdly, by relying on the theory of alternative, multiple or global modernities, one could make a suggestion which has two dimensions: the first is the recognition of the fact that modernity is not one but many, meaning that there are different and varying articulations of economy and culture in different national sites; and secondly that in our globalizing world, as well as in the post-September 11 world, modernity is becoming distinct from Westernization, meaning that a disjuncture between modernity and Westernization has been emerging and increasingly deepening in recent years. In fact, in our globalizing world, we have been observing that more and more cases have emerged where the claim to political and economic modernity (the nation-state and market capitalism) does not involve the acceptance of the Western secular and individual-based reasoning.²⁷ Modernity cannot be associated or identified with Westernization. The acceptance of modernity does not necessarily and automatically lead to a secular-individualistic culture and self. From Japan to China, from Iran to Malaysia, from Islamic fundamentalism to Occidentalism, in a wide spectrum, the increasing disjuncture between modernity and Westernization, and the concomitant emergence of the idea of alternative, multiple and global

modernities, together have been shaping global politics in recent years. As a matter of fact, it is the recent experience of Turkey in having the coexistence of Islam, democracy and free market values by maintaining its secular constitutional structure that has demonstrated to the world that a social formation with a large Muslim population can fulfill the disjuncture between modernity and Westernization without necessarily accepting the clash of civilizations thesis.

However, coexistence rather than clash also needs democracy; in fact, a “consolidated version of democracy which makes the articulation of modernity and democracy possible.”²⁸ For this reason, the perspective of modernity has to be completed with a critical analysis of the history of contemporary Turkey from the perspective of democracy and its consolidation. As has been suggested by many, although Turkey’s travel in modernity has always involved a reference to democracy, this history has revealed a paradox: a ‘success’ in the transition to democracy, but a ‘failure’ in making it consolidated.²⁹ It was in fact the case that Turkey until very recently had displayed a ‘paradoxical development’ in terms of the simultaneous presence of its ‘success’ in modernization and democratization and its ‘failure’ both to make its modernity more liberal, plural, and multicultural, and to consolidate and deepen its democracy by making it more participatory, stable and strong. In other words, even though Turkey had been

successful in creating a modern political and institutional structure necessary for political modernity, that is, the emergence of the nation-state, modern state bureaucracy, secularism and citizenship, as well as in the process of the transition to democracy, that is, the transforming its single-party political system into a multiparty parliamentary democracy, it had failed to consolidate and deepen its modernity and democracy. This paradox had manifested itself (a) in the problem of regime breakdowns (1960, 1971, and 1980) in the multiparty parliamentary system, (b) in the emergence of identity based conflicts since the 1980s (the question of Islamic resurgence, the Kurdish question, and the problem of civil society), and (c) in the problem of strong state and its clientelistic, corruption based and populist mode of governing. All these problems have been the main obstacles to the consolidation of democracy in Turkey.

A consolidated democracy includes both a formal understanding of democracy as a political regime with institutional norms and procedures, and, more importantly, a substantial understanding of democracy as a specific type of society in which the language of rights, freedoms, and responsibilities constitutes a dominant normative and legal norm concerning not only the question of ‘the regulation (or the governance) of societal affairs’ but also the question of ‘the creation of unity in a diverse and multicultural social setting’ in a given society.³⁰ By

democratic consolidation, it is usually meant the deepening of democracy in state — society/individual relations, and one can define the deepening process in behavioral, attitudinal, and constitutional terms:

Behaviorally, a democratic regime in a territory is consolidated when no significant national, social, economic, political, or institutional actors spend significant resources attempting to achieve their objectives by creating a non-democratic regime or turning to violence or foreign intervention to secede from the state.

Attitudinally, a democratic regime is consolidated when a strong majority of public opinion holds the belief that democratic procedures and institutions are the most appropriate way to govern collective life in a society such as theirs and when the support for anti-system alternatives is quite small or more or less isolated from the pro-democratic forces.

Constitutionally, a democratic regime is consolidated when governmental and non governmental forces alike, throughout the territory of the state, become subjected to, and habituated to, the resolution of conflict

within the specific laws, procedures, and institutions sanctioned by the new democratic process.³¹

Of course, these dimensions imply that, in addition to a well functioning state:

Five other interconnected and mutually reinforcing conditions must also exist or be crafted for a democracy to be consolidated. First, the conditions must exist for the development of a free and lively civil society. Second, there must be a relatively autonomous and valued political society. Third, there must be a rule of law to ensure legal guarantees for citizens' freedoms and independent associational life. Fourth, there must be a state bureaucracy that is usable by the new democratic government. Fifth, there must be an institutionalized economic society.³²

All these behavioral patterns and reinforcing conditions indicate that democratic consolidation involves both a formal/procedural understanding of democracy and a substantial/societal understanding of democracy, and more importantly, the simultaneous existence and operation of both. Within the context of Turkey, the history of democracy demonstrates a success in terms of transition but a failure with respect to consolidation. In this sense, the problem in Turkey has less to do with democratic transition, that is, the formal/operation of democracy, but more to do with its deepening in societal affairs.

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A viable Turkish foreign policy with strong soft power capabilities and capacities requires a consolidated democracy.

On the basis of these methodological openings, developed with reference to the concepts of alternative modernity and democratic consolidation, it can be suggested that Turkey with its ability to achieve the coexistence of Islam, secular modernity and democracy constitutes an alternative modernity facing the problem of democratic consolidation. Moreover, it is democratic consolidation that strengthens the recent perception in global academic and public discourse of Turkey as an important actor and pivotal state whose experience of modernity and democracy should be taken seriously by any attempt aiming at going beyond the clash of civilizations, beyond the orientalist divide between the West and the East, and more importantly beyond the culturally essentialist and fundamentalist desires to codify difference as the dangerous Other. A viable Turkish foreign policy with strong soft power capabilities and capacities requires a consolidated democracy. Going back to Larrabee and Lesser's suggestion that:

Turkey may be a pivotal state in Western perception, but uncertainties in transatlantic relations may make the very concept of the 'West' unclear as seen from Ankara. Above all, Turkey faces daunting political, economic, and social pressures, with implications for the vigor and direction of the country's

foreign and security policies. The range of possibilities is now quite wide, from a more globalized Turkey, more closely integrated in Europe and the West, with a multilateral approach toward key regions, to a more inward-looking and nationalist Turkey, pursuing a more constrained or unilateral set of regional policies.

It should be suggested that, without an attempt to consolidate Turkish democracy in a way to articulate it with multi-cultural modernity based on coexistence rather than clash, Turkey can easily slip towards becoming a nationalist state and having an inward-looking foreign policy orientation with a strong emphasis on security.³³ In fact, this is precisely what has been confronting Turkey and its proactive foreign policy. The more the AK Party government is losing its political will to further and upgrade Turkish democracy, the more nationalism is framing the terms of political and foreign policy discourse, as a result of which rather than being an alternative to the clash of civilization thesis, Turkey itself is being confronted by reactionary and exclusionary nationalisms, voiced strongly by Turks and Kurds in ethnic terms, as well as by left, liberal and conservative political ideologies.

Conclusion: Renewing Turkey-EU Relations

The possibility of democratic consolidation in Turkey occurred in

recent years, as Turkey-EU relations have deepened and gained a degree of certainty with the beginning of the full accession negotiations on 3 October 2005. In fact, since the Helsinki Summit of 1999, where Turkey was granted the status of a candidate country for full membership, Turkish-EU relations have gained 'certainty'. This certainty has forced the political and state actors in Turkey to focus on democracy, since the candidate-country status requires Turkey to fulfill the Copenhagen political criteria, which means having modernity and democracy linked and upgraded in a given candidate country for full EU membership. Turkey's efforts to make a number of important legal and constitutional changes before the Copenhagen Summit of 2002 was only enough to obtain a conditional date (2004 without a delay) for the beginning of full accession negotiations with the EU on condition that it meets the Copenhagen political criteria in terms of implementation in its state-societal relations. Turkey's efforts to consolidate its democracy in order to obtain a starting date for negotiations were successful, as the European Council decided in its December 2004 summit that Turkey would begin the full accession negotiations on 3 October 2005. In fact, the negotiations have started and given Turkey the status of a country in the process of gaining full membership.

There are still reactions, ambiguities and uncertainties in Europe with respect to the question of Turkey's full membership. Likewise, 'Euroscepticism'

has been on the rise in Turkey. However, there are two points worth making. First, the EU anchor has so far played a positive role in strengthening the level of democracy in Turkey, insofar as it has forced the AK Party government to initiate a number of institutional and constitutional reforms to start the full accession negotiations. Since the requirement of meeting the Copenhagen political criteria means moving in the direction of democratic consolidation, Turkey's reform process has placed democracy as the main basis for political competition among political parties, as well as for the regulation of state-society/individual relations.³⁴ Despite the recent political and judicial crises in terms of the headscarf affair and the AK Party closure case, parliamentary democracy has still remained an accepted political norm. This means that even though Turkish democracy is in need of being consolidated, democracy rather than authoritarianism is the likely candidate for becoming 'the only game in town.'³⁵

Secondly, despite uncertainties and the problem of trust involved in Turkey-EU relations, these relations have been the most system-transforming relations

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in terms of Turkish modernity and democracy, which has also generated positive impacts on Turkish foreign policy. Unlike Turkey-US relations or Turkey-Eurasia relations, Turkey-EU relations have been economically, politically and culturally system-transforming relations, and in this sense, should be the main axis of Turkish foreign policy and its proactive, constructive and multi-dimensional operation. As a matter of fact, the time when the global attraction to Turkey has increased in the post-September 11 world is also the time when Turkey was going through its democratic reform process to start the full accession negotiation with the EU. Moreover, the effect of EU soft power on Turkey, which has been exercised through the requirement of meeting the Copenhagen political criteria, and thus demanded democratic transformation in state-society/individual relations, as well as economic transformation to create stability and development in economic life, has made a significant contribution to the increasing importance and use of soft power by Turkey in its foreign policy behavior in the post-September 11 world. Both regionally and globally, Turkey, under the soft-power pressures coming

Turkey should focus on its priorities, not only to make its proactive foreign policy realistic and effective, but also, and more importantly, to maintain its role in global politics as an important actor and pivotal state.

from the EU in terms of democratic and economic transformation, has begun to employ and focus on soft power in its proactive, constructive and multi-dimensional foreign policy.³⁶ In other words, as Turkey has demonstrated a political will to upgrade its democracy, and acting upon it through democratic reforms, it was also being perceived in global academic and public discourse as one of the important actors and pivotal states of world politics.

Furthermore, as Ian Lesser has correctly pointed out, Turkey should focus more and more on “priority setting” rather than multi-dimensional “engagement”, in order to make its proactive and constructive foreign policy realistic and effective. Lesser argues that:

The entente with Greece, openings with Syria and even with Iran, the prospect of a real opening with Armenia. These are meaningful things but these are all things in Turkey's neighborhood. If you look at the scope of Turkey's foreign policy activism in recent years, it does sometimes seem as if Turkey is trying to do all things at once and be all things to all people. Under certain conditions, that could be a perfectly valid approach. When I look ahead, I see the climate for Turkey becoming more difficult and less encouraging to that kind of strategy. Turkey has had the luxury of not having to choose, for example, between Eurasia and the West, between the Muslim world and Europe, etc. In coming years, *Turkish foreign policy will be more about priorities and less about general activism.*³⁷ (emphasis added)

As Lesser suggests, Turkey should focus on its priorities, not only to make its proactive foreign policy realistic and effective, but also, and more importantly, to maintain its role in global politics as an important actor and pivotal state. As the post-September 11 world is creating multipolar rather than unipolar world politics, and as conflict in this world is becoming a conflict among great powers, as in the cases of 'the Russia question' and 'the Iran problem,' I would suggest that Turkey in its pro-active foreign policy should place a strong emphasis on priority over general activism. In a time when these changes are occurring, Turkey is serving a non-permanent member of the Security Council in the United Nations (2009-2010). The success of Turkey in its new role depends on how it will react to conflict and change. Whether Turkey will shape its proactive foreign policy by giving primacy over priority or not determines the degree of its effectiveness and transformative power. It is in this context that it becomes important and useful for Turkish foreign policy to have an 'effective anchor' or to establish a 'main axis' in its multi-dimensional operation. As it has been argued in this article, rather than Turkey-US relations, Turkey-Eurasia relations, or Turkey as acting an independent state without priority and anchor, Turkey-EU relations

should constitute the main anchor or axis of Turkish foreign policy, despite the existing problems and ambiguities in Turkey's Europeanization process. Contrary to the first three options, Turkey-EU relations are deep integration relations, constructed historically and institutionally, generating a number of economic, political and identity-based system-transforming impacts both in Turkey and Europe.³⁸ The need to place emphasis on priority over general activism also requires in Turkish foreign policy an effective EU anchor, which is compatible with and useful for Turkey's regional power and pivotal state role in the post-September 11 world.

It is in this sense that I would conclude by suggesting that a viable Turkish foreign policy requires (a) a proactive, constructive and multi-dimensional state behavior; (b) taking the concept of soft power seriously; (c) having the EU anchor as the main axis of foreign policy; and (d) coming to terms with the fact that it is not only geopolitics, but also, and more importantly, an articulation of modernity and democracy that sustains and deepens the global interest in, and global attraction to, Turkey in the post-September 11 world.

Endnotes

- 1 Zbigniew Brzezinski, *The Grand Chessboard: American Primacy and its Geostrategic Imperatives*, New York, Basic Books, 1997, pp. 124-35.
- 2 The terms proactive, constructive, as well as multi-dimensional foreign policy, indicate a change in Turkish foreign policy behavior from its buffer state identity during the Cold War, where it had tended or preferred to be “reactive, passive, bilateral and security-oriented”, to its pivotal state identity in the post-Cold War, and Post-September 11 era, where it had a more active, more multi-dimensional (even in the way it approaches to its bilateral relations, as in the case of Turkey-Greece relations, the Cyprus problem, and Turkey- Middle East relations) and more constructive and problem-solving identity in its relations both with its border countries and with its regional and global affairs.
- 3 For a more detailed analysis about the recent Turkish foreign policy activities, see Lenore G. Martin and Dimitris.Keridis (eds), *The Future of Turkish Foreign Policy*, Cambridge, MIT Press, 2004.
- 4 For a detailed analysis of both the nature and the end of the buffer state identity of Turkish foreign policy, see Barry Rubin and Kemal Kirişçi, *Turkey in World Politics*, Istanbul, Boğaziçi University Publications, 2002.
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- 6 Stephen Larrabee and Ian. O. Lesser, *Turkish Foreign Policy in an Age of Uncertainty*, Santa Monica, RAND, 2003.
- 7 The concept of soft power refers to a co-optive, non-coercive and consent-based power, rather than a command-based, coercive and hard power. State power gains legitimacy in the eyes of others through its soft power whose sources include diplomacy, economy, culture, and identity. Through soft power, the state gets the other state to “want what it wants”. Soft power involves consent. For details, see Joseph Nye, *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*, New York, Public Affairs Books, 2004. For an important account of the role of soft power in Turkish foreign policy, see, *Insight Turkey: Special Issue on Turkey's Rising Soft Power*, Vol. 10, No. 2 (April-June 2008).
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- 10 Martin, “Introduction”, p. 3.
- 11 Graham E. Fuller, *The New Turkish Republic: Turkey as a Pivotal State in the Muslim World*, Washington, United States Institute of Peace Press, 2007.
- 12 Larrabee and Lesser, *Turkish Foreign Policy in an Age of Uncertainty*.
- 13 Ibid., p. 3.

- 14 These options have been put forward in Turkish academic and public discourse and debate on the question of what should be the main axis or the main foundation of Turkish foreign policy in its proactive, constructive and multi-dimensional operation in the post-Cold War era in general, and in the post-September 11 world in particular. I have also extrapolated these positions in my research on ‘Turkey in a Globalizing World’; for a detailed account of these positions, see Morton Abramowitz (ed.), *Turkey’s Transformation and American Policy*, Washington, A Century Foundation Book, 2000; Martin and Keridis (eds.), *The Future of Turkish Foreign Policy*; Larrabee and Lesser, *Turkish Foreign Policy in an Age of Uncertainty*; Graham E. Fuller and Ian O. Lesser, *Turkey’s New Geopolitics*, Westview, Boulder, 1993; E.Fuat Keyman and Ziya Öniş, *Turkish Politics in a Changing World*, Istanbul, Bilgi University Publications, 2007.
- 15 We have elaborated this point in Keyman and Öniş, *Turkish Politics in a Changing World*.
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- 22 See, for example, Erik Cornell, *Turkey in the 21st Century: Opportunities, Challenges, Threats*, Richmond, Surrey, Curzon Press, 2001; Abramowitz, “*Turkey’s Transformation and American Policy*”; Keyman and Öniş, “*Turkish Politics in a Changing World*”; LaGro and Jorgensen, *Turkey and the European Union*; Fuller and Lesser, “*Turkey’s New Geopolitics*”.
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- 30 Keyman and Öniş, *Turkish Politics in a Changing World*, Chapter 1.
- 31 Özbudun, *Contemporary Turkish Politics*, p. 14.
- 32 Ibid, p. 15.
- 33 Larrabee and Lesser, *Turkish Foreign Policy in an Age of Uncertainty*, p. 3.
- 34 For a detailed analysis, see E.Fuat Keyman (ed.), *Remaking Turkey*, Oxford, Rowman Little, Oxford, 2008.
- 35 See Keyman and Öniş, *Turkish Politics in a Changing World*, Chapter 2; Özbudun, *Contemporary Turkish Politics*, Conclusion.
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Economic Diplomacy for Competitiveness: Globalization and Turkey's New Foreign Policy

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Abstract

This article aims to fill the methodological gap in the conventional IR literature by assessing the recent trajectory of Turkish foreign policy from the prism of international political economy, in particular global competitiveness. A holistic and interdisciplinary approach is adopted that incorporates critical insights from the disciplines of political science, international relations, economics, and development studies. The major parameters of Turkey's structural transformation from an inward-looking, import-substituting economic and political system to a liberal export-promoting strategy are evaluated in line with the first- and second-generation neoliberal reforms in the 1980s and the 2000s, respectively. Meanwhile, the impact of economic globalization on the multifaceted processes of state transformation and the ascendancy of economic issues to the level of 'high-politics' in the post-Cold War era are emphasized, with special reference to the pursuit of economic diplomacy and 'neo-protectionist' science and technology policies by both industrialized and industrializing countries. The major caveats of accelerated global integration for Turkey's 'new foreign policy' and principal policy challenges in the realms of macroeconomic management and foreign policy making are also identified.

Key Words

Turkish foreign policy, economic diplomacy, neo-protectionism, competitiveness.

Introduction

There emerged a broad-based consensus in academic and policy-oriented circles that, when compared to its conventional character that crystallized in the second half of the 20th century, Turkish foreign policy has evolved into a more multidimensional, proactive and order-generating disposition in terms of its main priorities, theoretical underpinnings and discourse in the first decade of the new millennium. In recent analyses focusing on different aspects of Turkish foreign policy, the idea that Turkey's previous image as a 'Cold-War warrior,' characterized by strong military muscle, has been replaced by the use of 'soft' and 'smart' power sources was voiced with ever-increasing frequency. Similar to that, one needs to stress that the intellectual/academic depth of the mainstream international relations literature experienced a concomitant widening as a result of the mushrooming

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of studies that explored the ideational and practical foundations of Turkey's new foreign policy orientation, both as a country maintaining accession negotiations with the European Union and as a shining regional power which acquired increased visibility and credibility in regional and global fora.

Based on a broad categorization among the mainstream approaches proposed to explain the ongoing transformation in Turkish foreign policy, it is possible to identify the following perspectives: studies conducted in line with the "Europeanization" literature understandably inspired by the EU membership process;¹ analyses conducted with special reference to the redefinition of identity politics (constructivism) and dominant national security perceptions;² studies that concentrate on the transformative impact of developments in domestic politics and the main foreign policy actors;³ writings that focus on geopolitical and geostrategic dynamics;⁴ and studies that indicate various implications of Turkey's expanded soft power.⁵ It would obviously be unfair to disregard other studies that synthesize many perspectives or theoretical approaches concerned in order to produce unorthodox discourses or analytical framework in this generic categorization intended to give the reader a broad idea about the state of the academic field.

However, the crux of the matter concerns the clear absence of systematic

It is a serious methodological pitfall that the burgeoning international relations discipline has so far neglected the role of economic factors in its explorations into Turkish foreign policy.

studies in the mainstream international relations (IR) literature on the formation and implementation of Turkish foreign policy, as well as its practical implications on the ground, from the prism of international political economy (IPE). Such studies might look into classical IPE issues such as the interdependencies between political and economic factors in international affairs; the respective roles played in international economic institutions and global governance platforms, geo-economic relations with major global and regional powers, potential socio-political impacts of multinational corporations, and the link between economic performance and political legitimacy. Given the dominance of economic factors in shaping the post-Cold War parameters of global competition and Turkey's projected national aim to become one of the top ten economies of the world by 2023,⁶ it is a serious methodological pitfall that the burgeoning international relations discipline has so far neglected the role of economic factors in its explorations into Turkish foreign policy. At a time when the trend to closely coordinate the Ministries of Economy and Foreign Affairs acquired extra momentum,

especially in emerging markets, it is imperative that sensitive issues such as international trade, international financial flows, foreign direct investment, relations with multinational corporations and international economic institutions, and science and technology policy are evaluated in conjunction with their foreign policy implications.

Against this background, this article aims to fill the stated methodological gap in the conventional IR literature by assessing the recent transformation trajectory of Turkish foreign policy from the prism of international political economy and global competitiveness. To this end, an interdisciplinary approach that incorporates critical insights from the disciplines of political science, international relations, economics and development studies has been adopted. In this context, major parameters of Turkey's profound structural transformation from an inward-looking, import-substituting economy into a substantially liberalized export-promoting regime will be evaluated in line with the first- and second-generation neoliberal reforms that were completed over the course of the 1980s and the 2000s. This will be followed by a general analysis of the impact of economic globalization on the multifaceted processes of state transformation and the ascendancy of economic issues to the level of 'high-politics' in the post-Cold War era among both the industrialized and industrializing countries. Meanwhile, special attention will be attached to the

pursuit of strategic economic diplomacy in conjunction with 'neoprotectionist' science and technology policies by the OECD countries and some of the leading emerging markets. The following part will assess the development trajectory of Turkey's 'new foreign policy' under the Justice and Development Party (JDP) administration and its intellectual architect Ahmet Davutoğlu, parallel to comprehensive changes in Turkish political economy. Building upon the preceding discussion, the final part will indicate the major caveats of accelerated global integration in the age of economic globalization and identify major challenges for policy makers in the realms of macro/microeconomy and foreign policy in the medium term.

Historical Background: Transformation of Turkish Political Economy

In his seminal article on Turkey's economic growth and socio-economic development performance over the course of the 20th century, Şevket Pamuk adopted the fitting metaphor of a "half-full glass" to denote the discrepancy between economic growth figures and improvements in social standards.⁷ In fact, since the foundation of the Republic in 1923, Turkey has experienced a radical structural transformation towards a more urban and industrialized social formation.⁸ However, while noting these crucial historical developments,

it also needs to be emphasized from a developmental point of view that Turkey failed to produce a ‘miracle story’ reminiscent of the Asian tigers, and long-term improvements in the socio-economic standards of the population broadly followed averages in the developing world. Moreover, the fact that Turkey’s economic growth performance, which displayed periodic booms despite political and macroeconomic crises, did not trigger a parallel progressive momentum in terms of human development, created a sharp diversification between the overall size of the national economy and the social/human development level of the country. Therefore, historically it has been conventional wisdom to observe stunning differences between Turkey’s position in the global pecking order in terms of broader macroeconomic parameters, such as the GDP per capita, and measures that assess the average life standards of the ordinary population such as the UN’s human development index.⁹

The crisis of the late 1950s did not only trigger a military coup but also instigated a strategic shift to import substitution-cum-planning as a form of neo-étatisme.

From a different angle, one needs to stress that interactions between macroeconomic strategy and foreign policy have been shaped in the light

of a predominantly protectionist/interventionist ideological background over the course of Republican history, whereby various periods of economic liberalism were frequently marred with returns to state tutelage. With the benefit of hindsight, it is possible to identify two crucial periods in the pre-1980 era during which the interventionist reflexes of the conventional state elite concerning macroeconomic management and social issues remained in the background. The first was the initial decade of the Republic, specifically the years between 1923 and 1931, which witnessed the imposition of a “reluctant liberalism” on the new state due to insufficient domestic capital accumulation and the restrictive conditions of the Lausanne Treaty on trade policy.¹⁰ This experiment was interrupted by the emergence of Turkish etatism in the early 1930s in the wake of the global economic recession which continued to determine the public policy discourse up until the transition to multiparty politics in the 1950s. The second liberal interlude, based upon the expansion of the domestic market with agriculture-led industrialization in the 1950s, in turn, triggered a form of unorthodox liberalism,¹¹ associated with the lack of fiscal discipline and populist expansion of the public sector, thereby leading to a major socioeconomic crisis and the country’s first-ever encounter with the IMF.

The crisis of the late 1950s did not only trigger a military coup but also

The immediate aftermath of the general elections in 1983 signified a turning point in the historical transformation of the Turkish political economy.

instigated a strategic shift to import substitution-cum-planning as a form of neo-étatisme; this time in tune with the contemporaneous global development paradigm of structuralism. Following the liberal, étatist and second liberal interludes in the 1920s, 1930s and 1950s respectively, Turkey attempted to become a “competition state” on the basis of infant-industry protection, development planning and import substitution (ISI) under the watchful eyes of the international economic institutions, most notably the OECD,¹² while enjoying its delayed encounter with the Keynesian revolution. The ISI-cum-planning strategy, supported by an alliance of rising domestic industrialists and bureaucratic elite, proved quite effective throughout the 1960s and the first half of the 1970s in underpinning comprehensive structural change, relatively high rates of economic growth and industrial upgrading.¹³ Consequently, Turkey was able to outperform most of the Latin American countries with respect to its development performance, although it failed to record steady high rates of economic growth on a sustained basis that could match the East Asian experiences. On the contrary, excessive, indiscriminate and

long-term protectionism associated with the political economy of the Turkish ISI experiment became a crucial factor that led to endemic export pessimism, economic stagnation and balance of payments crisis of the late 1970s.¹⁴

The first period of neoliberal restructuring managed by Turgut Özal's Motherland Party in the early 1980s represented a radical departure from previous trends based on domestic market orientation and protectionism.¹⁵ In fact, the immediate aftermath of the general elections in 1983 signified a turning point in the historical transformation of the Turkish political economy, which witnessed the insertion of a completely different macroeconomic management and competitiveness rationality into public policy. Despite certain caveats related to frequent disregard for the rule of law and regulatory principles on the part of the ruling elite, the logic of an open, export-oriented and competitive economic framework was firmly established, in collaboration with international economic institutions, and the seeds of an embryonic ‘competition state’ were laid into the Turkish soil. Consequently, the chronic export pessimism of the Turkish economic agents began to be broken with the ratio of total exports to GDP increasing from 4.1% to 13.3% between 1980 and 1988.¹⁶ Furthermore, the quantitative increase in export figures was also accompanied by a qualitative change in the content of exported items, reflecting a trend

towards diversification and a striking rise in the share of manufacturing goods at the expense of agricultural goods and raw materials in Turkey's exports.

There is no doubt that the proactive and multidimensional foreign policy attitude of Özal and the MP governments, which pursued accelerated political and economic liberalization by effectively utilizing the gaps in the international system towards the end of the Cold War, played a facilitating role in promoting economic growth and structural transformation. However, reflective of mainstream trends in the development of the Turkish political economy, this growth episode, like many others before, was not sustainable and the interlude of successful export orientation in the early 1980s did not carry into the second half of the decade.¹⁷ The second phase of Turkish neoliberalism in the 1990s suffered from a number of structural and agency-driven drawbacks which had a profound impact on the deterioration of economic and overall development performance. For one thing, the relative weakening of the MP and its charismatic leader Turgut Özal prior to his transfer to the rather symbolic post of the Presidency and subsequent death in 1993, along with the return of pre-1980 political figures to active politics with a referendum in 1987, radically transformed the domestic political balances.

The synergy between the imperatives of the IMF, the World Bank and the OECD as international donors and the

Özal's vision of improving Turkey's bilateral relations with neighboring countries through economic interdependence was only partially attained throughout the 1980s and the 1990s.

prerogatives of the domestic political coalition constructed under Özal's leadership which largely internalized the *zeitgeist* of the contemporaneous neoliberal agenda, constituted one of the crucial underpinnings of the neoliberal transformation project in the 1980s. Without 'elite ownership' and the impetus derived from the synergy of domestic-international reform agendas, the age-old struggles between Turkey's populist political actors resurfaced and paved the way for acute macroeconomic and political instability over the course of the 1990s. Politically, the decade was characterized by versatile and short-lived coalition governments, in which participant political movements focused on satisfying the immediate distributional demands of their electoral clientele with complete disregard for a systematic macroeconomic or developmental strategy. At a time when secessionist violence in Southeast Anatolia was on the increase, along with intensifying political polarization and fragmentation, Turkey expectedly entered into a relatively stagnant period in foreign policy and economic transformation which diverted its energy on domestic struggles. Given the negative impact of major conflicts such as the Iran-Iraq War, the Gulf War and the Bosnian

War on regional stability, Özal's vision of improving Turkey's bilateral relations with neighboring countries through economic interdependence was only partially attained throughout the 1980s and the 1990s.

The economic implications of socio-political instability and polarization proved to be lower economic growth rates, chronic hyperinflation and the complete loss of fiscal discipline leading to abysmal budgetary performance. Speculative attacks in the presence of substantial budget deficits were among the main causes of successive financial crises that hit the Turkish economy in 1994, 2000 and 2001. Evaluated in the light of these prominent trends of instability, the post-2001 period represented a clear rupture in the historic transformation trajectory of the Turkish political economy, which witnessed both the restructuring of a 'regulatory state' through comprehensive institutional/regulatory reforms, and a positive macroeconomic environment characterized by high and sustained growth rates, lower inflation, fiscal discipline, unprecedented levels of FDI inflows and the completion of large-scale privatization programs. In the post-2002 period, it is also possible to discern mutually reinforcing dynamics between the galvanization of macroeconomic stability and strong growth momentum on the one hand, and sustainability of the renewed activism in foreign policy on the other, both coalescing to transform Turkey into a credible regional power.

Global Transformations and the Ascendancy of Economics in Foreign Policy Making

In the post-Cold War era of economic globalization and multipolarity, conventional welfare states in the industrialized world and developmental states in the developing world started to evolve into neoliberal competition states. The fact that issues related to international trade, competitiveness and industrial-technological advancement began to be seen as issues of 'high politics' in the new era triggered a profound transformation in global hegemonic struggles and attracted the attention of major global actors into the realm of the international political economy. To illustrate, tendencies to strategically support R&D activities by various means in the rising sectors of the knowledge economy were strengthened among the public agencies of OECD countries as a matter of "national interest."¹⁸ Likewise, the BRIC countries which carried the bulk of the developmental momentum in the world economy, with emerging markets striving to follow their lead, progressively prioritized policies of structural transformation and competitiveness in technology-intensive sectors.

It seems inevitable that the main actors of Turkish foreign policy will also be forced to deal with such micro-issues of international trade and economic diplomacy.

Likewise, within the global trade regime, practices of public procurement and international project advocacy increasingly became critical areas, whereby public and private actors merged their strengths for the purpose of increasing the national capacities for competitiveness vis-à-vis their chief global rivals. The practice of implementing non-tariff barriers (NTBs) to foreign investors during public procurement via the formulation of specific criteria that favor national investors and stimulate creation of local technological know-how is a widespread exercise in the majority of OECD countries, led by the US. Moreover, the new economic diplomacy performed through public-private partnerships proceeded through intensive attempts to look for early project development opportunities across the globe, the provision of attractive finance/aid packages for these projects, and the application of diplomatic pressure on foreign governments.¹⁹ It seems inevitable that the main actors of Turkish foreign policy will also be forced to deal with such micro-issues of international trade and economic diplomacy, once the initial stage of Turkey's new market openings are completed and bureaucratic obstacles hindering Turkey's global integration are lifted through a series of preferential

Özal attempted to deepen Turkey's interdependence with countries in the Middle East, Balkans, Central Asia and Black Sea Basin through economic cooperation.

trade agreements (PTAs) and visa-free travel arrangements.

As far as the historical transformation trajectory of Turkish foreign policy priorities are concerned, it is crystal clear that the inward-looking and securitization-oriented clichés in the foreign policy lexicon have been gradually replaced with elements of economic interdependence and global integration since the 1980s. In this context, increasing international trade, especially with neighboring countries; promoting the inflow of foreign direct investment; facilitating Turkey's incorporation into global and regional networks of trade, finance, transportation, communication and energy began to be seen as the foremost objectives of Turkish foreign policy. Numerous experts appreciated the new character of Turkish foreign policy in the 1990s, which increasingly emphasized economic factors as essential elements of long-term success. To illustrate, William Hale indicated the crucial structural change and the rise of economic rationality in Turkish foreign policymaking in the aftermath of the Cold War during which trade followed the flag and political relations between countries automatically determined economic and trade relations between them.²⁰ Mine Eder, on the other hand, mentioned the critical need for a multidimensional and proactive new foreign policy aimed at dynamically identifying new markets and trading partners, so as to make the structural transformation towards economic liberalization and export-

oriented growth sustainable.²¹ Finally, Mustafa Aydın stressed the apparent widening in the mission definitions of Turkish diplomats abroad which began to include economic objectives such as opening up new export markets, facilitating the flow of investment credits, preparing the groundwork for trade agreements and promoting the flow of investment from Turkey to their respective country of operation.²²

Starting from the MP governments under Turgut Özal in the 1980s, Turkey actively adopted the principle of economic interdependence, both as a functional tool for the resolution of regional conflicts and confidence building, as well as a rational choice to increase the national export potential required for the maintenance of neoliberal transformation.²³ Despite the unambiguous resistance of the state establishment due to national security concerns, Özal attempted to deepen Turkey's interdependence with countries in the Middle East, Balkans, Central Asia and Black Sea Basin through economic cooperation, water and energy pipelines, regional initiatives such as the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC) initiative and flexible visa arrangements.²⁴ There is no doubt that this preference to pursue economic interdependence and proactive foreign policy positively contributed to the ascendancy of Anatolian tigers, clusters of SMEs around Anatolia which emerged as rivals against the Istanbul-based industrial bourgeoisie, which longed for accelerated integration with the Western world. Despite the

unravelling of political instability under fragile coalition governments in the 1990s, there were strong elements of continuity with the multidimensional foreign policy attitude based on economic interdependence, especially under influential Foreign Ministers such as Ismail Cem. The left-leaning Ismail Cem instigated a process of rapprochement with Turkey's arch-enemy Greece and a broader good relations with neighbors policy in the late 1990s. However, both Özal's and Cem's initiatives proved short-lived and were severely interrupted by resurgent regional conflicts such as the First Gulf War and the Wars in Bosnia and Kosovo which kept endemic sources of instability active in Turkey's natural hinterland and the domestic tendencies towards securitization of socio-economic relations alive.

Undoubtedly, one of the crucial aspects of the productive synergy between economic strategy and foreign policymaking in the post-2002 era concerned the adoption of a proactive and multidimensional foreign policy approach, as has been the case in numerous countries which experienced transitions from inward-looking import substitution regimes to outward-oriented export promotion strategies. In this context, despite the destabilizing impact of the American-led invasion of Iraq in 2003, the ensuing period constituted a window of opportunity during which relative peace and stability could be galvanized via pro-active diplomacy. Ahmet Davutoğlu was just the perfect match to reconstitute

Turkey's foreign policy discourse at this critical juncture. An academic by profession who focused on political and cultural history and philosophy as well as international relations, Davutoğlu outlined his vision for Turkey's proactive, multidimensional foreign policy perspective in his renowned book *Strategic Depth: Turkey's International Position*. Historical developments leading to the overhaul of the political space in Turkey's volatile democracy gave Davutoğlu an unprecedented opportunity to place his theory into practice in the first decade of the new millennium,

an opportunity which he brilliantly took. First, as the Chief Foreign Policy Advisor to the Prime Minister (2003-2009) and then as the Foreign Minister (2009-), he skillfully systematized what is called the zero

problems with neighbors and maximum cooperation policies in the context of which Turkey took the initiative to deepen economic interdependence and increase cross-border mobility with neighboring countries, while taking steps to solve frozen questions such as the Cyprus issue, the Aegean problem, the Armenian dispute, Kurdish separatism and conflicts with the administration in Northern Iraq.

The new foreign policy vision articulated by Davutoğlu departed

from a systematic re-evaluation of the ongoing tendencies in both Turkey and the world and argued for the adoption of a multidimensional and proactive foreign policy attitude. Davutoğlu placed Turkey's official foreign policy perspective into a more systematic and consistent conceptual framework, and stressed Turkey's need to get reacquainted with the history and geography of her region in order to maximize her strategic depth and emerge in world politics as a central state with potential influence areas in more than one region.²⁵ As the intellectual

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architect of Turkey's determined foreign policy approach, Davutoğlu promoted a novel geographic imagination based upon the destruction of perceptive Cold War barriers between Turkey and the surrounding

regions, reconstruction of political, economic and cultural relations with the Middle East, Balkans and Caucasus, and active intermediation in regional conflicts in the light of international norms. As Davutoğlu argues: "In the new era, Turkey's foreign relations will be structured on the basis of a holistic foreign policy approach from Chile to Indonesia, from Africa to Central Asia and from the EU to the Organization of the Islamic Conference in a way to contribute to Turkey's emergence as a global power by 2023."²⁶

Despite occasional criticisms originating from circles who found Davutoğlu's theses overly optimistic, the "zero problem with neighbors" policy became a blueprint for the official rejection of the isolationist, defensive foreign policy orthodoxy that was firmly established in the state establishment during the Cold War. The newly-inserted self-confidence and proactive foreign policy dynamism sent a strong message to Turkey's immediate and secondary neighborhood that the country was prepared to form a system of political, economic and socio-cultural alliances with all the regional actors on the basis of mutual interests and region-wide stability. As a result, Turkey's enmeshment in regional initiatives of economic and political cooperation in the Middle East, Balkans and Caucasus, as well as her respective standing as a neutral arbiter in regional disputes and conflicts, increased tremendously over the course of a decade, simultaneously raising Turkey's global prestige and credibility.

In retrospect, one of the critical points raised by Davutoğlu in *Strategic Depth* concerned the need for a proactive and multidimensional foreign policy in countries experiencing transitions from protectionism and import-substitution to economic liberalization and export-promotion.²⁷ In this vein, a careful observer needs to appreciate Turkey's synchronized and stubborn attempts to improve and deepen traditional trade relations with Western Europe, Balkans,

Middle East and Central Asia, while embarking on the formation of new trade links with emerging markets in North and sub-Saharan Africa, Latin America and Southeast Asia. The positive impact of these politico-economic attempts, galvanized through visa-elimination arrangements and PTAs, was clearly noticed when Turkey's export figures hovered around \$101.6 billion in 2009, despite the considerable contraction of demand in Western markets due to the global crisis.

When the intertemporal export figures covering the period between 2003 and 2009 under the reign of the JDP government are studied in detail, it is clear that Turkey's export performance displayed a consistent improvement from \$47.2 billion in 2003 to \$63 billion in 2004, \$73 billion in 2005, \$85 billion in 2006, \$107 billion in 2007 and \$132 billion in 2008, representing a record in republican history. Despite the sharp drop in 2009 to \$101.6 billion, the post-crisis recovery proved quite robust and estimated export figures around \$110 billion firmly placed Turkey as the 22nd largest exporter in the world. It is an undeniable fact that the commercial channels opened by foreign policy actors to neighboring countries, such as Iraq and Syria, as well as new markets in Africa and the developing world, were skilfully utilized by the new generation of Turkey's adventurous entrepreneurs which contributed to the maintenance of the initial momentum in export growth.²⁸ It needs to be emphasized in passing that

both Turkey's accession process for EU membership and her multidimensional international economic relations triggered the formation of a politically-influential business lobby advocating Turkey's full membership in the EU and the improvement of international economic relations with her neighbors and developing countries.

As far as the relative distribution of Turkey's trade with the EU, Middle Eastern and North African (MENA) countries are concerned, the regional shares for the EU and MENA, which were \$27.3 billion/\$7 billion in the year 2003, respectively, became \$36 billion/\$10 billion in 2004; \$41 billion/\$15 billion in 2005; \$48 billion/\$14 billion in 2006; \$60 billion/\$20 billion in 2007; and \$63.3 billion/\$31 billion in 2008. As can be clearly seen from the stated figures, Turkey's export performance to both the EU and MENA regions displayed a consistent expansion between 2003 and 2008. Yet it should also be noted that the relative share of the MENA countries among the main destinations of Turkish exports increased from a mere 5 per cent to 9 per cent despite a four-fold increase in the export volume.²⁹ When the impact of the global crisis triggered a 25 per cent drop in the exports to the EU countries from \$63.3 billion in 2008 to \$46.9 billion in 2009, the relatively slow drop in the export performance to the MENA markets provided Turkey with the leeway to withstand the worst effects of the crisis in terms of economic growth and unemployment. The strong dynamics

of regional integration between Turkey and the MENA region also facilitated a robust recovery in international trade after 2009, confirming the long-term sustainability of regional interdependence despite unexpected external shocks.

Political Economy of Turkey's "New Foreign Policy" and Nuanced Neoliberalism

On the basis of the historical and theoretical analysis presented so far on the mainstream trends of state transformation in the global political economy and Turkey's peculiar route to politico-economic change, it is worth evaluating the main opportunities and challenges facing the country's quest for international competitiveness and her new foreign policy approach. Such an analysis will allow both a general assessment of the two waves of neoliberal transformation experienced since the 1980s and the profound alteration in the basic priorities and strategies of Turkish foreign policy in the era of global economic integration. To start with, it must be emphasized as a general political comment that the incumbent JDP has consistently attempted to maintain the image of a market-friendly, center-right political movement with a carefully balanced dose of sensitivity in social welfare, since its foundation in 2001. Therefore, it conceived both the promotion of private sector activity, accelerated integration with the global

markets, and realization of visible improvements in the socioeconomic realm through substantial investments in public services in key areas such as education, health, and transportation, as existential elements of its political legitimacy.

Erdoğan and the JDP elite were also perfectly aware that their long-term strength in Turkey's volatile political arena depended on the accomplishment of sustained macroeconomic stability.

Moreover, Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and the JDP elite were also perfectly aware that their long-term strength in Turkey's volatile political arena depended on the accomplishment of sustained macroeconomic stability, as well as efficiency and fiscal discipline in public administration. As a result, following a long interlude in the post-2002 era, there emerged a strong synergy between the prerogatives of the external creditors pressing for the institution of a 'post-Washington' model regulatory state, the JDP government conceiving administrative reforms and rationalization of state institutions as the basis of its political future, and the Anatolian entrepreneurs hoping for accelerated integration into global markets under the watchful eyes of a 'favorable' government. This productive synergy could be identified as the fundamental factor which motivated

Turkey's success in instituting political and macroeconomic stability on the basis of the Economic Program for Transition to a Strong Economy.³⁰

As far as international economic relations are concerned, Turkey's international trade with especially its Middle Eastern neighbours, i.e., Syria and Iraq, displayed an eye-catching increase which contributed considerably to the maintenance of economic growth and stability up until the onset of the global economic crisis. Moreover, institutional initiatives ranging from the conferences of "Countries Neighboring Iraq" before the 2003 US-led invasion to the "High Level Strategic Cooperation Council" meetings with several neighbors; from PTAs to visa-free travel arrangements; from historical openings to previously unknown territories in Africa to long-term economic and political engagement with Latin America and East Asia, facilitated Turkey's fast-track rise as a respected regional actor. Furthermore, Turkish Airlines became the sixth largest airline carrier in the world in a short period of time. Turkey's proactive international development and technical support agency, TIKA, systematic education and health assistance facilities established abroad by Turkish NGOs; and coordinated regional and international commercial activities of business associations such as The Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey- TOBB, The Confederation of Businessmen and Industrialists of Turkey- TUSKON and Independent

Industrialists and Businessmen's Association- MÜSİAD, including major trade fairs and multilateral road shows contributed to the geometric increase in Turkey's soft power potential.

However, from a political point of view, there is a critical issue that needs to be emphasized regarding Turkey's ascendancy as a regional power, which concerns the comparatively marginal role played in all these developments by the large-scale industrial bourgeoisie organized around the Turkish Industry and Business Association- TÜSİAD. Unlike similar experiences in East Asia and Latin America whereby an 'emerging market' attempts to merge its politico-military might with socio-economic penetration capacity in order to establish itself as a regional power, Turkey's post-2003 initiatives in proactive diplomacy and the formation of new commercial partnerships within and outside its respective region seemed to receive negligible support from the leading 'captains of industry' which had traditionally controlled the pulse of the Turkish economy. Although the largest Istanbul-based and family-owned business conglomerates under TÜSİAD membership traditionally supported Turkey's Western-oriented foreign policy and her accession to the EU as a full member, they proved reluctant to lend support to the multidimensional and rhythmic foreign policy which was confirmed by the declining numbers of TÜSİAD-affiliated businessmen joining the President/Prime Minister in their

foreign visits, as well as the marginal contribution of TÜSİAD members to major investments in new markets. The underlying reasons of the apparent schism between the incumbent JDP and TÜSİAD are rather complex and include not only deep-rooted ideological differences as to Turkey's preferred national identity and future orientation, but also the comparatively higher adaptation capacity of the small- and medium-sized entrepreneurs based in the Anatolian heartland to the JDP's strategy of opening to new markets outside the US and the EU.³¹

The galvanization of the regulatory architecture in the post-2002 era facilitated the maintenance of the momentum for growth and the resilience of the financial sector.

In terms of domestic macroeconomic parameters, it needs to be reiterated that the period between 2003 and 2008 displayed strong characteristics of a virtuous political economy, including political stability under the single-party JDP administration, rapid economic growth and structural transformation, low inflation, increasing inflows of foreign direct investment and fiscal discipline.³² Especially, the galvanization of the regulatory architecture in the post-2002 era facilitated the maintenance of the momentum for growth and the resilience of the financial sector to external shocks during the height of the global economic crisis between 2008

and 2010. Seen from the perspective of coordination between foreign policy and macroeconomic governance, it could safely be argued that the “Davutoğlu-branded” pro-active foreign policy attitude closely followed, and sometimes even precipitated, new openings in international trade strategy and foreign economic relations. To illustrate, visa-free travel arrangements and PTAs, which were applied to neighboring countries and spread to Africa, Latin America and East Asia, substantially contributed to the increase in the cross-border mobility of goods, services and people to support Turkey's international trade dynamism. Furthermore, the natural corollary of the ‘zero problems with neighbors’ policy in Turkey's backyard has been the formation of novel networks of ‘rule-based trade.’

As the majority of the countries which signed PTAs with Turkey were not members of the World Trade Organization (WTO), Turkey's new initiatives to deepen economic interdependence and institutionalize cooperation through “High-Level Strategic Cooperation Councils” inserted a degree of international regulation and rule of law into the way in which regional trade has been conducted. Moreover, new openings in the relatively unexplored Middle Eastern markets facilitated the maintenance of the economic growth momentum during the global crisis, when overall demand in developed markets was at historically low levels. In terms of the transport of strategically-important energy resources,

new projects such as the Nabucco pipeline presented long-term geostrategic and politico-economic opportunities, while the well-coordinated initiatives by Turkish Airlines, TİKA and the Foreign Affairs bureaucracy laid the foundations for institutionalized and enduring relationships with crucial regions such as Latin America and Africa.

Yet, one important caveat which needs to be emphasized at this point concerns the fact that the new market openings stimulated by unprecedented activism in Turkish foreign policy seem to advance through the creation of operational spaces to mostly small- and medium-sized entrepreneurs (SMEs) situated in various sectors of the Turkish economy. At this point in time, there is no systematic industrial/technological policy which could indicate ‘global niche markets,’ or trigger some form of strategic orientation in the structuring of international trade links. There is also still no clear picture as to the broad sectoral priorities that will determine the fundamental areas of Turkey's international competitiveness and the potential markets that could be targeted by bourgeoining Turkish entrepreneurs. This issue is obviously more economic than foreign policy-related, and needs to be addressed by the key decision makers who shape macroeconomic management in cooperation with large-scale entrepreneurial groups and the representatives of SMEs across Anatolia.

Turkey is not sufficiently experienced in comparison to the BRIC countries or East Asian tigers to formulate coordinated social, economic and foreign policy approaches.

Despite her impressive economic performance in recent years, Turkey is not sufficiently experienced in comparison to the BRIC³³ countries or East Asian tigers to formulate coordinated social, economic and foreign policy approaches designed to promote specific structural transformation and development strategies. To start with, in terms of their respective areas of power and responsibility, there seem to be clear divisions between the economic, financial and foreign policy-related elements of the bureaucratic apparatus in the contemporary Turkish state, with insufficient doses of communication and policy coordination.³⁴ Even within the economic policymaking network, it is hardly possible to observe a broad-based consensus regarding the main parameters of the monetary, fiscal, employment, health-education and competition policies which could underline Turkey's international competitiveness in the medium-term.³⁵ This has a lot to do with the traditional bureaucratic reflexes of the state establishment which tries to keep its specific operational area as isolated as possible from the operational areas of other institutions, as well as the lack of a holistic developmental vision on the part of the political elite in the JDP,

which requires dynamic and synergical contributions of politico-economic actors.

As a result of the apparent absence of this 'strategic developmental orientation,' positive initiatives of certain ministries, bureaucratic agencies, NGOs and market actors have failed to create the optimum transformative impact. Traditionally, in certain economic sectors, there is excess capacity due to aggressive competition among local entrepreneurs and overinvestment, while in some others large-scale investments are not completed due to the scarcity of investment resources or lack of public attention. As a lasting effect of the country's long-term association with IMF programs and the destructive legacy of successive financial crises, the predominant goal of Turkish macroeconomic policy has been the maintenance of economic stability in a low-inflation environment. A repercussion of this, though crucial, obsession with macroeconomic stability is inefficient attention being given to industrial/technological upgrades as a result of which publicly-stated goals, such as 'being world-leader in new technologies' are destined to remain as unrealistic rhetoric.

Even in the realm of domestic subsidies, sectoral and regional preferences were expressed in a very frail manner, which made it impossible to determine the boundaries of a science and technology policy complete with sectoral/regional priorities of a comprehensive

transformation project. Therefore, the weakest link in the second-generation neoliberalism of the post-Washington consensus, followed by the JDP administration, concerned its relative inability, unlike the BRICs and East Asian tigers, to anchor a competition-oriented industrial/technology policy as the lynchpin of ongoing structural transformation. Since the national policy framework of a comprehensive strategic transformation is incomplete, it is practically impossible to expect to see the reflection of this framework in the design and implementation of foreign policy initiatives. Therefore, despite the unrelenting dynamism of the foreign policy apparatus under the leadership of Ahmet Davutoğlu, economic reflections of the new international openings were attained in a rather ad hoc and strategically-unregulated manner. The natural corollary of this state of affairs was a tendency to categorically increase Turkey's international trade relations with as many countries as possible, rather than specifying certain sectoral or regional priorities through which the accumulated value-added could be maximized. In the meantime, the traditional bureaucratic resistance of the civil-military establishment on the basis of a statist/protectionist mentality began to soften in view of the relative

The structural reasons for Turkey's underdevelopment in terms of the key sectors of the new economy are quite varied.

material advantages created by increased global integration. However, entrenched scepticism and unease with direct investments in the Turkish soil continued to re-emerge on occasional instances of bureaucratic confrontation with foreign capital, which became visible especially during large-scale privatization initiatives.

Caveats of Accelerated Global Integration and Main Policy Challenges

It is an undeniable fact that the proactive, consistent and order-creating character of the new Turkish foreign policy effectively formulated and implemented during the Davutoğlu era contributed to a considerable upgrade of Turkey's global profile and justified her visibility in international platforms such as the United Nations, NATO, EU, G-20, and the Organization of Islamic Conference as a credible and principled actor. However, it is also an undeniable fact that in order to support this political/diplomatic credibility with concrete economic-technological superiority, a state of Turkey's size should substantially improve her competitiveness in the flourishing sectors of the knowledge economy such as software, micro-electronics, nanotechnology, biotechnology and information and communication technologies. Despite positive trends in the overall export performance over the course of the

last decade, the relative share of high-technology manufactures remained at extremely low levels compared to countries such as Korea, Malaysia and Brazil which share Turkey's ambitions of being established as regional and global 'play makers'.³⁶ The structural reasons for Turkey's underdevelopment in terms of the key sectors of the new economy are quite varied, but they include the long-term export pessimism of public agencies and reluctance of large-scale bourgeoisie to independently monitor the latest technological developments since the ISI period; the absence of a systematic science and technology policy since the initial years of the first-generation neoliberalism; insufficient public and private attention given to R&D investments; and the lack of a comprehensive industrial/technology policy to coordinate the strategic selection of incoming FDI, induce processes of technological learning, promote mergers and acquisitions aimed at global market share and organize high-quality training for the local human potential. In order to alleviate Turkey's 'technology deficit' and improve her competitive advantage in high value-added sectors in a relatively short time-frame, coordinated policies in the realms of macroeconomic management, higher education, international trade and foreign policy need to be urgently designed and swiftly implemented. This will constitute another key area in which the 'new economic diplomacy' ought to be very effective in the future.

Furthermore, it is quite unfortunate that the entrepreneurial groups around

TÜSİAD, which control the largest firms in the industrial and technology-intensive sectors, have experienced an ideological and interest-based alienation from the JDP administration, because the bulk of the R&D activities are conducted, and patents are obtained, by TÜSİAD members.³⁷ In the first instance, the conventional habits of the large-scale industrialists to accumulate lucrative profits from financial speculation and relationships of domestic patronage since the late 1990s were severely interrupted by the JDP leadership, which tried to direct their commercial activities towards new markets in line with their foreign policy beliefs. However, the reservations of the TÜSİAD leadership concerning the JDP's conservative identity and political polarization between the civil-military state establishment and the JDP, encouraged the 'captains of Turkish industry' to remain in the background during Turkey's proactive openings to Africa, Middle East, Latin America and East Asia.

Although some analysts interpreted this state of affairs as a natural corollary of the JDP leadership's desire to create a 'politically-correct bourgeoisie,' a more balanced view should suggest that the strong commercial relations of the majority of TÜSİAD members on the Euro-Atlantic axis were too dear to be placed at risk, for the sake of adventures in the relatively underdeveloped markets of the 'Third World.' Whatever the respective viewpoint adopted on this issue, the fact remains that a country the size of

Turkey, which aims to establish herself as a major regional and global power, needs to achieve a close coordination between the ideals and priorities of the state elite with those of the key market actors and civil society in order to create a productive synergy so that it become a global actor. Especially the massive public investments required for the construction of new infrastructure for knowledge-intensive sectors and public-private partnerships in key areas, such as R&D investments, necessitate a rapprochement between the strategic goals and priorities of the state elite and those of the leading entrepreneurial groups. In the absence of such a rapprochement, it would be practically impossible to pursue a strategic industrial/technology policy in cooperation with a collection of SMEs scattered around different sectors and economic activities across Anatolia. As shown by historical experience, the bulk of the substantial investments required for the transition from an industrial to a post-industrial society require the involvement of the large-scale industrial bourgeoisie and its strategic partnership with the public sector.³⁸

Strong commercial relations of the majority of TÜSİAD members on the Euro-Atlantic axis were too dear to be placed at risk.

It was already stated that the tendency to dynamically monitor developments and windows of opportunity in global markets in order to develop coordinated

national responses is in its embryonic stages in Turkey. The conventional state elite in the civil-military bureaucracy maintained their adherence to a rigid and defensive understanding of 'national interest' inherited from the late-Ottoman and early-Republican experiments with foreign domination.³⁹ Based upon the preservation of political and economic sovereignty at any cost, this conception of national interest does not leave any room for strategic integration with the global political economy; in other words, it categorically opposes any form of integration. One variant of this defensive nationalism developed during the Cold War involved the inclination to attain attempts at Turkey's political, economic and military integration under the protective wings of a global power, namely the US. But this approach was also historically discredited as a result of various international crises during which the peculiar national interests calculations of the US dominated its protective promises to Turkey.

Another caveat about Turkey's strategic/controlled global integration in both the sociopolitical and economic realms concerns the continued dominance of the state in the economic realm in terms of both the central government and local administrations. As both the central and local political elite control major channels of rent-distribution through public contracts, employment opportunities and the like, the redistributive logic embedded in these circles and the competitive

logic of the global economy based upon rationality and effectiveness are in constant conflict. Therefore, regardless of their political orientation, the Turkish political elite seem to be adamant to preserve a substantial public sector under their governing despite unrelenting international pressures for privatization and deregulation. Finally, despite a three decades-long experimentation with economic liberalization and the Customs Union with the EU, neither the Istanbul-based large-scale industrial bourgeoisie around TÜSİAD, nor the SME groups around Anatolia loosely organized around TOBB, TUSKON, and MÜSİAD, have totally given up their primordial habits of looking for particularistic political favors and protectionist privileges to realize excess profits in a no-risk environment.

Conclusion

There is absolutely no doubt that the intensification of global economic integration and the shift from macroeconomic governance to microeconomic forms of interventionism through science and technology policy, neo-protectionism, international project advocacy and the like will increase pressures on foreign policymakers to get more actively involved in competitive economic processes. In this context, members of the Turkish diplomatic community as well will be expected to play a major role in promoting international trade and economic relations, discovering

new areas for investment and partnership opportunities for Turkish investors, channelling promising foreign investors to Turkey, and facilitating the socio-economic mobility of highly-qualified academics, researchers, scientists, artists and entrepreneurs into Turkey.

Restructuring of Turkey's Foreign Ministry should also be conducted in such a way to increase the number of diplomatic experts with an interdisciplinary focus.

This transformation will obviously require a profound shift in the underlying policy rationale of public actors, as well as the main priorities and tools of foreign policymaking, from their focus on political, ideological, geostrategic and military security towards a more pragmatic and economic efficiency-oriented new rationale constructed around the principles of competitiveness and technological superiority. The initial phase of this critical transformation has already been kickstarted in terms of the style of leadership and policy discourse during the Davutoğlu era; however it is clear that the constitution of a firm public-private infrastructure, in cooperation with globally-oriented entrepreneurs as well as the absorption of the new approach by the wider diplomatic community, civil-military bureaucracy and their counterparts in relevant international circles, is a time-consuming process. Recent

initiatives to expand Turkey's horizons in international economic relations with PTAs with some of the major Latin American and East Asian countries and cooperation agreements with crucial regional organisations such as Southern Common Market- MERCOSUR and Association of Southeast Asian Nations-ASEAN are extremely important as concrete manifestations of Turkey's firm commitment to institutionalize and deepen her relations with emerging markets. Yet, it should also be remembered that such initiatives will only be meaningful and sustainable if their socio-economic infrastructure is strategically and swiftly prepared by macroeconomic decisionmakers and the entrepreneurial community to accomplish productive synergies for international competitiveness.

Furthermore, Turkey's recent diplomatic activism in global fora such as the UN, NATO and the G-20 should also be carried into the institutional platforms that determine the basic parameters of global economic governance such as the Bank for International Settlement (BIS), the IMF and the World Bank in a way to facilitate the ventures of Turkish entrepreneurs across the world. To illustrate, key countries from the developing world such as Brazil, Egypt and Indonesia have a history of playing critical roles in international economic negotiations at different historical conjunctures such as the global oil crises in the 1970s or the Uruguay Round negotiations in

Turkey's excessively liberal attitude towards issues of technological progress and R&D is particularly surprising.

the 1980s and the 1990s.⁴⁰ But Turkey, unfortunately, does not have a historical tradition of economic diplomacy and a comprehensive diplomatic apparatus, including numerous experts who specialize in issues of international trade, finance, intellectual property rights, etc. Therefore, the restructuring of Turkey's Foreign Ministry should also be conducted in such a way to increase the number of diplomatic experts with an interdisciplinary focus in order to assess the sociopolitical repercussions of economic developments, and vice-versa.

A crucial issue that needs to be emphasized in conclusion concerns the intensification of practices among the industrialized states, BRICs and particularly the emerging markets in East Asia to transcend restrictions on the employment of protectionism in the global trading regime through a myriad of 'non-tariff barriers' (NTBs).⁴¹ At a time when both the industrialized and industrializing economies are engaged in competition to discover ways of neoprotectionism to promote the swift development of strategically important sectors, especially in the knowledge-intensive areas,⁴² Turkey's excessively liberal attitude towards issues of technological progress and R&D is particularly surprising. On their part,

conventional state elites and the left-wing political movements have so far adhered to an undifferentiated form of protectionism as a result of their political/ideological standing and were alienated from the logic of new global competition, while center-right political movements have distanced themselves from strategic regulation of domestic and international activity as a form of statist interventionism. Therefore, they avoided, for instance, the design and implementation of monetary, fiscal and international trade policies in the light of industrial/technological

advancement. As a result, Turkey's relative level of development in terms of R&D investments, high-technology manufacturing and diversification of exports remained quite disappointing compared to various countries located at similar positions of the global division of labor.⁴³ Therefore, in the near future, technological development and modernization of industrial sectors would be one of the central issues that the key actors of macroeconomic governance, major entrepreneurial groups and foreign policy makers will have to address together in close collaboration.

Endnotes

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 - 35 To illustrate, the main policy priority of the Central Bank has been macroeconomic stability and non-inflationary growth, while institutions dealing with the real economy such as the State Planning Organization or Ministry of Trade and Industry tend to focus on issues such as production capacity, employment creation and export potential. There is also a need to formulate policies for local-regional socio-economic development and international trade/competitiveness in a complementary manner.
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Turkish - American Relations in 2009

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Abstract

This article analyses Turkish foreign policy towards the USA in 2009. After putting the Turkish-US relations into historical and political context it focuses on a set of developments that affected bilateral relations in 2009. It argues that Turkish-American relations in 2009 were shaped and influenced more by “third party” problems and issues, than by bilateral ones. The set of such issues were categorized and examined under three levels- bilateral, global and regional. The year 2009 could be seen as a positively exceptional span of time for Turkish foreign policy, because of Turkey’s high level of cooperation with the USA. The term developed to describe this new era, model partnership, could be defined as extensive and intensive collaboration between Turkey and the USA to set up a new regional order in the countries and regions around Turkey. Thus, during 2009, Turkey and the USA actively cooperated for the resolution of crises pertaining to Iraq, Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Armenia, and the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Key Words

Turkish foreign policy, American foreign policy, Turkey-USA relations in 2009, Model Partnership, regional order in Eurasia.

Introduction

Turkish-American relations in general terms have always been shaped under the influence of two factors. The first is the set of structural and institutional factors, which can be regarded as the fundamental dynamic of the bilateral relations. It includes those enduring elements that helped the continuity of the relationship, despite all kinds of current or periodical challenges. Most important of those elements are the following: Turkey’s membership in, and position within, the military-political structure of NATO; her relations with global economic and financial institutions, the IMF and the World Bank; her diplomatic and political role stemming from UN membership; and finally, the U.S. sphere of influence policy in the regions around Turkey. All these can be seen as the bases of continuity in Turkish-American relations for more than sixty years, which ensure

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the maintenance and resilience of good relations in spite of crises and problems that emerge from time to time. However, the structural and institutional dimension is frequently tested by new developments and crises time and again, but revised and maintained continuously.

The second set of factors to influence Turkey's foreign policy towards the US is those national and international conjectural/periodical developments which closely relate to, and influence, Turkish-American relations. Thus, changing conjunctures from the 1940s up until now have caused an overlap of interests and policies of the two countries sometimes, and conflicts and alienation at other times. As a result, Turkey's foreign policy towards the US has shown different patterns in different periods.

In historical perspective, Turkey's policy toward the US was at the highest level in three periods, which can also be described as the golden ages of Turkish-American relations: the Menderes period of the 1950s, the Özal period of the 1980s and the Gül-Erdoğan period since 2007. In those periods Turkey's policy towards the US was intensive and extensive. It can be argued that the above-mentioned periods played a leading role in the formation of Turkey's perception of the US in general. Turkey's definition

and perception of the US as an 'ally', a 'friend,' and even a 'savior' resulted from its experience in those periods. Bilateral and multilateral cooperation between the two countries grew in those periods, too. They co-acted to form an order in the regions extending from the Middle East to Europe up to Korea. In those golden ages, a strong sympathy towards the US, i.e. pro-Americanism, developed at the social and bureaucratic segments of Turkey.

At other times outside the golden ages, Turkish-American relations witnessed serious problems, and even deep crises, from time to time. But two of these crises were especially critical because of their potential risks to destroy relations between the two countries. The first

In those golden ages, a strong sympathy towards the US, i.e. pro-Americanism, developed at the social and bureaucratic segments of Turkey.

was the turmoil in the 1960-1970 period due to the Cyprus problem, which resulted in the notorious Johnson Letter in 1964, and unfortunate US military embargo against Turkey in 1975. The second period covered the time frame from 1 March 2003, when Turkey's Grand National Assembly (TGNA) refused to cooperate with the US on the invasion of Iraq, to 5 November 2007, when Prime Minister Erdoğan and President Bush met in the Oval Office to conclude an intelligence cooperation agreement against the PKK. In those years, a wide range of tensions and alienation erupted in Turkish-American relations. Turkey's

approach to the US became negative, especially at the social level; some people even came to the point as to consider the US a big threat for Turkey. In contrast to the golden ages, anti-Americanism was on the rise in that period.

It can be inferred from the above analysis that Turkey's policy toward the USA was shaped more by the situations in third countries or regions which were related to the interests of both countries than by the issues directly related to bilateral relations. In other words, Turkey's foreign policy toward the US and Turkish-American relations was rather heavily influenced by the periodic developments in third countries or other regions. As an overall principle, it can be argued that in those cases where both countries have common perceptions of interests about third countries and regions, Turkey's foreign policy toward the US has been 'good'; on the contrary, in those cases where interests of both countries conflicted or deeply differed the relationship has been 'negative' or 'in crisis.'

Turkey's policy towards the US closely influences its foreign policy in general terms and its attitude toward other countries and regions.

Thus, when analyzing Turkey's policy towards the US, unlike her policy towards most of other countries, one should take into account not only bilateral issues but

also those situations and problems which concerned both countries' interests at the same time. Such situations may emanate not only from those developments at local, regional and global levels, but also from 'domestic' political issues of both countries. Consequently, Turkey's policy towards the US closely influences its foreign policy in general terms and its attitude toward other countries and regions. In other words, Turkey's foreign policy understanding and its policies toward other countries and international system is a derivative of Turkey-US relations. This is mainly because of the aforementioned structural and institutional factors.

From this perspective, we can analyze Turkey's foreign policy towards the US or Turkish-American relations in 2009 under three sections: firstly the general mood or atmosphere of Turkey-US relations; secondly, developments in bilateral relations; thirdly, approaches and practices by Turkey and the US toward third countries or other regions.¹

Turkey's US Policy before 2009

To understand Turkey's US policy in 2009, we should first of all recall the recent history of Turkish-US relations. Although Turkish-US relations in 2009 were based on recent developments, two of them must be emphasized in particular. The first one is the refusal by TGNA, on 1 March 2003, of the Gül

Turkey was convinced to create a new US policy so as to eliminate the negative consequences of the Iraq problem to Turkey.

government's decree to support the US-led invasion of Iraq, and the ensuing crisis in the relationship between Turkey and the US.² This decision, which can also be seen as Turkey's rejection of the US-led invasion of Iraq, shocked the Bush administration and American analysts. Turkey's refusal to open its bases and soil to the American use for the first time in long years (e.g. since 1975) caused deep sorrow and bewilderment in the US. Even though the government, despite the rejection of the decree by the TGNA, opened its airspace to the US for flights during the invasion operations, hence gave indirect support to the USA, it did not calm down the administration's frustration.

The emergence of chaos and instability in Iraq after the invasion caused further deterioration in Turkish-American relations. In particular, the growth of risks and dangers such as the fragmentation of Iraq, establishment of a Kurdish state and change of Kirkuk's status in Iraq led to an incremental increase of anti-Americanism at the social and political levels in Turkey. Additionally to that was ignorance by the Bush administration and neoconservatives of Turkey's fight against terror and sensitivities on security

matters, and their failure to take into account Turkey's views on Iraq and other regional problems, which resulted in a deep crisis in bilateral relations.

However, the gradual 'bogging down' of the US in the Iraqi crisis, after a few years of occupation, forced the Bush Administration to revise its Iraqi policy and to change its program to restructure Iraq. An important step in this context was the famous Baker-Hamilton Iraqi Report.³ The report argued that the American policy towards Iraq and the region was in trouble, and suggested that there should be a policy change to reverse the process in a positive direction. One of the dimensions of the new policy was to integrate all Iraqi groups into the government; the other was the obligation to start cooperating with Iraq's neighboring countries, Turkey in particular.

To implement the second dimension of the report in particular, the Bush administration needed to make a radical change in its approach to Turkey. It realized the importance of Turkey's key role in the restructuring of Iraq and in the withdrawal of US forces from Iraq. Thus, the structural and institutional importance of Turkey-USA relations was suddenly discovered. In the following period, the Bush administration accelerated rapprochement with Turkey.

Meanwhile, Turkey was convinced to create a new US policy so as to

eliminate the negative consequences of the Iraq problem to Turkey. A terror attack by the PKK on a Turkish military post in Dağlica on the Iraqi border on 21 October 2007 played an important catalyst in this process. Turkey embarked on a new dialogue with the USA in order to launch a military operation against PKK terrorists who were infiltrating into Turkey from northern Iraq. This case paved the way for a new period in Turkish-American relations.

Obama's understanding of foreign policy, different from that of his predecessor Bush in terms of both its content and geopolitical conceptualization, accentuated Turkey's role

In this context, Prime Minister Erdoğan, accompanied by a large delegation of civilian and military officials, held a historic meeting with President Bush and his aides in Washington on 5 November 2007. At the end of this meeting, the two countries decided to cooperate on sharing intelligence against the PKK. This agreement was in fact the start of a new and comprehensive period of cooperation between Turkey and the US. They reached a consensus to cooperate for reconstructing, not only Iraq, but also the Middle East in general. This meeting can be accepted as the starting moment of a new period, not only for Turkey's US policy and Turkish-American relations, but also for Turkish foreign policy towards Iraq in particular

and towards the whole Middle East in general. The year 2009 is the span of time that should now be analyzed in this context.

Basic Factors Shaping the Bilateral Relations in 2009

Turkish-American relations developed very positively in 2009. Before explaining this period, the basic factors generating this positive process will be briefly evaluated. At the top is the abovementioned atmosphere of the 5 November 2007 agreement. While Turkey and the US started having a common position against the PKK terror, the US extended more intelligence support to Turkey's struggle to combat terrorism. In this respect, Turkey and the US, alongside with the Iraqi government, formed a trilateral intelligence mechanism in order to target PKK terrorists operating from northern Iraq. Turkey also tried to draw in the northern Iraqi Kurdish administration in order to have its support for the process. Turkish Foreign Minister Davutoğlu, Turkish Interior Minister Atalay and a delegation of security officials went to Erbil to meet with the Kurdish regional representatives to realize the trilateral mechanism.

A related factor emerging in this atmosphere was the change of administration in the US. The inauguration of Barack Hussein Obama as president on 20 January 2009 played a decisive role in Turkish-American

relations. Obama's understanding of foreign policy, different from that of his predecessor Bush in terms of both its content and geopolitical conceptualization, accentuated Turkey's role.⁴ The foreign policy of Obama, who had gained the presidency with the motto of 'change', aimed to develop a different and more positive relationship with the Islamic world and the Middle Eastern countries. In his Cairo speech on 5 June 2009, Obama stated that he wanted to open "a new page" with the Islamic world, terminating the mistaken practices of the past, and to develop a new kind of relationship based on mutual interests and respect.⁵ From this and other statements of Obama, it can be concluded that he desired to follow a foreign policy which was peaceful and pro-dialogue in content, while still focusing on the Islamic world, Middle East, Caucasus, and Central Asia from a geopolitical perspective.

To implement his policy, Obama needed allies in the region to cooperate with and rely on, among which the first and the most important actor would be Turkey.⁶ Thus Turkey's international structural-institutional position overlapped with the conjunctural conditions. In other words, the Erdoğan government's foreign policy coincided perfectly with the content and spirit of Obama's foreign policy. Just like Obama's foreign policy, the AK Party's seven-year foreign policy was based on a "vision of peace."⁷ All of the AK Party's practices in the context of the EU's Copenhagen criteria, its

performance in the Cyprus problem and relations with Greece, and even its attitude to the American-led invasion of Iraq, were aspects of this vision of peace. Turkey's foreign policy within this content was supported both in the east and the west. Turkey's liberalism-oriented foreign policy was perceived well by the whole world, including the US and other Western countries in particular. As a result of such a growing sympathy, Turkey was elected (after a long time) as a non-permanent member to the UN Security Council for the period 2009-2010.

The coincidence of Turkey's election with the inauguration of President Obama can be seen as a factor contributing to the development of Turkish-American relations in 2009. The non-permanent Security Council membership assigned Turkey a significant role and responsibility around the UN principles. That the UN is principally a peace-promoting organization has been a contributing factor to the peace-oriented foreign policies of Obama and Erdoğan. Given the fact that all the problems on the international agenda from Iraq to Afghanistan and from Iran to Palestine are included one way or another in the agenda or scope of the UN Security Council, increased cooperation between the US and Turkey is easy to comprehend.

To implement such a foreign policy whose content and geopolitics overlapped, there needed to be a

leadership with the same vision and dynamism. Hillary Clinton in the US and Ahmet Davutoğlu in Turkey played a great role in this respect. While Clinton posed as a powerful foreign policymaker due to both her experience from her husband, former US president Bill Clinton, and to her own presidential candidacy, Davutoğlu had been both an adviser to Turkey's foreign policymaking elite since 2002 and the right person for the resolution of conjectural foreign policy problems.

We cannot know for sure whether Davutoğlu's appointment as foreign minister on 1 May 2009, just after Obama's visit to Turkey on 5-6 April 2009, was a coincidence or a result of the Erdoğan-Obama agreement. Either way, Davutoğlu's appointment was a very critical and positive step for the implementation of Turkish-American cooperation, because of the fact that he is an expert in the problems of the Middle East and Caucasus, a leading actor in the AK Party government's foreign policymaking toward the region, and an academic arguing that Turkey's 'strategic depth' requires her to concentrate on the Middle East, Balkans, Caucasus, and Central Asian "basin". Davutoğlu was the best choice for the implementation of the foreign policies of both the Obama administration and Erdoğan government as well as for their cooperation. Developments in 2009 clearly proved that.

Turkey-USA Relations in 2009: Towards Model Partnership

The most striking aspect of Turkish-American relations in 2009 was the high level, reciprocal and formal visits and the ensuing new agenda. Of these visits, the most important indication of the importance that Obama showed toward Turkey was Obama's first formal visit to Ankara and Istanbul on 5-6 April. Obama's speech in the TGNA was the most important activity to start a new period in the Turkish-American relations. It was also striking to see that Obama held not only traditional and routine talks with the Turkish president, prime minister, and chief of staff as well as with opposition party leaders under the premises of the Assembly, but also 'civilian' meetings with religious, cultural and student groups in Istanbul. On these occasions, he practiced such public diplomacy as to give religious, cultural, strategic and political messages to gain the sympathy of Turkish society. The visit and its program, which would be mundane under ordinary conditions, turned out to be very important strategically and very meaningful due to the transformation of recent Turkish-American relations and to Turkey's new role in the current crises.

Obama's visit to Turkey was critical partly because of the fact that diplomatic and political rapprochement between the two countries started improving

again, and partly from the fact that the visit program included activities geared towards eliminating increasing anti-Americanism in Turkish society. Indeed, Obama's visit to Turkey was appreciated not only among Turkish officials but also by the 'man-on-the street'. Turkish public opinion, as revealed in the media channels, was such that the Obama administration was perceived differently from the Bush administration. Moreover, the Islamic origins of Obama's initial names (Barack Hussein) and the spread of such gossip that Obama was actually a 'Muslim in heart' boosted Turkish people's perception about Obama and the US.

Obama's speech in the TGNA in particular and his meetings with Turkish officials in general became the basis for a framework for Turkish-American relations for the year 2009 and the future. Obama's description of Turkish-American relations as 'Model Partnership' gave strong hints of the start of a new era between the two countries. Whereas in the past, concepts like 'strategic partnership' or 'durable alliance' were used mostly to describe Turkish-American relations, Obama's expression of a model partnership for the first time caused ambiguity in the beginning. What did Obama mean by a model partnership? How would Turkey-US relations develop in the following years? What would Turkey's contribution to, and role for, the partnership be? What would be Turkey's benefit and interests from the partnership? Such questions

were instantly asked. In response, some theories were spelled out, some positive and negative ideas were expressed, and speculation started from the first day.

The clearest answer to these questions was indeed given in practice in 2009. Namely, the details of the Turkey-US Model Partnership were partly seen in Obama's speech in the TGNA, but it was actually revealed more clearly in the implementation process. Obama's concept was partly related to Turkey's domestic politics but mostly to Turkey's foreign policy. The issue most wondered about regarding its relevance to Turkish domestic politics was the question of what would be the Obama administration's attitude towards democracy and secularism in Turkey. Obama, in his speeches in Ankara, tried to eliminate speculation by emphasizing the importance of Turkey's membership into the EU, the greatness of Atatürk, and Turkish secularism.

Obama's main message was hidden in his views pertaining to Turkey's foreign policy and to the level of Turkish-American relations. Obama in his TGNA speech stated that "I am asked whether my visit to Turkey, an important ally of the USA, has any message." He replied that "my answer to this question is (in Turkish) 'Evet – Yes.'"⁸

The following were Obama's messages to the Turkish people with the motto "Model Partnership": The basic message was that the parties must resolve

the difficulties by working together. Obama described the difficulties and the ways of cooperation very clearly. First, “an open border helps Turkish and Armenian peoples to coexist in peace and welfare, which serve the interest of both countries. Therefore, the US supports a full normalization of relations between Turkey and Armenia.” Second, “the US and Turkey can help the Palestinians and the Israelis. Turkey mediated between Syria and Israel. She should extend her hands to the Palestinians as well.” Third, “Iran should make its choice: do they want to have a better future, or resort to the arms?” Fourth, “Iraq’s security is important in terms of regional security too. As US president and a NATO ally, I support neither the PKK nor any other terrorist organizations.” Finally, “Turkey is our strong partner; she is one of the powers in the region. We should define our goals together. I appreciate your help given to us...We extend our friendly hand to all...we should work together for building the future...”

The reason for Obama’s interest in Turkey was his awareness that he could achieve great part of his strategy only by cooperating with Turkey.

From his speech, the new regional strategy of the Obama administration could be divided into five categories, each of which is closely related to Turkey. First is to reverse President Bush’s ‘preemptive

strike’ policy which put US regional interests at risk, and instead to follow a strategy based on multilateralism, diplomacy, peace and dialogue. Second is try to stop Iran’s nuclear program by diplomatic methods, instead of war and conflict. Third is to restructure Iraq after the withdrawal of American troops. Fourth is to stop Iran’s influence over Syria and radical actors like Hamas and Hizbullah in order to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Fifth is to obtain Pakistan’s support to fight terror in Afghanistan. The reason for Obama’s interest in Turkey was his awareness that he could achieve great part of his strategy only by cooperating with Turkey.

Philip H. Gordon, U.S. Deputy Secretary of State for Europe and Eurasia Affairs, clarified the Obama administration’s expectations of Turkey’s role in the region in his speech at the Brookings Institution Sabancı Lectures:⁹

Few countries play such a crucial role in such a diverse set of important areas. How many countries have borders with as diverse an array of countries as Turkey – Greece, Bulgaria, Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Iran, Iraq, and Syria. With its combination of strategic, economic, and cultural links, Turkey’s influence touches such vital concerns of both our countries as the stability of the Middle East and relations with the broader Islamic world, relations with the Caucasus and Black Sea region, the transit of energy from the Caspian Basin to Europe, the security and development of Iraq, Afghanistan, and Pakistan, and the maintenance of strong ties to Europe and the Trans-

Atlantic alliance. The geography that I have just mentioned spans some of the most sensitive and significant parts of the globe and in every one of these areas U.S.-Turkish cooperation can be a force for progress.¹⁰

From Turkish point of view, the Model Partnership was important in three respects.

The Model Partnership concept of the Obama administration was explicitly welcomed by the AK Party government. Foreign Minister Davutoğlu bluntly expressed Turkey's willingness. Davutoğlu, in a speech he made before his departure to the US on 31 May 2009, soon after his appointment to the office on 1 May 2009, announced his support for the Model Partnership as follows:

The main point of my contacts is a kind of follow-up to President Obama's visit to Turkey and meetings with him thereof. In the following period there are many issues in the international agenda that Turkey and the USA must talk about. Such topics as Iraq, Caucasus, Afghanistan, Pakistan, the Middle East, and Cyprus are the issues on which Turkey and the USA should have a close coordination.¹¹

In another speech Davutoğlu stated that "Turkish foreign policy and Obama administration's foreign policy fully overlap."¹²

From Turkish point of view, the Model Partnership was important in

three respects: first, struggling against the PKK terror, finding a durable and just solution to the Cyprus problem, and cooperating on energy and other issues which are directly related to Turkish interests; second, resolving concrete problems pertaining to Iraq, Iran, Afghanistan, Armenia, Azerbaijan, and other issues which closely affect Turkish interests; and third, restoring peace and stability in the Middle East, Caucasus, Central Asia, and Balkans, of which the most important was the Palestine problem.

The Model Partnership was attempted to be implemented at three levels in 2009: first, in bilateral relations, a high level of activities and rapprochement took place; second, at a global level, Turkey's participation in global organizations and processes intensified; and third, at the regional level, Turkey followed an active policy towards the establishment of a regional order. This policy was almost fully supported by the USA. The implementation process of the Model Partnership will be analyzed in the following section.

Increasing Activism in Bilateral Relations

The most important and primary dimension of the Turkey-US Model Partnership was the high level, intensive and reciprocal diplomatic contacts in bilateral relations. An important

indicator for understanding the state and the degree of international relations between any two states is to see the intensity and level of diplomatic relations between the states concerned. In 2009, diplomatic relations between Turkey and the US developed very intensively and at the highest level possible. In the intensive diplomatic traffic during the year, there were many important visits from the US to Turkey and from Turkey to the US at all levels. Secretary of State Clinton and President Obama visited Ankara and Istanbul in March and April, respectively, while Davutoğlu visited the US three times after his appointment as Foreign Minister and Prime Minister Erdoğan visited America twice in 2009.¹³ Even though one of the Turkish visits was for the purpose of participating in the UN General Assembly, there were diplomatic talks between Turkish and American officials on this occasion. In addition, there were a series of formal talks between the Turkish and American chiefs of staffs, civil society organizations, finance ministers, treasury ministers, economy ministers, Assembly/Congress members, and different political actors. It must be stressed that the flow of visits from Turkey to the US was more than those from the US to Turkey. The reason for this was partly due to the intensity of bilateral relations, and partly due to Turkey's participation in international organizations such as the UN, IMF, World Bank, and G-20, which are located in the US.

This intensity of the diplomatic agenda vindicated how intensified the relations between the two countries became.

This intensity of the diplomatic agenda vindicated how intensified the relations between the two countries became. The main goal of such an agenda of bilateral, regional and global issues can be briefly summed as the implementation of the Model Partnership. The diplomatic process tried first of all to improve bilateral rapprochement in all fields possible to serve the interests of both sides. While Turkey expected support from the US in fighting against the PKK, promoting security, resolving financial and economic problems, and resolving foreign policy problems, especially the Armenian question, the Cyprus problem, EU membership, the US expected support from Turkey to play a role in the resolution of problems in Iraq, Iran, and Afghanistan- in the process of withdrawal of American military forces from Iraq in particular- in the Arab-Israeli peace process, and in other regional and global issues.

The diplomatic traffic was not confined to the bilateral level only, but spilled over to regional and global issues. Moreover, if one takes the Model Partnership as the basis of cooperation between the countries towards third countries as well as regional and global issues, it can be argued that all bilateral

diplomatic relations aimed to achieve the implementation or operationalization of this cooperation.

Global/ Structural Level of Cooperation

An important aspect in the implementation of the Model Partnership and the development of Turkish-American relations in 2009 was the participation in international and global institutions in which both Turkey and the USA are present. Considering that NATO, IMF, World Bank, and G-20- are critical in terms of the operation of the global system, the level of cooperation between Turkey and the US within these institutions should be investigated as well. In 2009, Turkish-US cooperation inside these institutions developed such that Turkey's position within these institutions improved visibly.

At the forefront was Turkey's election as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council. Although Turkey was elected to this position with as high as 151 votes of the UN General Assembly, we should not forget the support from the UN Security Council permanent members, the US in particular. It was clear that Turkey's recent 'peace-oriented' foreign policy and her critical geopolitical position in world politics played an important role in her election to this position. The election of Turkey, with its peaceful foreign policy objectives, to the Security Council was a very good match. When taking into account that most of

the regional problems being dealt with by both Turkey and the US are on the agenda of the UN Security Council in one way or another, the value of Turkey's Security Council membership can be better understood. Turkey's peace-oriented foreign policy toward such issues like Iran's nuclear program and the Arab-Israeli question made Turkey's membership of UN Security Council more meaningful and valuable.

Two of the UN Security Council meetings in 2009 to which Turkey also attended could be discussed in this context: the 31 March International Conference on Afghanistan under the auspices of UN in the Hague and, the 11 May Conference on the Middle East in New York which was chaired by Davutoğlu. In the New York meeting, it was suggested that there should be a two-state solution to the Palestine problem, and the dialogue between different Palestinian groups, i.e., Hamas and Al Fatah, should be improved. These were the suggestions shared by both Turkey and the Obama administration. Another project in which Turkey played a role within the UN context was the Alliance of Civilizations process. This process, co-chaired by Turkey and Spain, was supported by the Obama administration and the Alliance Summit in Istanbul on 6-7 April was attended by many world leaders, including Obama. Obama's participation in the Istanbul Summit and the US support of the process was very interesting, because the Alliance of Civilizations was originally formed as a protest and alternative to the Clash

of Civilizations thesis produced by an American scholar, Samuel Huntington, and almost put into practice by the Bush Administration. The Obama administration has a different attitude than its predecessor on this issue, standing consistent with Turkey's approach in the Summit.

Another development, which strengthened Turkey's international structural position, was her increasing participation and position in global financial-economic organizations. Turkey's involvement in the G-20 process, which started in 2009, was particularly important. She participated in two G-20 summits in April and September where Erdoğan and Obama held bilateral as well as multilateral talks, all of which helped improve Turkey's position in the global financial-economic system. By being part of this system, Turkey tried to resolve, on the one hand, her problems generated by the globalization process in general and current international financial-economic crisis in particular, and to be influential in the formation of decisions and policies of the global organizations on the other. As a result, Turkey started to have a say in the restructuring process of the global system.

A very important development in this context was the convening of the annual meeting of the governors of the IMF-World Bank on 4-8 October in Istanbul.¹⁴ More than fifteen thousand people, including the most influential finance and economy ministers of the global economy, heads of central banks,

and heads of states and governments, visited Istanbul for this occasion. The Istanbul Declaration was issued at the end of this meeting where a set of important decisions was made for the restructuring of the IMF and the World Bank. If these decisions will be put into practice, it can be argued that the Istanbul Meeting could be seen as a historic turning point for these institutions.

Although these meetings focused basically on financial-economic issues, a number of debates took place on international political and security issues to make an effort to form common positions on these problems. This is not a surprise if one considers that economic, political and security issues are interlinked. For example, in the G-8 meeting in Trieste, Italy on 25-27 June, where Davutoğlu participated, despite its economic character in essence, a seminar was held on 'Afghanistan and the Regional Dimension.' Measures for the resolution of the Afghanistan problem and its implications for the region were debated. Davutoglu's participation in this meeting was due to Turkey's contribution to the resolution of the Afghanistan problem and its contribution to the NATO-led ISAF operation.

Another aspect of Turkey's importance for the US is its role and policies around NATO membership, which is very critical for the establishment of Turkey's international position and foreign policy. This role required Turkey to join peacemaking operations in

Turkey continued to play an active role by participating into all NATO meetings in 2009 that tried to resolve the Afghanistan problem.

Afghanistan. As a member of the ISAF force formed under the leadership of NATO, Turkey served twice as the head of the command. Turkey continued to play an active role by participating into all NATO meetings in 2009 that tried to resolve the Afghanistan problem.

The most important of all these meetings was the NATO Summit of Heads of States and Governments in Brussels on 3-4 April.¹⁵ In the Summit, where Turkey was represented by President Abdullah Gül, apart from such decisions as the election of the Secretary General of NATO, the Afghanistan problem was discussed. Moreover, in the Defense Ministers Council meetings on 11-12 June in Brussels and 22-23 October in Slovakia, Afghanistan and the ISAF issue was debated. Finally, in the Foreign Ministers meeting on 3-4 December in Brussels where Turkey was represented by Davutoğlu, such issues as increasing the number of NATO soldiers in Afghanistan and NATO's new strategy in this respect were debated. The conclusion issued in the Afghanistan Declaration was that the member countries should send more combat troops to Afghanistan.

Turkey gave a negative response to the NATO demand which had been made in parallel to Obama's new strategy

on Afghanistan. Turkey opted to send peace-making forces only, but declined to send additional combat forces to Afghanistan. This Turkish policy, although it appears as a refusal to the US request, was appreciated by the US administration. Turkey's 'soft power role' in Afghanistan, namely training Afghan soldiers and police while constructing infrastructure, made a great contribution to the restructuring of Afghanistan, and a 'soft contribution' to the war on terror.

All these meetings and issues show that the organizations around which the US global hegemonic power is formed and where Turkey's role has increased, sought to tackle a set of problems from Afghanistan to Iraq, Iran, and Israel. Given its performance, Turkey's role and influence improved not only within the context of global bodies but also in Afghanistan and other regional problems.

The Quest for Security, Stability and Order at the Regional Level

One of the main reasons for the start of the Model Partnership was both countries' converging positions on the need for the resolution of regional security problems. Turkey and the US focused on concrete and specific security problems which directly affected both countries: Iraq, Armenia, Afghanistan, Iran, and the Israel-Palestine peace process. Each of these problems, although having its own peculiar characteristics and importance,

had an element of regional and global security. Therefore, these problems were very closely followed not only by global actors such as Russia, China, and the US but also by the regional countries such as Iran, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Pakistan, India (to some extent), and Turkey, most obviously.

The most important issue for Turkey and the US since 2007 has been the Iraqi problem.

As mentioned above, the geopolitical perspectives of Turkey and the Obama administration overlapped to a great extent. The reason for this overlap comes from their shared goal to establish a stable order in the region. Both countries try to not only improve stability in the region but also to form a new regional order for the sake of regional security. These issues and problems under the Model Partnership can be divided into six groups:

- the process of restructuring Iraq,
- the process of Turkey-Armenia cooperation,
- the fight against terror in Afghanistan-Pakistan sub-region,
- efforts to have a two-state solution for finding a peaceful resolution of the Israel- Palestine problem,
- Turkey's mediation between Syria and Israel, and

- efforts to improve cooperation among Bosnia-Herzegovina, Kosovo, Serbia, and Croatia for peace in the Balkans.

The rapprochement aimed to strengthen Turkish-US partnership in the region against Iran and the groups partly supported by Iran from within the region and partly by Russia, China and the EU from outside the region. This process will be briefly examined in the following section.

Iraq

The most important issue for Turkey and the US since 2007 has been the Iraqi problem. Domestic conflicts, instability, and other problems ongoing in Iraq were having a negative impact on the security and economic interests of both countries. Therefore, Turkey and the US visibly improved their cooperation on Iraq in 2009. They broke through very critical and vitally important issues by acting collectively. At the top of the list of these developments was Turkey's increasing rapprochement with Iraq. Previously, especially after the US-led invasion of Iraq in 2003, Turkey was hesitant about having diplomatic relations with Iraq due to President Celal Talabani's Kurdish identity and his stance on the presence of the PKK in northern Iraq. But in 2009, Turkey changed this attitude and started cooperating with Iraq.

We can divide the developments within this context into three groups. The first was the formation of a Turkey-

US-Iraq Trilateral Security Mechanism and the convening of meetings on 11 April and 28 July in this context.¹⁶ In line with this, work was carried out in order to curb terrorist camps in Iraq.¹⁷ Even if this cooperation could not produce any concrete outcome in 2009, it started a fresh process for the future.

Second, intensive and high-level diplomatic relations developed between Turkey and Iraq. A very important step taken by Turkey was President Gül's visit to Baghdad on 23-24 March 2009, which was the first visit at the presidential level in 33 years. In addition, there were several visits at different levels from the Turkish side, especially from the foreign minister and the interior minister to Baghdad and Erbil, the center of the Northern Iraq Kurdish Administration. The visits to Erbil in particular showed the degree of change in Turkish foreign policy. In response, there were a number of formal and informal visits from Iraq to Turkey during 2009. In addition to Iraqi officials such as the vice president, deputy chief of staff, and deputy prime minister, visits to Ankara were also made by the leaders of Shia, Sunni, Turkoman and other ethnic groups. These reciprocal visits were indeed an outcome or an indication of improving cooperation between Turkey and the US on the reconstruction of Iraq. Therefore, all these visits were supported and appreciated by the US administration.

The aim of these visits was partly to implement the agreement on trilateral

security mechanism among the three countries. In this respect, General David Petraeus', US CENTCOM Commander, visit to Ankara on 30 June-1 July and his meeting with Foreign Minister Davutoğlu was very important for the implementation of cooperation and intelligence assistance to Turkey. These visits could also be seen as an indication of the appreciation for Turkey's role and efforts to ensure stability and order during the parliamentary elections in Iraq in 2010. Turkey was working hard to motivate the Sunnis and other groups to participate in the election process, so as to resolve Iraqi problems and promote stability in the country. Turkey's grand aim was to instigate a dialogue between Sunnis, Shias, Kurds, and all others in order to build up Iraq's central integrity. In doing so, Turkey tried to resolve disagreements among these factions. In order to strengthen Iraqi central authority after the elections, Turkey urged all groups to integrate into the mainstream system. Another aim of these visits from the Turkish point of view was to motivate the Kurdistan Regional Government to fight against PKK terrorism and eradicate terrorists from the area.

Turkey's grand aim was to instigate a dialogue between Sunnis, Shias, Kurds, and all others in order to build up Iraq's central integrity

The third dimension of Turkish-Iraqi relations in 2009 was the formation

of a High Level Strategic Cooperation Council. After preparatory work during 2009, the two countries signed 48 agreements in Baghdad on 15 October in a ceremonious meeting with the participation of the two prime ministers and ten ministers from both sides. These agreements aimed to improve cooperation between the countries in several areas. From the Turkish point of view, the rapprochement with Iraq was important for such goals as cleansing PKK terrorists from northern Iraq, preventing the establishment of a Kurdish state, and promoting the territorial, national and political integrity of Iraq. It was important from the US point of view for such goals as ensuring an easy withdrawal of US military forces from Iraq, ensuring Iraq's stability after the withdrawal, and reducing the influence of Iran in particular or any other country in general in Iraq's domestic affairs.

These developments were to a certain extent an extension and implementation of the Turkey-US Model Partnership process. Turkey's close relationship with Iraq, the struggle to form a new order, and the launch of military operations in northern Iraq were all implemented in coordination with, and support from the USA. Remembering that Turkey's relations with Iraq were almost non-existent from 1 March 2003 until 5 November 2007, it can be concluded that Turkey's increasing relationship and cooperation with Iraq after 2007 was a product of the 5 November agreement,

and that its continuation by the Obama administration in 2009.

Iran

Probably the most critical and sensitive issue in the Turkey-US Model Partnership process was the objective to stop, or take under control Iran's nuclear program. First of all, it should be stressed that in terms of general objectives, Turkey and the US have had almost similar policies about Iran's nuclear program. Both stated that, in principle, Iran can have a nuclear program for peaceful aims, but must not be allowed to develop nuclear weapons. Yet they differed on the methods and means to reach this point; the US tends to use coercive methods, all kinds of forceful instruments including sanctions, or even to consider the launch of a military operation against Iran if other measures are not effective. Turkey on the contrary, believes that coercive and military methods will be not only ineffective but will also cause greater problems. Turkey instead supports the use of soft-power, -persuasive methods such as diplomacy and dialogue, as well as just and equal treatment of all countries on the issue of non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and the elimination of all nuclear weapons in the Middle East, including that of Israel.

To cope with the difference in methods, Turkey struggled to have an informal 'mediation' between the US and Iran during 2009 so as to prevent a

US military operation or tough sanctions against Iran. The aim of the mediation was to pull the US and Iran to the negotiation table and to prevent each side from taking extreme actions that could lead to an escalation of the conflict. In this respect, there was intensive diplomatic traffic between Ankara and Teheran. Prime Minister Erdoğan and Foreign Minister Davutoğlu, accompanied by a number of officials, visited Teheran on 26-28 October and 20 November 2009 respectively.¹⁸ In response, President Ahmedinajad, Foreign Minister Muttaki and a large contingent of Iranian officials visited Ankara.

An agreement was reached on Turkey's mediation in swapping enriched uranium between the Vienna Group and Iran.

All visits partly tried to improve bilateral relations, and more importantly to thaw the international tension generated by the Iranian nuclear program. It is possible to argue that Turkey made a considerable contribution to the holding of the meeting between the P5+1 and Iran in Geneva on October 1. In that process, an agreement was reached on Turkey's mediation in swapping enriched uranium between the Vienna Group and Iran. Even though all these efforts did not brought about a final resolution of the nuclear crisis, there is a consensus that Turkey has played an important role in Iran's communication with the US and the Western countries on this issue.

Moreover, it is certain that Turkey's role was appreciated by the US and other Western countries.

An important mechanism effective in Iran's communication with the Western world was the intensive commercial, economic, financial and political relations between Turkey and Iran. A number of agreements were signed in 2009. The most striking of all was the visit to Tehran on 26-28 October by Erdoğan, accompanied by Davutoğlu and a large number of ministers, bureaucrats, businessmen, and media representatives. Agreements between Turkey and Iran in a number of fields such as economy, oil, commerce and terror not only improved bilateral relations but also contributed to Iran's dialogue with the West/the USA by means of Turkish good offices, and to the formation of a peaceful order and cooperation in the region. Finally, no doubt Turkey-Iran relations were related to the developments in the Middle East and in Central Asia as well.

Afghanistan-Pakistan

Another dimension of the Turkey-US Model Partnership in the context of regional order, probably the most important issue for the Obama administration, was the goal to continue the fight against terrorism in Afghanistan to restructure this country and to integrate Pakistan into this process. While the first objective of the Obama administration's foreign policy was to withdraw US troops

from, and consequently restructure, Iraq, the other was to continue fighting Al Qaeda and Taliban in Afghanistan. Unlike his predecessor Bush, Obama focused more on Afghanistan.

NATO countries have been making substantial contribution to achieving US objectives in Afghanistan, in which Turkey's role is very critical. As a NATO member, Turkey has been primarily involved in Afghanistan as part of the ISAF since its inception. Through this involvement, Turkey supports the US/NATO strategy, but the US came to the conclusion at the end of this eight-year struggle against terror that the stabilization cannot be achieved by military instruments only. There is a consensus on the fact that to be successful in the fight against terrorism, there is a need to get support from neighboring as well as other countries such as Pakistan and Turkey. Pakistan is a key actor because both Al Qaeda and the Taliban have strong roots and sources of support there. Obama thinks that Pakistan should be integrated into the war on terrorism process in order to cut off this linkage.

Turkey's support to the US on the Afghanistan issue can be discussed in two categories. The first category includes Turkey's participation in ISAF, contribution to the training of Afghan soldiers and police, and construction of a number of civilian facilities. During 2009, Turkey continued all such work, not only actively participating in meetings on the Afghanistan problems of NATO,

the UN, and the G-8, but also assuming the ISAF Central Command in Kabul for the second time on 1 November 2010. Turkey's role within NATO is not a fight on the ground, but it makes a peaceful contribution to the civilian restructuring of Afghanistan. Turkey had a positive reaction to Karzai's reelection as president in 2009.

Turkey's second and more important role was to form a trilateral mechanism by mediating between Afghanistan and Pakistan. In this context, the third summit meeting of the presidents of Turkey, Afghanistan and Pakistan, i.e., Gül, Karzai and Zerdari respectively, convened in Ankara on 1 April 2009. All these summits, where the parties agreed to cooperate on such issues as fighting against terrorism and promoting stability and security, were convened under Turkish leadership and within the scope of the US/NATO strategy.

Turkey showed a high level of interest towards Afghanistan and Pakistan during 2009. Foreign Minister Davutoğlu declared Turkey's support for the development of both countries and their fight against terrorism on his visit to both countries on 9-13 June, soon after he had visited the US, where he met Secretary Clinton on 31 May. An important step by Turkey in this context was Prime Minister Erdoğan's visit to Pakistan where he was joined by a group of ministers, bureaucrats, businessmen and media on 25-26 October. On this occasion in which the High Level

Strategic Cooperation Council was formed, the two countries signed a number of agreements on several issues from economy to health, from the fight against terrorism to military cooperation, and from education to cultural cooperation. The aim of these agreements was to ensure their cooperation not only for improving bilateral relations but also for eliminating sources of terror in Pakistan. Turkey and Pakistan consider cooperation in soft power in the fight against terrorism in order to resolve the terror problem through education. To this end, initiatives were undertaken to implement the Turkish model of Imam Hatip religious schools, so as to foster a moderate understanding of Islam in Pakistan.

Armenia

There are many bilateral problems between Turkey and Armenia.¹⁹ However, they are not limited to bilateral relations only, but they also negatively affect the Caucasus region and global politics as well. Regionally speaking, Armenia's geographical proximity to Russia facilitates Russian influence in the region. The Russian invasion of Georgia's breakaway province of South Ossetia in 2008 showed once more Russia's increasingly expanding influence over the Caucasus. This development also showed that the Caucasus was a center of global power politics. The Russian invasion and its consequences alarmed not only regional countries but also the US and

other Western/NATO countries. By sending warships into the Black Sea, the US showed its determination to support Georgia's security. The attitudes and positions of other regional countries on that issue were also important. Turkey's timely initiative, named the "Caucasus Stability and Cooperation Platform", drew the attention of other countries, the USA and Russia in particular.

Obama's Armenian strategy overlapped with Turkey's goal to improve its relations with Armenia.

The resolution of Turkish-Armenian problems is important for Obama for three reasons. First, the administration can be relieved of pressure from the lobbies in domestic politics; by ending the Armenian lobby's attempts every year to get a resolution passed by Congress, it would help the administration get rid of being squeezed between the Congress and Turkish Realpolitik. Second, the development of Turkish-Armenian relations may facilitate Armenia's move away from the Russian sphere of influence towards the US/NATO sphere of influence with the help of Turkey. Third, Armenian rapprochement towards Turkey would facilitate the flow of the region's energy resources to the West.²⁰

For these reasons, Obama's Armenian strategy overlapped with Turkey's goal to improve its relations with Armenia, motivating Turkey's opening toward

Armenia which, as mentioned above, had been stressed by President Obama during his visit to Ankara. Therefore, the start of diplomatic traffic between Turkey and Armenia soon after Obama's visit was not a coincidence. The first, and perhaps, the most important example of the traffic, was a trilateral meeting among than Turkish Foreign Minister Ali Babacan, Armenian Foreign Minister Edward Nalbandian and Obama in Istanbul on 7 April, on the occasion of the Second Forum meeting of the Alliance of Civilizations. This meeting was very important, not only as an indication showing Obama's interest in the problem, but also as the start of Turkey's opening to Armenia. Soon after that, Babacan and Nalbatyan met once more in the Foreign Ministers meeting of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation in Erivan on 16 April.

The goal of these meetings and talks was to prepare an agreement for improving Turkey-Armenia relations. The first step for such an agreement was the signing of protocols and their implementation. Two protocols were prepared at the end of diplomatic negotiations held behind the closed doors with the mediation of Switzerland. Finally, two protocols entitled "Start of Diplomatic Relations" and "Improvement of Diplomatic Relations" were signed in Zurich on 10 October. The scene at the signing ceremony of the protocols showed how important Turkey's opening to Armenia was for regional and global politics, considering

that the ceremony was attended by US Secretary of State Clinton, along with Russian Foreign Minister Lavrov, EU High Commissioner Solana, and French Foreign Minister Kouchner.

Arab-Israeli Question

Another critical issue for the Model Partnership was to revitalize the Arab-Israeli peace process to find a solution to the problem. It was noticed that the Obama administration and Turkey had a common view and approach on two points for the resolution of the conflict.²¹ The first point was to implement the "two-state solution" to the question; however to achieve this there is a need to first end Israeli occupation and second to reconcile two Palestinian foes, Hamas and El Fatah, under the same banner. The second point was the conclusion of peace negotiations between Israel and the Arab states, the most critical of which was Syria. Syria is one of the keys actors to the peace process, not only because of its geopolitical position in the region, but also because of its support to the radical groups Hezbollah and Hamas. Another reason for including Syria in the peace process was its alliance and strong relations with Iran. Iran's influence in most of these regional issues, including the Arab-Israeli conflict, makes Syria's position critical and invaluable. Iran and the US compete to have Syria on their side due to its critical position. All Western countries, led by the US, want Syria to decouple from Iran and move

towards the US-Western axis, and want Turkey to play a role in this strategic process.

Turkish-Israeli relations passed through its worst time ever, witnessing many crises one after another during 2009.

Turkey had already undertaken certain initiatives in both issues before 2009, namely, trying to mediate between Palestinian groups and between Israel and Syria. But, the process, also supported by the US, derailed to a great extent in 2009, because of Israel's large-scale military attack on Gaza in December 2008-January 2009, just before the inauguration of President Obama. The ensuing problems destroyed Turkey's position and efforts. Afterwards, Turkey's efforts to reconcile Hamas and El Fatah were severely damaged, and its position as mediator between Syria and Israel almost ended.

Turkey showed a very strong reaction against Israel's invasion of Gaza. As a result, Turkish-Israeli relations passed through its worst time ever, witnessing many crises one after another during 2009. An important development in this process was the "one minute crisis," which erupted because of Prime Minister Erdoğan's reaction to Israeli President Peres for Israel's attacks and killings of Palestinian people, when the two leaders were together on the stage at the

meetings of the World Economy Forum on 29 January 2009 in Davos. After this affair, a series of skirmishes continued, resulting in a confrontation between Turkey and Israel.

In the midst of the "one minute crisis," most people expected that Israel or the US would react severely to or punish Turkey, but no such action followed. Neither Peres nor the majority of the Israel public nor the US and the Obama administration took steps to break relations with Turkey. There occurred no crises in Turkey's relations with the US or Israel at the official level. The strongest reaction came from US and Israeli media and other civil society organizations. Some US media channels, such as the Wall Street Journal, argued that improving Turkey-Iran relations, in contrast to declining Turkey-Israeli relations, showed that Turkey was in a shift of orientation away from the West toward the East/Islamic world. Because of that, they harshly criticized Erdoğan and his government. What is worse, some pro-Israeli columnists argued that Erdoğan was moving to be an Islamofascist.

Some argued that the US would have punished Turkey if it did not improve its relations with Israel. Yet, the Obama administration and US elites in general continued supporting Turkey. It can even be argued that Turkey's harshness against Israel because of the Gaza invasion was supported, or at least

tolerated, by the US. There was a need to increase pressure on Israel to persuade it to accept the “two state solution”, and both Turkey and the US needed to play a role for this objective. Indeed, as was seen in the following year, the Obama administration, too, followed a “distanced” and reserved policy towards the Netanyahu government. This vindicated the belief that both Turkey and the US had a similar approach towards Israel.

Turkey-US relations did not face any serious crisis in 2009 or in 2010, except the case of the non-binding Armenian resolution that the US Congress Foreign Relations Committee voted favorably in March 2010. On the contrary, despite all criticisms, the Turkey-US Model Partnership process continued. Turkey's efforts in the case of Syria and on uniting the Palestinian groups sustained during 2009. Turkey also continued arguing that Hamas, Hezbollah and Syria should be more peaceful, and worked hard to decouple them from the Iranian sphere of influence. The Obama administration supported Turkey, simply because Turkey's efforts were compatible with the US general strategy and interests.

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Economy-Energy-Finance

Among the issues concerning Turkey and the US at both the bilateral and multilateral levels was their common goal to overcome the international economic crisis and to improve cooperation on energy. There were significant developments on these issues in 2009. First of all, we must stress the continuity of US support to Turkey's relations with, and position within, the IMF. In fact, because Turkey did not face great difficulty at the time of the world-wide international financial-economic crisis, American support to Turkey played a role to a certain extent. The reason was that despite some positive aspects, the Turkish economy is still fragile due to its dependence on the international financial-economic system. This fragility did not turn into a crisis, mainly because the US and international institutions had a positive attitude toward Turkey. Most importantly, there was no outflow, but more inflows, of American capital into the Turkish stock market and economy. Such a performance can be interpreted as continuing support from the US capital for Turkey's economy, politics and foreign policy.

Turkey's regional importance emanates not only from her economic and political role, but also from her proximity to sources of energy, i.e., her geo-economic position.²² Turkey's key position as a country at the crossroads of oil and gas transfers from the neighboring

regions to the West gained a new dimension in 2009. A very significant agreement was signed in Ankara on 13 July for the Nabucco gas pipeline project. The US also participated at the ceremony. Supporting the transfer of gas originating from Central Asia, the Middle East and Caucasus through Turkish territory, was indeed an indication of US trust in and support of Turkey.

Another economic dimension of the Model Partnership was the goal to improve bilateral economic and commercial relations between Turkey and the US. At least, Turkey thinks that the Model Partnership should include an economic dimension. Erdoğan and Turkish economy officials stressed this point to Obama during their talks with him in Washington on 4-5 December. Obama responded positively, stressing that the US also wanted to improve bilateral economic relations between the two countries, and the necessary steps could be taken as early as possible. In this context, both sides agreed on having joint meetings of their economy and commerce ministers, together with their staffs. However, there was no such meeting during 2009, or even in the first half of 2010.

A point on this issue in historical perspective should be mentioned. Turkey has long been aiming to diversify its relations with the US, from the military and strategic fields into the economic and commercial fields. During the 1980s, the Özal governments tried to

Turkey thinks that the Model Partnership should include an economic dimension.

sign an agreement with the US to form a Free Trade Zone; yet, all attempts failed. Sometimes US economic lobbies and international economic partners played an obstructive role; at other times political problems in the Turkey-US relationship prevented such attempts. Even though the US administrations made some rhetorical gestures to this end, they failed to implement their promises. This was mainly because of the fact that US administrations perceive Turkey mainly as a military-strategic partner, not as an economic one. As a conclusion, we should be cautious about achieving the economic and commercial aspects of the Model Partnership.

Domestic Politics Dimension: Turkey's Democratic Openings and the US

Another important dimension of the Turkey-US Model Partnership in 2009 was the US attitude towards Turkey's efforts on democratization, democratic openings and civilian rule. From a historical point of view, we can see that the US has played a role in Turkey's democratization process- sometimes positively, sometimes negatively.²³ The positive role was its considerable

contribution to Turkey's transition to democracy after the Second World War. In contrast to this, the US played a negative role in Turkey's democratization with its stance towards the execution and aftermath of military coups in Turkey. This was partly due to Turkey's membership in NATO and the intimate relations between armed forces of the two countries.

As for 2009, there were two key issues on the agenda regarding Turkey's democratization. The first was the Ergenekon and Balyoz cases accusing retired and serving military officers of allegedly planning a military coup in Turkey. Technically speaking, because the cases are related to Turkish domestic law and politics they are not supposed to be an issue for any country, nor for Turkey-US relationship. However, honestly and realistically speaking, the cases are being closely followed by all countries including the US, based on rule of law concerns. It is unclear how these cases will affect the Turkish democratization process, but the following comment analyzing the US position on the Ergenekon case is worth quoting:

The Ergenekon issue is not on the top of US's Turkey agenda. Nor an issue in the official negotiations. The US is not involved in the issue, so long as the developments come to the point to seriously threaten Turkey's domestic stability or democracy. [US's] emphasis on democracy and reform process may be perceived as US support to those

reformists dealing with the Ergenekon problem; the US attitude can be evaluated as a message for Turkey to handle the Ergenekon case in such a way to suit a democratic country, more transparent for instance. On the other hand, America's wording on laicism can be understood as a US show of sympathy towards the laicist groups who are concerned about the Ergenekon case.²⁴

From this comment, it is possible to deduce that in principle the US is not against the Ergenekon case. However, the US is critical of the procedures of arrests and violation of human rights during the Ergenekon process. The U.S. Human Rights Report of 2009 pointed to this concern, too.²⁵

Another issue about Turkey's democratization was Turkey's "democratic opening" process which formally started after a meeting between Prime Minister Erdoğan and Ahmet Türk, the Chairman of DTP (Democratic Society Party) in Ankara on 5 August 2009. This process can be regarded as Turkey's domestic issue, because in essence it aims to resolve such intricate problems as the Kurdish question by peaceful means and to improve the level of Turkey's democratization. However, because the resolution of the Kurdish problem in particular is closely related with Iraq, and directly related to the trilateral mechanism which had started to fight against PKK terrorism in parallel with the withdrawal of American troops from Iraq, the democratic opening process

can be included within the scope of Turkish-American relations. Due to this connection, the US administration looked very positively towards Turkey's democratization efforts, and even motivated Turkey to this end, according to some sources. That means, just like Turkey's foreign policy openings, the democratic opening can be regarded as a part of the Model Partnership process.

US support to the Ergenekon case, the democratic opening and Turkey's democratization in general is not a surprise. Actually, in the new international system which emerged after the September 11 attacks, Turkey's democratization efforts were increasingly supported by the US. This was mainly because Turkey was seen as an example of the coexistence of Islam and democracy on the one hand, and of being against radical and extremist countries on the other. Some American authors argued that Turkey as a "moderate Islamic country" could be shown as a model or an example for a number of Islamic countries in the world.²⁶ Therefore, the sympathy and support for those Turkish parties and groups in favor of democracy has increased.

These arguments were criticized in Turkey as a "violation of laicism" and "moving toward an Islamic order." In particular, the fact that majority of the governing AK Party's members had Islamic identity and practices has heightened the laicist debate. Some of this criticism was targeted to the US,

due to widespread allegations that the latter supported AK Party and moderate Islam.

The US and the Obama administration's views of Turkey are based on Realpolitik perspective. The matter for US interest is to maintain stability and continuity in Turkey's domestic politics and foreign policy. The US is not interested directly in Turkish domestic politics so long as internal stability is not in danger. However, it can be argued that it is closely interested in the orientation of Turkey's foreign policy or about Turkey's international position. It can be even argued with certainty that the US would try to prevent any unwanted change in the latter dimension. Indeed there were some examples of this in the past.²⁷

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Obama sharply clarified his views about Turkey's domestic politics and foreign policy in general terms in his speech to the TGNA. His mention of Atatürk's greatness and his support to Turkey's membership into the EU could be accepted as important hints about his views. From this, we can deduce that the Model Partnership is based on such points as laicism, democracy, liberal and other Western values, the resolution of problems in religious freedoms, respect

for ethnicity and identity, the fight against PKK terror in terms of domestic politics, and finally on an axis of EU, NATO and IMF values in terms of international politics.

Conclusion

Turkey's US policy and Turkish-American relations witnessed a wide range of developments in 2009. It is of course impossible to evaluate each of these developments in detail in this article. However, as mentioned above, this period can be analyzed by categorizing these into actions at the bilateral, global and regional levels. Even though the main agenda of Turkey-US relations was about the promotion of security and stability at all levels, other issues like economy, commerce, diplomacy and the military were equally important. The main theme of the relationship in 2009 can be summed up as cooperation and mutual action. From this perspective it was one of the most positive and golden ages of the history of Turkish-American relations.

No doubt, the primary goal of this cooperation was to promote the national interests of each side. However, their partnership aimed to go further in order to form a new "order and mechanism" for resolving regional and global problems. Those problems and crises concerning Iraq, Iran, Palestine, Afghanistan, and Armenia could not be dealt with

by focusing on these countries only. Additionally, there was the necessity to reform regional and national relations and order, so as to improve stability and security of the above mentioned countries and their environs. In this context, the main expectation was to ensure that the regional countries concerned act in cooperation, to eliminate the regional influence of such actors as Iran and Russia in particular. Turkey's role and position was, thus, critical in this regard. It was this critical role and position which strengthened Turkey-US relations. In this way, Turkey and the US tried to form a stable and orderly region by mutually supporting each other.

Their partnership aimed to go further in order to form a new "order and mechanism" for resolving regional and global problems.

The process which started in 2009 has not been completed yet. How will it be finalized and what kind of, positive or negative, outcomes will result can be seen only in the coming years. Just as a forecast, the following estimate can be made: In the coming period, the state of Turkey's US policy and/or Turkey-US relations will depend in great part on how Iran's nuclear program, Russia's Caucasus policy, and the Palestine question will develop, and on how Turkey and US will handle these "third party" developments.

Endnotes

- 1 Most of the data used in this work was gathered from Turkish daily newspapers and other media sources. The data dated in the text refer to the corresponding daily newspapers, *Hürriyet*, *Zaman*, *Radikal* and *Milliyet*.
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- 15 Davutoğlu participated at the NATO Foreign Ministers meeting in Brussels on 3-4 December 2009 for a series of regional conferences. See Republic of Turkey Ministry of Foreign Affairs, “No: 223 NATO Dışışleri Bakanları Toplantısı Hk.”, at http://www.mfa.gov.tr/no_-223-01-aralik-2009_-nato-disisleri-bakanlari-toplantisi-hk_.tr.mfa [last visited 16 September 2010].
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- 19 For example, alleged “genocide” claims on Turkey, problems regarding the closed Turkish-Armenian border, Armenian demands from Turkish territory or re-drawing the border, and Armenian occupation of Azerbaijani territory.
- 20 Boyer and Katulis, *The Neglected Alliance*, pp. 21-26.
- 21 Davutoğlu participated in a meeting on the Middle East in the UN Security Council, arguing a two-state solution to the Palestinian problem. Republic of Turkey Ministry of Foreign Affairs, “Dış Politika 2009” at <http://www.mfa.gov.tr/mayis.tr.mfa> [last visited 11 May 2009].
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Searching a Beneficial Way Out from the Impasse: The Cyprus Problem and Turkish Foreign Policy

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Abstract

This article examines critically the developments pertaining to the Cyprus issue in 2009. Turkish authorities gave genuine support to the Cyprus negotiations and insisted that a solution should be concluded and voted on in referendums in 2009. They considered it vitally important that the Turkish Cypriot side should stay at the negotiating table and the Turkish side should not be held responsible for the ongoing stalemate. Promising steps were taken regarding confidence-building measures while some progress was achieved in major issues. However, no agreement came out on the election of Turkish representatives by their people; the issue of property remained a Gordian knot and the sides continued to have contrary views on the 1960 treaties and Turkey's guarantee. The Turkish government did not open its harbors and airports to the Greek Cypriot administration in 2009 since the EU promise of removing the isolation of the Turkish Cypriots was not fulfilled. Turkish leaders announced that Turkey would choose Cyprus if it was forced to choose between the EU and Cyprus.

Key Words

Turkey's Cyprus policy, Cyprus negotiations, Turkey's EU membership process.

Introduction

In the recent history of the Cyprus question, the leaders of the Greek and Turkish Cypriots, Glafcos Clerides and Rauf Denктаş, respectively, met fifty-eight times by 2002 in order to try to find a comprehensive solution to the Cyprus question under the auspices of the United Nations, but they could not achieve any substantial progress. Feeling the need to intervene in the process, UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan submitted his plan to the sides on 11 November 2002. While the Turkish side failed to give an official response to the plan because of Denктаş's health problems and the government change in Ankara, the Greek Cypriots stated that they saw the plan as a basis for discussion, but they could not accept it as it was. Some changes were made in the plan and it was resubmitted to the sides, but it could not be signed at the EU Copenhagen Summit on December 12 in spite of intensive pressures from

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representatives of the US, the UN and the EU. Denktaş and Clerides met eight times after the Copenhagen Summit, but technical committees could not be established and activated immediately as it was planned, so that the negotiations could not be elevated to the expected intensity because of the propaganda activities conducted by the Greek Cypriot side for the presidential elections on 16 February 2003. The negotiations process reached a further impasse when Tasos Papadopoulos, who criticized the Annan Plan harshly and accused Clerides of being too soft, won the elections. Kofi Annan came to Cyprus on February 26 to submit the third revised version of his plan to the two sides and invited them to The Hague to receive their official responses. Annan also wanted the sides to promise to take the plan to the people in a referendum even if they did not reach an agreement on it. No agreement came out of the intensive negotiations between Annan, Denktaş and Papadopoulos on March 10 and the Greek Cypriot administration signed the accession treaty with the EU in a ceremony at Athens on 16 April 2003.

The Turkish government tried to revive the process at the beginning of 2004 so as not to be isolated totally in the international arena and to ease its EU membership process. Taking courage from the Turkish initiative, UN

Secretary-General Annan had talks with the leaders of the Cypriot communities, Denktaş and Papadopoulos, in New York in February and submitted to them a two-page text to be responded to with just a 'no' or 'yes' answer. According to the text, if the two leaders could not reach an agreement before 22 March, Greece and Turkey would be invited to the process. If an agreement was not still possible after 29 March, referendums would be arranged for the last version of the Annan plan by both sides of Cyprus before 1 May. The two sides accepted the text and thus they consented to holding referendums even if an agreement was not reached.

The Turkish government tried to revive the process at the beginning of 2004 so as not to be isolated totally in the international arena and to ease its EU membership process.

According to the plan, the number of Turkish and Greek soldiers on the island would be reduced to 6000 in 2011, to 3000 in 2018, and

ultimately Turkey and Greece would keep 650 and 950 soldiers, respectively, on the island. The Turkish Cypriot territory would be reduced from 36% of the island to 29%. Güzelyurt and its surrounding area would be left to the Greek Cypriot administration and Karpaz would stay in the hands of the Turkish Cypriots. The number of Greek Cypriots who would return to their homes in the north would not exceed 18% of the Turkish population for the next 19 years. When Turkey became an EU member or after 19 years had passed, all limitations would be removed. The Greek Cypriots having

In the immediate aftermath of the referendums, the EU issued a declaration stating that the EU Council was determined to support the economic development of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus.

homes in the Karpaz region would return to their homes without any restrictions. The lands which would be left to the Greek Cypriots would be transferred to them in six phases over forty-two months. The restrictions regarding the Greek Cypriot purchase of property from the Turkish founder state would be removed when the per capita income of the Turkish Cypriots reached 85% of Greek Cypriots' per capita income or at the end of 15 years. The election of senators would be made according to ethnic origin rather than citizenship in order to not harm the balance in the Senate, which was designed to be formed by 24 Turkish Cypriots and 24 Greek Cypriots. However, in the Council of the Presidency, citizenship not ethnic origin would be used as the criteria. The federal government would consist of 3 Turkish Cypriots and 3 Greek Cypriots; there would be 4 Greek Cypriot MPs and 2 Turkish Cypriot MPs in the European Parliament and, in the first period, presidency and vice presidency would alternate between the sides every ten months in the Council of the Presidency, which would be formed by 6 Greek Cypriots and 3 Turkish Cypriots. In the following period, the presidency would

be undertaken by the Greek Cypriots for 40 months and then by the Turkish Cypriots for 20 months. Decisions of the Council of Presidency would have to be approved by at least one Turkish Cypriot member and the sides would not be able to dominate each other. The 45,000 Turks who came to Cyprus after 1974 would continue to stay on the island and the rate of Turks who could immigrate to Cyprus would not exceed 5% of the population on the Turkish Cypriot side. In the referendums held in April 2004, the plan was ratified in the north at a rate of 65% whereas the Greek Cypriots rejected it at a rate of 70%.

In the immediate aftermath of the referendums, the EU issued a declaration stating that the EU Council was determined to support the economic development of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, which demonstrated its willingness to join the EU. The declaration advised the release of a financial aid package of 259 million dollars appropriated for the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC) and the EU Commission was urged to start the necessary work to develop comprehensive economic projects for Turkish Cypriots. In the EU Summit of December 2004, Turkey was given a date for the start of accession negotiations, but it was also reminded that it had to extend its customs union with the EU to the Greek Cypriot administration and withdraw its soldiers from Cyprus.

In line with its policy of solving problems with the neighbors and creating a security belt around Turkey, the AKP government of Turkey has been insisting since 2004 on finding a solution to the Cyprus problem and, therefore, it has faced fierce accusations at home that it has undermined Turkey's vital interests in Cyprus. In 2009, AKP leaders who are rightist-conservatives gave strong support to the actions, attitudes and views of the leftist statesmen of the TRNC on the Cyprus question. Therefore, in this article, the concept of 'Turkish side' is used in a way to include both Turkey and the TRNC. Evaluations and analyses in the article are related mostly to the events of 2009. In this article, developments related to the Cyprus talks of 2009 are discussed with a special emphasis on Turkey's stance on Cyprus and Turkey's Cyprus policies are analyzed in connection with the EU's role and attitude in the Cyprus issue.

The Process of Negotiations in the Cyprus Question

When TRNC President Mehmet Ali Talat and Greek Cypriot leader Dimitris Christofias met on 21 March 2008, they decided to initiate a process which would result in a comprehensive solution and to submit the text which would be created at the end of the process to the approval of their communities (via referendums). Two important steps were taken before the negotiations began on 3 September 2008. Six working groups were established to help the representatives of the two

leaders to discuss the issues concerning the essence of the Cyprus question (government and power sharing, land, property, economy, EU, and security and guarantees). Additionally, seven technical committees were set up to help the technical experts on both sides to work on confidence-building measures (crime and crime-related issues, economic and commercial issues, cultural heritage, crisis management, humanitarian issues, health and environment).¹ During the negotiations, the six major issues were discussed directly by the two leaders while their representatives met frequently and for long hours either to make preparations for the meetings of the leaders or to ensure progress on issues on which no agreement was reached in the leader talks. The technical committees too conducted important work and achieved concrete progress with the support of the UN and the EU to build confidence between the two communities and to create an atmosphere of reconciliation.

According to the method of negotiation adopted by the sides, in the first phase, the leaders were going to negotiate each of the six major issues once and they would prepare for each issue a single paper including the points on which they agreed and disagreed. The second phase would be the give-and-take process, in which mutual concessions would be made.² However, in the second phase which began in September 2009, the leaders had second talks on the issues which had been negotiated previously without agreement. In the following third phase, the leaders planned to overcome

disagreements through the give-and-take method.³

It was decided that a change of method for the Cyprus negotiations was needed in order to ensure more rapid progress.

The talks on the issue of government and power sharing were completed on 16 January 2009. On 28 January, the leaders exchanged the official papers explaining their position on the property issues and they transferred it to their representatives on 5 March to be discussed in its details. On 11 March, the leaders began to discuss the EU issue and transferred its technical aspects to technical experts, instructing them to prepare a report on it. By 21 April, the sides had begun to negotiate the issue of the economy. It was planned that the Economy Working Group was going to meet three times a week and prepare an almost ultimate document to be ratified by the leaders. However, negotiating this simple issue continued until 11 June. On 2 June, the two leaders completed their first reading on the issue of territory and agreed on the negotiation program for the next 3-4 months. They had talks on security and guarantees on 10 June. When the leaders completed the first phase of negotiations on 6 August, they had prepared 30 joint papers on three major chapters (government and power sharing, relations with the EU and economy). According to Talat, the creation of joint texts which specified the points of agreement and

disagreement was the first in the history of Cyprus negotiations and was a very important development.⁴

The second round of negotiations were supposed to begin on 2 September, but the Greek Cypriot side announced that they had postponed negotiations since the Greek Cypriot worshippers who wanted to visit religious places in the north had been subjected to bad treatment by TRNC authorities at the Yeşilirmak check point. The Turkish Cypriot side stated that they had remained faithful to the previously signed agreement and they were not responsible for hardships experienced by the Greek Cypriots since they provided sufficient officials and took the necessary measures.⁵ At the end, the second tour of negotiations began on 11 September. The leaders discussed government, power-sharing and the presidency on 7 October, foreign relations on 21 October, property on 22 October, authorities of the federal government on 27 October and the criteria which would be used on the property issue on 2 November. In early December, Talat paid a visit to Turkey and had talks with President Abdullah Gül and Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan. During the talks, it was decided that a change of method for the Cyprus negotiations was needed in order to ensure more rapid progress. The Turkish leaders also determined the issues in which they could show more flexibility and new demands which would be conveyed to the Greek Cypriot side.⁶ After these talks, Talat

stressed the necessity to take steps which would reduce disagreement and to seek a different method given the reluctant attitude of the Greek Cypriot side in conducting serious negotiations. Talat also announced that he and Christofias were going to meet three times at each leader's home in January 2010 in order to negotiate longer (the whole day), to accelerate the speed of negotiations and to have talks on convenient issues by changing the place of negotiation.⁷ But later it was declared that the leaders were going to have talks at the home of Taya Brook Zerihoun, the special envoy of the UN Secretary-General on Cyprus, in the buffer zone, because the infrastructure of the leaders' houses was not sufficient and that method would cause loss of time.⁸

The Issue of Government and Power Sharing

The alternative which was most preferred by the Turkish side was independence. However, since they knew that this is impossible under the present international conditions, they preferred a federated state whose sovereignty would be as strong as possible and which could take care of its own affairs within a federation. The Greek Cypriots desired to fortify the independence of the Republic of Cyprus as a unitary state to dominate the whole island. This was preferable for them because *enosis* (unification with Greece), which is regarded as their national dream, is not possible as well under the present international

conditions. The Greek Cypriots seem to support a structure entitled a 'federation' whose central government is strong because they are expected to establish a partnership with the Turkish Cypriots. In fact, under international pressure, both sides accepted a bi-zonal and bi-communal federation established on the political equality of the sides as defined by various UN Security Council resolutions. The partnership, which would have been created by the founder Turkish and Greek Cypriot states having equal status, required the establishment of a federal government having a single international identity (sovereignty).⁹

Hasgüler rightly questions how appropriate a federation is for Cyprus.¹⁰ In a federation, a balance is sought between the federal government and the federated states as well as the powers of the legislature, the executive and the judiciary. It is extremely hard to bring together ethnically different communities who feel deep distrust towards each other. When attempts are made to bring the sides together under the framework of a federation, it must concentrate on creating conciliation between them through mutual sacrifices, but federalist controls and balances are not to be taken into consideration. It is highly likely that the majority will try to take over the federal government and that the weak side will face a serious difficulty in protecting its existence and sovereignty in case of a single sovereignty, single identity and single representation.

During the 2009 negotiations, the Turkish side attributed the greatest importance to ensuring political equality with the Greek Cypriots and preventing Greek Cypriot hegemony over them. In their eyes, if genuine political equality was ensured through quantitative equality in some federal bodies (like the Senate) and quantitative closeness in some federal bodies (like the Council of Presidency and the Legislative) and thus if the federal government was prevented from falling under Greek Cypriot control, then there would no problem for them to increase the authorities of the federal government.¹¹ However, it was highly important that Turkish representatives would be elected solely by the Turkish Cypriot people.

On the sovereignty issue, the Greek Cypriot side stressed a single sovereignty as a reflection of their unitary state approach. On the Turkish side, the National Union Party (UBP), which won the majority in the Parliament in the April 2009 elections, was openly opposed to a single sovereignty, one of the essential conditions of a federal state, and preferred confederation.¹² The AKP government of Turkey expressed its dislike for the statements of UBP leader Derviş Eroğlu on the issue of single sovereignty. In the opinion of TRNC President Talat, sovereignty would be established at two levels; the two sides would take care of their own affairs and they would live their own democracy. At the federal level, there would be joint sovereignty in the sense that there would be a joint government under the leadership of one

The Turkish side attributed the greatest importance to ensuring political equality with the Greek Cypriots and preventing Greek Cypriot hegemony over them.

Greek Cypriot and one Turkish Cypriot and this government would have a joint program. In this context, one thing which was proposed by Talat and was found dangerous by some people on the Turkish side was the possibility that the president and the vice president (one Greek Cypriot and the other Turkish Cypriot) would be elected from a single list since they would implement a joint government program.¹³ However, contrary to the Greek Cypriot proposal, Talat proposed the election of president and vice president by the Senate instead of by the people. Talat's reasoning was that it was difficult for diverse voting groups to come together and create conciliation among them whereas this would be achieved more easily in the Senate where there were fewer members and the sides had an equal number of representatives.¹⁴ The thing which was considered to be important by Talat in this context was the possibility that the Greek Cypriot people would have at least an indirect role in the election of the Turkish Cypriot vice president. In the opinion of some Turkish critics, the same possibility would also be valid in the Senate. It was even hinted that Talat would try to be the representative of the Turkish Cypriot side in the joint government by receiving the support of some circles in the Greek Cypriot side

because he would not be able to gain sufficient support among the Turkish Cypriots.

However, the Talat administration openly opposed the proposal of using joint ballots for elections, labeling it a deviation from UN parameters, on the grounds that it would enable the Greek Cypriot people to determine the result of the election of Turkish Cypriot leaders. The foreign minister from the Republican Turkish Party (CTP) government, Turgay Avcı, stressed that the election of the Greek Cypriot president, Turkish Cypriot vice presidents and Greek and Turkish Cypriot MPs from a single list would bring about a unitary state whose joint decisions would be taken by the Greek Cypriot majority.¹⁵ On the other hand, the proposal that the votes of Greek Cypriots cast in the elections of the Greek Cypriot state should be effective in the TRNC elections at the rate of 20% and vice versa was considered by some circles as the game of the AKEL (the communist party in the Greek Cypriot state) and the CTP. It was alleged that the AKEL and the CTP would support each other in crisscross voting and thus they would prevent nationalist parties such as the UBP from coming to power. Pointing out that the Turkish Cypriots had separate electoral rolls and separate ballots since 1876; it was argued that such a method would bring about a single state by neutralizing the Turkish Cypriots.¹⁶

In fact, Greek Cypriot leader Christofias clearly stated during the negotiations that the federal solution was a difficult and inappropriate one under the conditions of Cyprus.¹⁷ His statement in the UN General Assembly that the Republic of Cyprus would become a federation through evolution and that federation would consist of two autonomous regions was perceived by the Turkish side as a confession demonstrating the real intention of the Greek Cypriots.¹⁸ While Christofias was compelled to utter the goal of establishing a bi-zonal and bi-communal federation because of the UN resolutions, he especially stressed a state having a single sovereignty, a single international representation, a single citizenship and a unified economy within the EU; he even presented the fact that Talat accepted single sovereignty as a substantial progress.¹⁹

The Greek Cypriot side tried to give the impression that Turkish Cypriots were joining them.

It seemed that the Turkish Cypriots could sacrifice their existing state to participate as a founder in a federation in which they will be able to take care of their own affairs. But the Greek Cypriot side tried to give the impression that Turkish Cypriots were joining them by insisting on the continuation of the Republic of Cyprus as a federation and they would work to strengthen the unitary aspect of the state in the following

process. It seems that the key issues on the question of government and power sharing would continue to be the extent to which the Greek Cypriots would have a role in the election of Turkish Cypriot representatives and to what degree the federal government would come under the control of the Greek Cypriots.

The Issue of Property

The Turkish side approached the property issue in the 2009 negotiations from the perspective of protecting the bi-zonal character of the state, since they did not forget that Greek Cypriots had destroyed the state system established by the international agreements they signed and forced the Turkish Cypriots to withdraw to 36% of the island to survive. In the eyes of the Turkish side, handling the property issue at the individual level by trying to compensate every individual for losses would result in a collapse of the socio-economic structure which emerged at the end of a long process. The issue should be seen as a part of the whole Cyprus question in light of the rights of the present and former owners of properties and the three alternatives (compensation, exchange and restitution) should be kept on the table.²⁰

Considering the property issue as an important tool to dominate the whole island, the Greek Cypriots insisted on the return of properties to their 1974 owners by giving them the last say. They anticipated that the Turkish

Cypriot structure in the north would lose its meaning when at least 70% of Greek Cypriots who owned 80% of the lands in the north returned to their homes. Tumazos Çelebis, an advisor to Christofias, demonstrated this state of mind when he said that the solution of the property problem would be much easier when lands were returned to Greek Cypriots at the highest rate possible.²¹ Greek Cypriot authorities encouraged their citizens to apply to the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) and the Court of Justice of the European Union since they knew that these courts always ruled in favor of Greek Cypriots regarding property rights.²² Encouraged by their authorities, three Greek Cypriot citizens filed a claim in the Court of the District of Columbia in the United States against the TRNC, demanding 1 trillion 400 billion dollars as compensation.²³

In the negotiations, Talat stated at the beginning that there should be an agreement on principles before deciding on the property issue.²⁴ According to his statement in February 2009, it was agreed that the alternatives which would be discussed in solving the issue were restitution, exchange and compensation, although the positions of the sides remained considerably different.²⁵ In his opinion, the Property Committee would be a part of the general mechanism which would also include an independent court dealing with property disagreements. Turkish Cypriot authorities recognized the property right stressed by Greek Cypriots, but they were proposing a

mechanism in which the opinion of the former owner would be taken into consideration at first and the appropriate alternative out of three (restitution, exchange and compensation) would be chosen in accordance with the criteria which would be determined in later stages of the negotiations.²⁶ According to the statement by Talat, by March 2009, agreement had been reached between the sides on the establishment of the Mechanism of the Property Committee which would not be under the control of any side.²⁷

It was announced by the Turkish Cypriot side in November 2009 that the first rapprochement appeared between the sides on the property issue with agreement reached on half of the criteria proposed by both sides.²⁸ Meanwhile, the work of categorizing the properties continued. When this work ended, discussion could be resumed on how problems concerning the properties in each category could be solved. By November 19, the paper of rapprochement on the property issue had been completed and the list of categories had been prepared.²⁹ However, this progress would not have any meaning as long as the sides did not step back from their positions, which were far apart from each other.

Developments concerning Greek Cypriot applications to the Immovable Property Commission of the Turkish Cypriot administration kept their importance in 2009. In December 2005, the ECHR demanded that Turkey, in

lawsuits filed by Xenides and Arestis against Turkey, establish an effective mechanism of compensation for 1400 similar lawsuits filed by Greek Cypriots. Although the Court's call to establish the mechanism on the Turkish Cypriot side was directed not to the Turkish Cypriots but to Turkey, perhaps hinting that 'it was the invader of Cyprus,' the Papadopoulos government objected to the call by thinking that any application by Greek Cypriots would amount to recognizing the TRNC. The Greek Cypriot government stated that it would not object on legal grounds to the application of its citizens to the commission for their property rights, but it demonstrated in different ways that it was opposed to such applications. While the nationalists in the Greek Cypriot parliament suggested the removal of the refugee status of Greek Cypriots who applied to the commission and termination of any state aid to them, nationalists among the ordinary Greek Cypriot citizens demanded punishment of those people and thus the applications of Greek Cypriots to the commission remained under the expected level.³⁰

The importance of the Immovable Property Commission for the Turkish side is that it was accepted by the ECHR as a domestic legal mechanism, hinting at the legitimacy of the Turkish Cypriot administration.³¹ But it was considered to be a domestic legal mechanism of Turkey, not the TRNC, by the ECHR as a result of the investigation it made in the eight pilot trials in 2010. The Greek Cypriots

should take advantage of the domestic legal mechanism; in other words they should apply to the commission first in order to be able to apply to the ECHR regarding their properties. It is expected that the Greek Cypriot applications, which are in front of the Court, will be withdrawn and directed toward the Commission.³² By May 2009, the number of Greek Cypriots who had applied to the Commission had reached 390. While fifty-two of the applications were concluded with compensation by mutual agreement, two applications were concluded with compensation and exchange, four applications with return and compensation and one application with restitution.³³ A total of 9,906,000 Cypriot pounds (approximately 24 million US Dollars) were paid to Greek Cypriots by the Commission as compensation. In November 2009, there were some reports in newspapers that 50 million Turkish Liras would be paid to two Greek Cypriots and that this would encourage more Greek Cypriots to apply to the Commission and would add a new aspect to the property issue.³⁴

The judgment concluded by the Court of Justice of the European Union in the Orams trial in 2009 constituted a heavy blow to the Cyprus negotiations. A Greek Cypriot court had concluded a judgment against a British couple who had bought property in the north of

Cyprus on the grounds that they illegally purchased property belonging to a Greek Cypriot citizen. The British Court of Appeals asked the opinion of the Court of Justice of the European Union in the trial and the EU Court concluded that the judgments of the Greek Cypriot courts on property had to be taken into consideration in all the EU member states.³⁵ This meant that Greek Cypriot courts would have the opportunity to force the authorities of EU states to confiscate properties and bank accounts of Europeans who bought property in the TRNC and would thus be able to stop purchase of properties by foreigners

in this state. It was interesting that the Greek chairman of the EU Court which concluded that judgment, Judge Vassiolis Skovris, had been previously

awarded (on 2 November 2006) with the Badge of Makarios III by the Papadopoulos government, because of his services and loyalty to the Greek Cypriot people.³⁶

In the eyes of the Turkish side, with this judgment, EU authorities tried to solve a problem of a political nature through legal means by forgetting that the Greek Cypriots who destroyed the Republic of Cyprus at the end of 1963 did not represent Turkish Cypriots and did not have authority and sovereignty over them, a UN parameter in the Cyprus question. If such judgments

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were implemented, the renewal of the partnership would not be possible because the authority and sovereignty of the Republic of Cyprus would be extended to the north.³⁷ If similar judgments were to be concluded after the solution, the structure created as a result of long efforts would collapse. The Turkish Cypriot government condemned the judgment and announced that any deeds issued by the Turkish Cypriot government as a consequence of their sovereignty rights could not be questioned and that it would support the rights of all people who bought property in the TRNC. The government also reiterated that all bodies of the state would enforce the law which was in force in the north.³⁸

Other Issues

In the 2009 negotiations, the Turkish side insisted on the continuation of the Treaties of Guarantee and Alliance with Turkey's effective and actual guarantee as indispensable conditions of a solution. In the eyes of the Turkish side, if Turkey's guarantee did not exist, the Turkish Cypriots would not survive as an equal community on the island and would not even have minority rights, let alone the right of self-determination. Given the failure of the UN and British guarantees

in protecting Turkish Cypriots against Greek Cypriot embargoes, pressure and massacres in the past, the Treaty of Guarantee was a necessary condition for Turkish Cypriots to be secure about their future and the eventual implementation of a solution.³⁹ If the guarantees and treaties were considered non-existent, the sides would have to start everything from the zero point. The Turkish side also stressed that the effective participation of Turkey, Greece and Britain in talks as guarantor states would positively contribute to the negotiations and would help the creation of a sustainable peace process.⁴⁰ The Greek Cypriot side expressed its stubborn opposition to the meeting between the five states and Turkey's guarantee by saying that the security of an EU member could not be guaranteed by a third state, allowing its unilateral intervention.⁴¹ Britain responded by asserting that the solution should be created by the Cypriots themselves and the sides should reach an agreement before the issue of guarantee was discussed.⁴²

On the issue of land, the sides chose at the beginning to talk on basic principles rather than the map. The Greek Cypriot side insisted on the return of the Karpas region to them. Meanwhile, it was claimed that Britain was ready to return its bases, which constitutes about 3% of the Island, to the Cypriots, creating hopes that it would encourage the Greek Cypriots to be more conciliatory since they were trying to capture as much land as possible from the Turkish

side. However, they responded to such news by saying that they did not need encouragement and that if Britain wanted to contribute to the process, it should put pressure on Turkey.⁴³ The Turkish side was concerned that territorial changes creating regions or cantons on each side belonging to the other side would cause a great amount of people movement and great disturbances between the two communities. The Turkish side also objected to the inclusion of the Karpaz peninsula in the Greek Cypriot territory and the extension of the Greek Cypriot territory to the north of Lefkoşa-Magusa motorway, on the ground that it would bring about the loss of depth of security for Turkish Cypriots.

It was reported in 2009 that the American firm Nobel Energy was conducting joint operations with the Israeli Delek firm, which had received a warrant from the Greek Cypriot administration to search for natural gas in its unilaterally-declared economic zone, and found rich natural gas reserves in the Tamar region of the eastern Mediterranean.⁴⁴ The Greek Cypriot side seemed to demonstrate that the whole restricted economic zone around Cyprus belonged to them, and they could grant any firms any warrants concerning that zone on behalf of all Cypriots, including the Turkish community. In the eyes of the Turkish side, this Greek Cypriot attitude violated the legal rights of Turkish Cypriots, who had an equal status according to the treaties establishing the Republic of Cyprus and the UN

parameters, on the restricted economic zone.⁴⁵ The letter pointing out this Turkish view was sent by TRNC President Talat to UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon and was published as a UN document.⁴⁶ The Turkish Cypriot administration also condemned the statement of the US ambassador in Cyprus, who announced that an American firm would search for natural gas and oil northwest of Cyprus, and accused the American administration of supporting the irresponsible policies of the Greek Cypriot administration.⁴⁷ The Turkish side was also dissatisfied with the EU attitude recognizing the right of the Republic of Cyprus to search for energy reserves in its offshore regions in accordance with international and EU law.

The Greek Cypriot side insisted that all or a great majority of Turkish people who came to Cyprus after 1974 should return to Turkey.

On the EU issue, rapprochement and reconciliation were more dominant between the sides, although there were points on which they disagreed.⁴⁸ The Turkish side insisted that the solution treaty should be a part of the EU's primary law,⁴⁹ because there might be some elements in the solution, which would not comply with the EU *acquis*, and Greek Cypriots might try to remove these elements by applying to EU institutions and courts. Given the present pro-Greek inclinations of the ECHR

and the Court of Justice of the EU, if derogations in the solution were not put under such protection, the Turkish Cypriot side could not be sure on the proper implementation of the solution. In order to keep their hands strong for the future, the Greek Cypriots naturally did not want the solution to be part of the EU's primary law.

The Greek Cypriot authorities will not be satisfied, even if they get maximum gains from the negotiations and even if all of their proposals put forward in conformity with UN parameters are accepted.

On the citizenship issue, the Greek Cypriot side insisted that all or a great majority of Turkish people who came to Cyprus after 1974 should return to Turkey. The Turkish Cypriot authorities responded that they had to protect the rights of people who entered the TRNC through legal means and were entitled to citizenship by having completed the legal procedures,⁵⁰ stressing that TRNC citizenship could not be bargained. During the intensive negotiations in early 2010, it was reported that the Turkish side proposed in its package submitted to the Greek Cypriot side that the citizens of the Turkish Republic and their goods, services and capital too should benefit from the right of free movement and settlement in the united Cypriot state. It was claimed that in spite of the serious opposition of Prime Minister Derviş

Eroğlu, Turkish authorities gave support to this package, which was considered to protect the Turkish-Greek balance on Cyprus until Turkey became an EU member, but the Greek Cypriot side rejected it.⁵¹

Positions of the Sides and Progress Reached in Negotiations

The Greek Cypriot side is recognized by all the states of the world, except Turkey, as the sole representative of Cyprus. It represents Cyprus in all international fora and organizations on behalf of the entire island of Cyprus and occupies all seats and positions allocated to Cyprus in EU bodies. It is not logical to expect such a Greek Cypriot administration to share its authorities with Turkish Cypriots and to establish a joint state with them. Greek Cypriots are naturally reluctant to continue the process of creating a joint solution accepted by both sides and prefer to approach the Cyprus question from the legal point of view.⁵² It better suits their interests to put pressure on the Turkish side through legal means instead of facilitating a solution by resorting to political tools.

It seems that the Greek Cypriot authorities will not be satisfied, even if they get maximum gains from the negotiations and even if all of their proposals put forward in conformity with UN parameters are accepted by the other

side, while there is still a possibility of controlling the whole island. A solution which does not satisfy them will not be accepted by the Greek Cypriot people at a rate of 65% in a referendum. Therefore, the strategy of the Greek Cypriot authorities is to prolong negotiations as much as possible, to prevent the emergence of a solution which will be voted in referendums, to push Turkish authorities and people to nationalist attitudes and to force the Turkish side to leave the negotiation table, thereby preventing Turkey's EU membership through the Cyprus question or to impose its own solution in the Cyprus question in return for Turkey's EU membership.⁵³ But they also accuse Turkish Cypriot authorities of putting forward proposals amounting to confederation rather than ones complying with bi-communal and bi-zonal confederation.⁵⁴

It had been supposed that the leader of the leftist AKEL, Christofias, would negotiate and reach an agreement with Talat, who was also a leftist, more easily and would understand the situation of Turkish Cypriots who were the oppressed side. Christofias was also supposed to condemn the official ideology of the Greek Cypriot administration, which considered the Turkish Cypriots as a minority, because of the grants given to the leftists in the north through the AKEL. However, Christofias consciously tied his hands with the political partnerships he made during and after the elections to prevent the start of negotiations on the

basis of the Annan Plan. Christofias treated Talat and the CTP as if they were his branches in the north and did not see them as equal partners. The AKEL, under the leadership of Christofias, gave up the rhetoric of the Cypriot labor class, adopted an approach tilting toward Hellenic nationalism and saw the Cyprus question from the perspective of ethnicity rather than class conflict and exploitation. This development further contributed to the diversification between Greek and Turkish Cypriot identities and the continuation of negotiations in the ethnic identity basis.⁵⁵

In October 2009, Greek Cypriot leader Christofias went so far as to compare Turkey with the Hitler government. He complained that the EU gave too many concessions to Turkey and added "the situation reminds me of concessions given to Hitler to prevent his aggression; at the end, fascism is fascism and Hitler is Hitler."⁵⁶ In December 2009, the Greek Cypriot administration worked to remove Turkey from the draft decision stipulating the cooperation of the EU's police organization Europol with third countries, but no country other than Greece supported its call.⁵⁷ In December, again, the statement of Christofias that the TRNC flag at the Beşparmak mountains symbolized invasion and division of people, that these 'freak flags' were waving just opposite him⁵⁸ touched the nationalist senses of the Turkish Cypriot people. In 2010, it was planned that the leaders

would meet at each other's house, but under the influence of his own public's opinion, Christofias decided not to pass to the north and to have talks with Talat in his home by stating that it would mean recognizing the TRNC.

The Turkish side demanded determination of a calendar for negotiations to reach an agreement before the presidential elections in the TRNC in April 2010 and insisted that a solution package should be voted on in referendums in 2009. Moreover, in order to balance the negative attitude of the EU and its bodies toward the Turkish side and to accelerate the process, Turkish Cypriot authorities stressed constantly that the UN should participate in the process and should be the arbitrator in the last phase. In Talat's opinion, there would certainly be some points on which the sides could not reach an agreement regardless of the degree of rapprochement that emerged between them. In order to reconcile the sides on those points and to ensure the emergence of a lasting solution, the international community should intervene in the process, put forward guiding proposals and be an arbiter between the sides in order to lead them in the right direction.⁵⁹ The most important actor, which will undertake such roles on behalf of the international community, is the UN. While the EU takes care of the interests of its own

The EU takes care of the interests of its own members and adopts an approach on a legal basis but forgets the situation before 1974.

members and adopts an approach on a legal basis but forgets the situation before 1974, the UN demands a solution in the context of parameters taking the separate existence of the two communities into consideration. However, the UN, too, sometimes has remained indifferent to the Greek Cypriot attitude of ousting UN parameters. The Turkish side expresses its dissatisfaction with this UN attitude, pays visits to UN authorities to make them more active and tries to persuade them to visit the TRNC.

The seemingly anti-Turkish attitudes of the Greek Cypriots and the EU created a certain degree of disappointment and pessimism in the Turkish Cypriot people, affecting both their voting choices and their attitudes toward the Cyprus question and the EU. In the general elections of April 2009 in the TRNC, the government's performance in domestic issues rather than the Cyprus question was discussed and domestic problems having an economic and social nature, rather than developments in the Cyprus question, became influential. However, the non-realization of expectations regarding solution, EU membership and removal of embargoes became influential to a certain degree in the election defeat of the CTP and the election victory of the UBP. Perhaps the CTP opened the way for its defeat by feeding the disappointment, distrust and anger of people to maintain

hopes instead of directing them to the Greek Cypriots, the EU and the world.⁶⁰ Since negotiations were conducted by President Talat, the elections did not have a direct negative effect over the Cyprus negotiation process. But they signaled that the process would be complicated when UBP leader Eroğlu won the 2010 presidential elections.

Public surveys demonstrated the changing attitude of the Turkish Cypriot people toward the EU. In the Eurobarometer (EB-71) trust measurements, which included 27 members of the EU, three candidate countries and the Turkish Cypriot people became the people who third most distrusted the EU with a 12% decrease in comparison with their score in EB-70. Turkish Cypriots, who had a rate over the EU average in believing that EU membership was a good thing, stayed this time under the EU average (53%) with a rate of 45%. The rate of Turkish Cypriot people who believed that their views were taken into consideration in the EU (17%) was much lower.⁶¹ Public surveys also demonstrated that Turkish Cypriots had more negative views of the solution process in comparison with the Greek Cypriots who had actually resorted to the delaying tactics. According to the public survey conducted as a part of the project 'Cyprus 2015,' 69% of Greek Cypriots and 42% of Turkish Cypriots wanted the process to result in an agreement. However, 17% of Greek Cypriots and 34% of Turkish Cypriots preferred the failure of the solution process. In a

probable referendum, the rates of those who would certainly vote 'no' were 22% in the Greek Cypriots and 31% in the Turkish Cypriots; the rates of those who would certainly vote 'yes' were 39% and 27%, respectively. Additionally, 28% of Greek Cypriots and 16% of Turkish Cypriots were opposed to a bi-communal federation in principle and 70% of Greek Cypriots found the system of rotating presidency and vice-presidency to be unacceptable.⁶²

Another development which demonstrated the pessimism of Turkish Cypriots was that 47 non-governmental organizations sent a letter to Turkish Prime Minister Erdoğan. The letter demanded Prime Minister Erdoğan not delay efforts to recognize the TRNC by reminding him that the Greek Cypriot National Council took decisions unanimously, demanding the continuation of the Republic of Cyprus, the withdrawal of Turkish armed forces from the island, the removal of Turkey's guarantee and the deportation of some TRNC citizens. Underlining that Talat's proposal of the election of president and vice-president from the single list was a mistake, the non-governmental organizations also stressed that leaving the Karpaz region and Güzelyurt to the Greek Cypriot side was a red line for the Turkish Cypriot side.⁶³ However, it should be noted that the possibility of this letter reflecting the views of the majority of Turkish Cypriot people was not so clear. In the same month, 50 Turkish and Greek Cypriot non-governmental organizations gave

the leaders of the two communities a joint declaration expressing their support for the efforts, courage and initiatives towards building a united Cyprus.⁶⁴

There were also some positive developments in the relations between the Turkish and Greek Cypriot sides in 2009. The steps taken on confidence-building measures created hope in the international community that the peace process would be accelerated. In January 2009, the leaders of the two communities decided to form an information desk which would conduct work on the immovable heritage to implement the agreement reached in the technical committee of cultural heritage.⁶⁵ Meanwhile, the committees of mines and missing people continued their activities successfully. In March 2009, it was stated in the decision taken in the meeting of the Council of Delegates of the European Council on Missing People in Cyprus that the work of the Committee of Missing People, which had been established between the Cypriot communities, should be given primary consideration. According to the decision, the responsibility for effective investigation mentioned in the judgment of the ECHR would be discussed after the work of the Committee of the Missing People ended.⁶⁶ In April, the

As a sign of mutual trust and understanding, the sides cancelled their usual military exercises ‘Toros’ and ‘Nikoforos.’

problem of the passage of ambulances between the two sides was resolved, the ultimate conclusion was reached on the implementation of the project on water saving supported by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), the exchange of information on crime and crime-related issues was accomplished, and a consultative committee was established on cultural heritage.⁶⁷ In May, a technical committee which would work in the joint liaison office in the region under the control of the UN, was established to undertake the job of exchanging information and intelligence in crime and crime-related issues, and to fight against crime more effectively.⁶⁸ In June, the leaders of the two communities decided to open the seventh gate (Yeşilirmak) between the two regions. According to the decision, the rules of the other gates would also be valid for passages in this gate; minibuses would be in service on three days of the week for those who wanted to go to Erenköy; food, water and non-military supplies would be allowed to be transported to Erenköy and ambulances would be allowed to enter and exit from Erenköy in emergency situations.⁶⁹ Moreover, as a sign of mutual trust and understanding, the sides cancelled their usual military exercises ‘Toros’ and ‘Nikoforos.’ Finally, as a symbolic sign of good will, the leaders of the two sides planted olive trees in October in the garden of the UN building in Cyprus.⁷⁰

Concerning the original negotiations between the two leaders, the Turkish side

and UN circles issued statements asserting that some progress and rapprochement was achieved in 2009. According to these statements, progress was reached on the issues of government and power sharing, economy and the EU, whereas the sides kept their contrary positions in land, property and security.⁷¹ In the opinion of Talat, a good opportunity had appeared for peace and the sides came to the door of good developments. The Greek Cypriot leader, too, wanted a solution; if the present opportunity was missed, a disaster would come and the island would be doomed to permanent division.⁷² The Greek Cypriot leader Christofias stressed in his speech on the state television channel *RIK1* in June 2009 that a prolongation of negotiations would result in a division of the island and the emergence of two states, one of which would be like Taiwan.⁷³ In the opinion of Hugh Pope, if the negotiations would not result in a solution agreement by April 2010, in which presidential elections would take place in the TRNC, the next phase of the question would be a sharp turn toward hostile division and the UN would not be willing to invest time, people and money to hold a fifth round of negotiations.⁷⁴

In spite of all expectations and hastiness of the Turkish side, no serious progress could be achieved while the presidential elections approached, and it seemed that the negotiations which had been continuing since 2008 were not so different from the futile negotiations of the past. Although the continuation

Turkey needs to solve the Cyprus problem to stop being the state which prevents cooperation between the EU and NATO.

of negotiations on essential matters, rapprochement on certain issues and release of joint papers provided some hope. The fact that the two sides could not reach an agreement on government and power sharing and that their positions on property, land and security were so different from each other gave the impression that there would be no solution in the future. It seemed that the sides would not create a solution on their own, unless mediators such as the UN would intervene in the process, and the motherlands agreed on a reasonable solution and tried to influence their respective Cypriot communities.⁷⁵

The General Attitude of Turkey

The support given by Turkey for the solution process since the referendums in 2004 was received positively by the international community and saved it from being seen as the guilty side for the failure to reach a solution. Although it is still subject to criticisms since it does not open its airports and harbors to the Greek Cypriots as required by its EU membership process. Turkey has prevented excessive pressure with its insistence on solution. Turkish Prime Minister Erdoğan sent a letter to Greek

Prime Minister Yorgo Papandreu, proposing to cooperate in Cyprus.⁷⁶ When the Turkish Cypriot government changed in April 2009, Prime Minister Erdoğan warned newly elected Prime Minister Derviş Eroğlu on supporting Cyprus negotiations. Probably as a message to Eroğlu, Turkish President Abdullah Gül, too, stated that Talat was strongly supported by Turkey.⁷⁷

In conformity with the goal of making Turkey a regional, even a global power, the AKP government attributed importance to solving problems with all neighbors, creating a security belt around the country and turning characteristics and values of the surrounding region to an added value for Turkey. This approach also required resolution of the Cyprus problem or at least the lessening of its negative influence. While Turkey became an attractive power for its neighbors thanks to its soft power, solving the Cyprus question to turn the eastern Mediterranean into a region of stability and to remove the most important obstacle in its EU membership would pave the way for Turkey to become an influential power.⁷⁸ Solving the Cyprus question will also eradicate an important factor restricting its general foreign policy and would strengthen its moral position and prestige in the international arena.⁷⁹

Turkey also needs to solve the Cyprus problem to stop being the state which prevents cooperation between the EU and NATO. Turkey does not allow the EU to benefit from the military capabilities

It is not possible to say that Turkey will make great sacrifices in the Cyprus question for the sake of being an influential power.

of NATO in operations not arranged by the Berlin Plus process, which regulates cooperation between the EU and NATO. While Turkey argues that the institutional cooperation between Turkey and the EU should be based completely on the arrangements of Berlin Plus, the EU states that all efforts at cooperation need not to be made in accordance with these arrangements. According to Berlin Plus, the Republic of Cyprus, which is not part of NATO's Partnership for Peace project, is not allowed to participate in meetings between the two sides. The EU does not want Turkey to object to the participation of Cyprus in institutional cooperation between the EU and NATO. In retaliation for Turkey's vetoing its participation in EU-NATO meetings, the Greek Cypriot administration prevents Turkey from participating in the European Defense Agency and signing any security treaty with the EU.⁸⁰

However, it is not possible to say that Turkey will make great sacrifices in the Cyprus question for the sake of being an influential power. It is clear that a country which gives concessions easily on vital issues concerning many aspects of its foreign and domestic politics will lose its self-confidence, as well as its prestige in the eyes of world powers. Instead of

seeing the Cyprus question as an obstacle or an indispensable national cause, the authorities of the AKP government evaluate Turkey's Balkan, Caucasian, Central Asian, Middle Eastern, European and American connections all together in the light of their general foreign policy. While they try to reduce the number of Turkey's enemies and increase Turkey's strength and prestige in the international arena, they also work to find ways to increase Turkey's power in the Cyprus question. For this purpose, they give support to the negotiation process as a secondary goal to demonstrate that they want a federal solution for the Cyprus question, but they plan to make the solution of two states inevitable as a primary goal and keep the model of Taiwan as a third alternative.⁸¹

In this general framework, it seemed reasonable for Turkey to protect the red lines related to regional politics, namely, to give support for a sustainable treaty and to keep the Turkish Cypriot side at the negotiation table in 2009. Turkish authorities estimated that the emergence of a solution totally contrary to the major interests of the Turkish Cypriot side was not possible. Any solution protecting the interests of the Turkish side to some extent would open the way for Turkey's EU membership and the likely rejection of such a solution by the Greek Cypriots would turn the international community against them.⁸² So it was reasonable to insist on a solution until the Greek Cypriots were perceived by

the international community as the uncompromising side.

During the 2009 negotiations, Turkish authorities stressed political equality, a true bi-regional structure and a new partnership formed by two equal founders. In this line, they argued that Turkish Cypriots should maintain their absolute sovereignty, the great majority of TRNC citizens having Turkish origin should stay on the island and Turkish Cypriots should occupy positions in every ranks of the state in equal status and in rotation. Turkish authorities stated that Turkey would continue to fulfill its responsibilities as a guarantor state for the implementation of the ultimate solution and pointed out that this would help the sides in finding a solution rather than creating problems for them.⁸³ In their eyes, the other side resorted to delaying tactics, intended to corner the Turkish Cypriot side with isolation and embargoes, dreamed of assimilating the Turkish Cypriot people and tried to create EU pressure on Turkey in relation to the Cyprus question. Turkey could not allow itself to fall in such a trap, could not let the other side impose its own project and could not dare to lose the EU for the sake of the Cyprus question or to lose Cyprus for the sake of EU membership. If the other side, too, wanted a genuine and comprehensive peace as a strategic choice, this should be done as soon as possible. The other side, too, should see that non-solution of the problem would bring about serious losses

for all regional states. Continuation of the status quo was unacceptable, because it allowed embargoes and isolations to remain against the Turkish Cypriots and prevented them from benefiting from various rights.⁸⁴

In line with these views, State Minister and Vice Prime Minister Cemil Çiçek, who spoke at the independence ceremonies of the TRNC in November 2009, announced that Turkey would give priority to the Cyprus question rather than its EU connection and would always choose Turkish Cypriots, if it was forced to choose between Cyprus and the EU.⁸⁵ State Minister and Chief Negotiator Egemen Bağış stated that it would be naïve to expect a comprehensive solution if no substantial progress was reached before April 2010.⁸⁶ In his speech in the UN General Assembly, Prime Minister Erdoğan said that Turkey would not tolerate fruitless negotiations anymore and they would give priority to recognition of the TRNC if no agreement was reached before the spring of 2010.⁸⁷

In fact, more effective advertisement of the TRNC in the international arena, opening its offices in different countries and ensuring its representation in all international fora had already a high place on the agenda of Turkish authorities.⁸⁸ The decision taken with their initiative in the meeting of foreign ministers of Muslim countries in Damascus between 23 and 25 May 2009 was a good example in this

sense. In this decision, the importance of the removal of restrictions on Turkish Cypriots was underlined and it was stated that the members of the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) should cooperate with the Turkish Cypriots in the removal of those restrictions and high-level visits should be exchanged and cultural and sport activities should be arranged between OIC members and the TRNC.⁸⁹

The EU Connection in the Cyprus Question and Turkey

The statements of its high-level authorities in 2009 demonstrated that the EU accepted the general UN parameters for the solution. Olli Rehn, the EU Commissioner for Enlargement, said in his press conference on 13 February 2009 that they supported a bi-communal and bi-regional federation based on political equality in Cyprus and gave full support to the negotiations.⁹⁰ Thus, the model which went beyond the present unitary structure of the Republic of Cyprus continued to be the major choice of the EU in 2009. However, this policy reflected the political perspective of the EU in the Cyprus problem collided with the EU approach of resolving issues concerning Cyprus on a legal basis.⁹¹ In 2009, EU bodies continued to make decisions alienating the Turkish side from negotiations, which harmed the negotiation process, yet did not accept to remove the isolation of the Turkish Cypriots.

While the EU authorities supported efforts to find a solution to the problem in accordance with the UN parameters, they especially emphasized that they did not have a proposed solution and the job of solving the problem belonged to the Cypriots themselves.⁹² Günter Verheugen, Vice-Chairman of the EU Commission, said that it was the Turkish Cypriots' right to benefit from the advantages of EU membership and that the EU would not act as a mediator or arbitrator in the Cyprus question, but it would provide help, support and advice if the sides needed and requested it.⁹³ Rehn stressed that speaking of a unified Cyprus as a single voice was essential and added that the Commission was ready to provide legal and technical support on the issues concerning the EU. Rehn's statement that the solution should conform to the EU *acquis* and that the EU would adapt itself to the solution hinted at important messages. If the solution was made compatible with the EU *acquis*, the position of the Turkish Cypriots in the new system would have been threatened. If the solution was made primary law of the EU and thus the EU adapted itself to the solution, this would have angered Greek Cypriots.

As it had done since 1987, Turkey did not open its harbors and airports to the Greek Cypriot administration.

The EU, which complicated the Cyprus question by making Cyprus its

member and rendering the Cyprus issue part of Turkey's membership process, continued in 2009 to hold attitudes parallel to this general approach. After the EU decided in December 2004 to start membership negotiations with Turkey in October 2005, Turkey signed the Additional Protocol on 29 July 2005, which would include the new members states in the Ankara Treaty and thus would include them in the Customs Union of Turkey with the EU, but stated that this would not mean the recognition of the Greek Cypriot administration by Turkey. However, in the following period, the promise of removing embargoes against, and the isolation of, the Turkish Cypriot side as a result of its conciliatory attitude in the referendums in 2004 was not fulfilled by the EU and, therefore, Turkey did not implement the protocol it had signed. In other words, as it had done since 1987, Turkey did not open its harbors and airports to the Greek Cypriot administration and did not allow the direct import of Greek Cypriot goods. On the other hand, Greek Cypriot goods, which fell under the scope of the Customs Union, had been entering Turkey indirectly without being subjected to any customs tax or quotas. On 11 December 2006, the European Council suspended eight chapters related to the customs union and decided not to open any of them or to close even temporarily any chapters, unless Turkey began to implement the Additional Protocol. It also instructed the European Commission to observe

Turkey's practices regarding the Additional Protocol for three years and to submit a report on them to the Council in December 2009.⁹⁴

In 2009, the EU continued to remind Turkey on every occasion of its responsibilities related to the Additional Protocol. Thinking that law was on their side, the Greek Cypriots, too, sent strong messages to the Turkish side and expected that the EU would pressure Turkey to comply with the law. Greek Cypriot authorities constantly expressed their warnings in international forums that if Turkey did not fulfill its responsibilities, the chapters would not be opened in the negotiations with Turkey, Turkey's membership process would not continue as normal and Turkey would not be a member of the EU. In October 2009, Greek Cypriot leader Christofias stressed that the membership process would not be without obstacles, if Turkey continued its hypocrisy and did not implement its responsibilities.⁹⁵ In November, Christofias also sent a letter to the presidents and prime ministers of the 26 EU members, stating that they were opposed to Turkey's membership process, if it did not fulfill its EU responsibilities.⁹⁶ The greatest hope of the Greek Cypriots was that the EU Council would take, in its December meeting, the decision to implement new though sanctions against Turkey in accordance with the negative report which would be prepared by the Commission as it had been previously projected.

As a response to the pressures on the implementation of the Additional Protocol, Turkey announced an action plan in 2006 and proposed mutual removal of restrictions on transportation and the free movement of goods, individuals and services within a certain timetable.⁹⁷ In fact, with this proposal, Turkey declared, in a sense, that the EU Council's decision to remove the isolations against the TRNC, which were taken on 26 April 2004, should also be implemented if Turkey was expected to implement the Additional Protocol. With their statements in 2009, Turkish authorities pointed out that the issue of Turkey's opening of its harbors and airports to the Greek Cypriot administration should be handled within the integrity of the Cyprus question and stressed that it would be unfair to force Turkey to take steps in accordance with the partial proposal while no progress had occurred regarding the fulfillment of the promises of the international community, the UN and the EU given to the TRNC. In their opinion, partial proposals and partial solutions would neither ensure the ultimate solution of the Cyprus question nor persuade Turkey to make concessions for the sake of EU membership. In fact, while Turkey's EU membership process was supposed to progress in accordance with promises given to Turkey, as well as established traditions and practices, linking the process with the Cyprus question was a mistake itself.⁹⁸

Turkish Cypriot authorities, too, pointed out that the Additional Protocol was not an issue which would be handled only in the light of Turkey's EU responsibilities, but it was directly related to the Cyprus question. In their opinion, Turkey could not open its harbors and airports to the Greek Cypriot side as a unilateral concession, as long as the EU did not implement the Direct Trade Decree and it maintained the isolation of the Turkish Cypriots.⁹⁹ Derviş Eroğlu, who became president after the April 2010 elections, went further by saying that ports should not be opened before an agreement was reached even if the embargoes were removed and the isolation were lifted because meeting this demand would encourage the Greek Cypriots to demand Turkey to open diplomatic offices and even to recognize the Greek Cypriot administration; if Turkey met their demands, there would be no need to continue negotiations.¹⁰⁰

The Greek Cypriot administration was highly annoyed by the EU's failure to take a decision to impose sanctions against Turkey.

When the European Council met in December 2009, it also discussed the Progress Report, which was prepared by the Commission to evaluate Turkey's responsibilities under the Additional Protocol. In the report, it was stated that evaluations would be continued on Turkey's responsibilities stemming from

the Additional Protocol and it was stressed that Turkey would not be considered to have fulfilled the EU *acquis* in the chapters frozen at the end of 2006 unless it did not remove restrictions against the Greek Cypriot administration. The report did not warn Turkey that it would face more sanctions if it did not implement the Additional Protocol and did not consider December 2009 as the deadline as it had been thought previously.¹⁰¹ Furthermore, the report included positive views on the continuing support given by Turkey for the Cyprus negotiations. By adopting the general thrust of the report, the EU foreign ministers also underlined their dissatisfaction with the non-implementation of the Additional Protocol and stressed the importance of the support which would be given by Turkey to the solution talks, but they did not impose any new sanctions. In this way, the foreign ministers chose to delay the question at least for one year.¹⁰² While the EU held such an attitude, it did not want the issue of the Additional Protocol to affect the Cyprus negotiations negatively and thought that creating a deeper crisis in EU-Turkish relations, which had already come to the point of termination, would not be a reasonable act.¹⁰³ The Greek Cypriot administration was highly annoyed by the EU's failure to take a decision to impose sanctions against Turkey.¹⁰⁴

In March 2009, the report prepared by Dutch Christian Democrat Ria Oomen-Ruijten, Turkey reporter of the European Parliament, and accepted by the European

Parliament General Assembly with 528 ‘yes’ votes against 52 ‘no’ votes, displeased Turkey. In the opinion of the Turkish side, some elements in the report, such as demanding Turkey to withdraw its armed forces on the island and to regulate its trade relations with the Greek Cypriot administration, considering Turkey as the reason for the non-productivity of the negotiations and holding Turkey responsible for missing persons, were unacceptable. They reasoned that the Turkish garrison protected the peace, stability and lives of Turkish Cypriots on the island. Actually, it was the Greek Cypriots who complicated the process by putting forward proposals outside the UN parameters.¹⁰⁵

On the missing persons, both sides faced undesired losses in the later stages of the crisis caused by

the Greek Cypriots in July 1974. On the other hand, there were also some elements in the report which pleased the Turkish side – it was stated in the report that the EU Parliament continued to support the negotiation process and that there could be some derogations in the treaty which would be reached. In his speech in the Parliament, Olli Rehn said that Turkey continued to support the negotiation process actively.¹⁰⁶

While the two seats reserved for Turkish Cypriots in the European Parliaments had to be left empty, they were filled by Greek Cypriots and thus

the rights of Turkish Cypriots were seized by Greek Cypriots with the permission of the EU.¹⁰⁷ The application of the Turkish Cypriot Airways to the High Court in London for the start of direct flights between Britain and Northern Cyprus was rejected. The Girne American University in Northern Cyprus opened its Canterbury campus in the district of Kent in Britain; the Canterbury campus was a member of the British High Education Accreditation Institution and thus the diplomas which would be given by this campus would be recognized in all EU countries.¹⁰⁸

While the two seats reserved for Turkish Cypriots in the European Parliaments had to be left empty, they were filled by Greek Cypriots.

On the removal of the isolation applied to the Turkish Cypriots, the EU has taken some positive steps. The “Green Gate Arrangement” was created by the

EU Council in April 2004 and was revised in February 2005. The purpose of the Arrangement was to ease economic isolation against Turkish Cypriots, to contribute to the economic integration of Cyprus and to pave the way for the comprehensive solution of the Cyprus problem by establishing bridges between the sides and by creating a positive political atmosphere on the island. The major intention of the European Commission in proposing the Arrangement was to ensure free trade between the Cypriot communities along the Green Line and to allow the Turkish Cypriots to sell their goods directly to EU markets. While

the Greek Cypriots supported the first point in the context of their goal of making the Turkish Cypriot community economically dependent on them, they definitely objected to the second point. Therefore, the Turkish Cypriots became aware of the Greek Cypriots' trap of making solution negotiations redundant by ignoring the political aspects of the Cyprus question and they became unwilling to trade with the south.¹⁰⁹ Moreover, the EU could not put the direct trade arrangement into practice because of its own legal arrangements and the opposition of Greek Cypriots, which created deep disappointment among the Turkish Cypriots. In addition, Turkey had to treat goods originating from Northern Cyprus as the goods of a third country because of the customs union with the EU.¹¹⁰ At the end of 2009, all kinds of isolation, including economic, continued to be applied to the Turkish Cypriots.

Conclusion

In accordance with its policy of solving problems with neighbors and making sure stability prevailed in the region, the AKP government gave genuine support to negotiations for solving the Cyprus question and insisted that a solution treaty should be concluded and voted on in referendums in 2009. Turkish authorities considered it vitally important that the Turkish Cypriot side should stay at the negotiating table and the Turkish side should not be held

At the end of 2009, all kinds of isolation, including economic, continued to be applied to the Turkish Cypriots.

responsible for the non-solution. The Greek Cypriot side tried to prolong negotiations as much as possible and to prevent the conclusion of a treaty, so as to prevent a vote on it in a referendum. The Greek Cypriot leaders knew that even if the Turkish side accepted all their proposals, the Greek Cypriot people would not ratify the solution created. Therefore, Greek Cypriot authorities tried to corner the Turkish side through judgments of courts by focusing on the legal aspect and to force the Turkish side to leave the negotiation table by creating an impasse in Turkey's EU membership process. In such an atmosphere, Turkish authorities had the tendency of supporting a solution, which would not be accepted by the Greek Cypriots, making some concessions and protecting their red lines. Actually, the plan of the AKP leaders was to pave the way for the recognition of the TRNC in the international arena, put an end to its isolation and to put the Taiwanese model into practice as the worst case scenario, if a solution could not be found.

While the time factor was working to the disadvantage of the sides, progress or developments which would destroy the bad memories of the past and emerge as a breakthrough did not appear. Promising steps were taken on confidence-

building measures and some progress was witnessed in such major issues as the EU, the economy and government and power sharing. It could be said that some kind of bargaining could be achieved on the issue of land. However, no agreement came out on the election of Turkish representatives by their people and thus the possibility of Greek Cypriot control of the federal government was not eradicated. The issue of property remains a Gordian knot. The insistence of the Greek Cypriots on their return to their old lands continued to be a factor threatening the bi-regional character of the future state and the separate existence of the Turkish Cypriot state. On the issues of security and guarantees, the Turkish side considered the continuation of the 1960 treaties and Turkey's guarantee as vital whereas the Greek Cypriot side objected to it altogether.

Probably the Cyprus question affects Turkey's relations with the EU at the highest level. Although Turkish authorities assert that there is no linkage between Turkey's EU membership and the Cyprus question, the EU has made the opening of Turkish harbors and airports to the Greek Cypriot administration in the short term and the recognition of the Greek Cypriot administration in the long term as conditions of Turkey's EU membership. Apart from the Cyprus question, it is clear that EU-Turkish relations are not going well. French President Sarkozy openly states that he is against Turkey's membership and he will not allow the opening of the chapters

which are related to full membership. The other members, too, easily find excuses to prevent the opening of those chapters. The fact that only one chapter was to be opened in 2010 demonstrated how far relations have deteriorated. In such an atmosphere, the Turkish government rejected the implementation of the Additional Protocol in 2009, since the promise of removing the isolation of the Turkish Cypriots was not fulfilled. While the Turkish vice prime minister announced that Turkey would choose Cyprus if it was forced to choose between the EU and Cyprus, the Turkish prime minister declared that they would not wait forever for a solution. The thing which gave such courage to Turkish leaders was the prediction that the EU could not dare to contribute to the further deterioration of relations, which had already hit their lowest level. In fact, while the EU was supposed to decide new sanctions against Turkey because it did not implement the Additional Protocol, it disappointed Greek Cypriots by not taking such a step. In a period in which the two most important states of the EU were openly opposed to Turkey's membership and the embargoes against Turkish Cypriots continued, it was normal for the Turkish government, which had to care about not losing its majority in the general elections, not to implement the Additional Protocol, which allowed the continuation of EU sanctions.

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Turkish Foreign Policy Towards Iraq in 2009

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Abstract

This article examines Turkish foreign policy towards Iraq in 2009. Turkey's Iraq policy had been conditioned by mainly security factors. In the last couple of years, however, we have witnessed an increasing use of tools other than security in the formulation of this policy as not only military factors but also trade and other tools of diplomacy have been effectively used by Turkey. The year 2009 witnessed several steps which enabled increasing cooperation between Turkey and Iraq, such as the Iraqi elections. Turkey has continued to develop contacts and start dialogue with different political actors in Iraq and has hosted heads of different ethnic and religious groups in Turkey. An important step that strengthened political and economic relations was the creation of a High Level Strategic Cooperation Council.

Key Words

Turkish foreign policy, Iraq, Kurds, USA, elections.

Introduction

The relationship between Iraq and Turkey is one of the most important

topics in Turkish policy towards the Middle East. During the Cold War era, relations between Turkey and Iraq were cool. During and after the Gulf War, however, contacts between the two countries increased. The power vacuum in the north of the country after the Gulf War created serious setbacks for the Turkish struggle with the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) and, consequently, Turkish policy towards Iraq was conditioned mainly by security issues. In the last couple of years, however, we have witnessed an increasingly use of tools other than security in the formulation of Iraq policy, as economics and other tools of diplomacy have been effectively used by Turkey.

One of the important turning points in Turkish foreign policy towards the Middle East in general and towards Iraq in particular was the capture of PKK leader Öcalan in 1999 and the decline in the security threats against Turkey afterwards. After this, attacks against Turkey emanating from Iraq declined and the heated atmosphere of the 1990s cooled. This situation continued until the invasion of Iraq in 2003 by the US-led coalition forces headed to topple the Saddam Hussein regime. Considering the

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negative outcomes of the Gulf War and the lack of international legitimacy for the invasion, along with the uncertainties about future scenarios after the invasion, Turkey opted for a policy which was different from that of its long-standing ally, the US. The lack of order and stability in the months after the invasion was a source of concern for Turkey. Beside the increasing PKK attacks, the threats against Turkish citizens doing business in Iraq affected Turkish attitudes. More important than all of these was the policy of Turkey against the possibility of a future independent Kurdish state in the north of Iraq. But the negative atmosphere between Turkey and Kurdish politicians just after the invasion has been transformed into a positive one in the last couple of years and Turkey has followed a policy in which it has aimed to establish contacts with every actor in Iraq.

Previously, Turkey had refrained from having contacts with Kurdish authorities in northern Iraq, but in order to achieve its foreign policy aims, Ankara started to act in line with the new realities in Iraq. Instead of relying on military means to overcome the threat of terrorism from northern Iraq, Turkey has lately increased its contacts with Arab and Kurdish authorities in Iraq and tried to convince them to cooperate more in the fight against the PKK. In this respect, Turkey's new stance became obvious after 2007.

After the PKK attacks against military posts along the Turkish-Iraqi border threatened to create conditions similar to those of the 1990s, Turkey reacted not only through military means, but also contacted both Iraqi and US authorities to ask for cooperation. Aware of the possible negative outcomes of any Turkish military intervention on the fragile nature of Iraqi politics, Turkey's counterparts partially responded to Turkish demands. In addition to this, new factors influenced Turkish foreign policy towards Iraq; the planned withdrawal of US troops from Iraq in 2011 and Washington's desire to prevent any development that might destabilize Iraq.

Turkey has lately increased its contacts with Arab and Kurdish authorities in Iraq and tried to convince them to cooperate more in the fight against the PKK.

Several steps for increasing cooperation in Turkish relations with Iraq were introduced in 2009.

Although security issues were still an important factor in bilateral relations, their primacy was in decline and factors such as trade were increasingly playing a role in Turkish-Iraqi relations. In terms of political relations, the two countries signed several agreements to strengthen their ties. Beside several high-level reciprocal visits, the establishment of the "High Level Strategic Cooperation Council" laid the groundwork for stable relations and in diversifying bilateral bonds. As a result, in addition to advancements in the spheres of politics and economics, cooperation between the two neighbors in terms of security

matters has worked out better than in the past.

During these visits, issues of politics, economics and security topped the agenda.

As a reflection of the advancements in the security situation of the country, the Iraqi government has had the opportunity to make long-term plans in several policy areas for the future of the country. Turkey has continued to develop contacts and start dialogue with different political actors in Iraq and has hosted leaders from different ethnic and religious groups in Turkey. In this respect, the visits of Shiite leaders such as Mukteda al-Sadr and Ammer al-Hakim have constituted spectacular examples. At the same time, as a reflection of Turkey's increasing profile in the region in the last couple of years, Ankara has played an important role in overcoming the grievances between Syria and Iraq after the bombings in Baghdad in August 2009. All of these developments might be interpreted as examples of Turkish efforts to contribute to Iraqi stability.

Political and Economic Relations

In 2009 there were several high-level visits from Turkey to Iraq. Beside the visits of Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu, both President Abdullah Gül and Prime Minister Tayyip Erdoğan visited Iraq. During these visits, issues of

politics, economics and security topped the agenda. Turkey has tried to develop its relationships with different actors in Iraq in order to protect its political and economic interests in the future, especially after the expected withdrawal of US forces. Beside these visits to Iraq, Iraqi President Talabani, Prime Minister Maliki, and Foreign Minister Zebari visited Turkey, along with the heads of several influential groups in Iraq, such as the Shiite leaders Mukteda al Sadr and Ammar al Hakim.

In March 2009, Iraqi President Talabani came to Istanbul to attend the World Water Forum and to meet with Prime Minister Erdoğan. At this meeting, alongside security issues, steps to be taken to improve relations between the two neighbors and preparations for the visit of Turkish President Gül were discussed.¹ Among the reciprocal visits, the most important was Turkish President Gül's Iraqi visit in March 2009. As a result of a novel Turkish approach towards Iraq beginning in the autumn of 2007, there was a thaw in bilateral relations that allowed for Talabani's visit. Gül subsequently went to Baghdad on 23 March and this was the first visit of a Turkish President to Iraq since Fahri Korutürk's visit in 1976. Security matters, the future of Kirkuk, and economic relations were the primary topics of discussions. On this visit, Gül met with the Iraqi President, Prime Minister, Foreign Minister and Turcuman MPs. The Turkish President also met with the Prime Minister of the

Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG), Neçirvan Barzani, and delivered Turkey's expectations regarding security to Iraqi authorities.²

Talabani supported the Turkish concerns on security and said that there were two options for the PKK; either laying down their arms or leaving Iraq.

During his meeting with President Gül, Iraqi President Talabani supported the Turkish concerns on security and said that there were two options for the PKK; either laying down their arms or leaving Iraq. The Iraqi President said that the Iraqi constitution forbids the existence of armed groups in Iraq; thus, the trilateral commission of Turkey, Iraq and the US would work together to end the existence of the PKK in Iraq.³ Similar declarations from Barzani supported the Turkish position against the PKK. Barzani argued that it was not logical to attack a country and then seek shelter in Iraq. Following these declarations, one of the leaders of the PKK, Murat Karayılan, said that "Talabani is trying to please Turkish generals and we do not believe anymore that Talabani can play a role in the solution of the Kurdish problem. Nobody can derive us from the Kandil Mountains."⁴

The year 2009 also became a period in which the Turkish government increased its contacts with the Kurdish authorities in Iraq. Along with the

Kurdish opening domestically, Turkey's contacts with Kurdish groups in Iraq became frequent and Ankara aimed to curtail possible support there for terrorist activities. In this vein, Turkish Foreign Minister Davutoğlu went to Iraq on 11 August and met with Foreign Minister Zebari and other Kurdish officials.⁵ The primary purpose of this visit was for the preparations of a High Level Strategic Cooperation Council between the two neighbors and although security issues were on the agenda during the meetings, Davutoğlu argued that his visit should not be confined to security since Turkey was trying to diversify its policy towards Iraq and with other countries in the region.⁶

The change in Turkish foreign policy and its increasing relations with the Middle East has been covered in the Arab media. Particularly, the economic and security aspects of Davutoğlu's visit were highlighted in Arab newspapers. In Davutoğlu's opinion, increasing bilateral trade was the focal point, whereas in Zebari's opinion, future cooperation between Turkey and Iraq was stressed. In this respect, the parties decided to share intelligence to fight terrorism and to establish a joint command center in northern Iraq.⁷

Another factor that affected Turkish-Iraqi relations in 2009 was the Kurdish opening in Turkey. Although the 'opening process' was an issue of debate in terms of domestic politics, it supported Turkish relations with Iraq, especially

with Iraqi Kurds. The reactions to the opening coming from the Iraqi Kurdish authorities were generally positive. In interviews with the Turkish journalists, President of the Iraqi Kurdish Region Masud Barzani said that they support this process and the solution is possible through peaceful and legal ways.⁸ These developments show that it is not possible to detach issues of domestic and foreign policy completely from one another. Moreover, also in order to have successful foreign policy, one should overcome domestic problems first.

High Level Strategic Cooperation Council

The most important development that affected Turkish-Iraqi relations in 2009 was the establishment of the “High Level Strategic Cooperation Council” and the signature of a protocol on this body during Turkish Prime Minister Erdoğan’s visit to Baghdad accompanied by nine ministers. The groundwork for the visit of Erdoğan was laid in Istanbul in September during the preparatory meetings with the participation of the foreign ministers and other members of the two cabinets.⁹ Beside foreign ministers, the ministers of the interior, health, foreign trade, agriculture, energy, environment and transportation from both sides attended the visit to Baghdad with Erdoğan and discussed possible joint projects focusing on areas such as commerce, domestic affairs, agriculture, health, transportation, water, public

works, environment and energy. Following the meeting, there were agreements on the opening of another border crossing between Turkey and Iraq, the railways connection between Basra with Istanbul, the extension of the contract for Kirkuk-Yumurtalık pipeline, and the construction of new electricity wires, all important steps in diversifying bilateral relations.¹⁰

According to one Turkish columnist who attended the visit, in the new era bilateral relations will develop in three stages: first, stability and security in Iraq; second, bilateral cooperation on security issues; and finally, economic interdependence.¹¹ Turkey seemed to be ready to move beyond security in its relations with Iraq. The coverage in the Arab media of the agreements between Turkey and Iraq also did focus not on security issues but on economic cooperation and increasing trade.¹² Bilateral agreements materialized in a very short time in the area of transportation and a train service started to operate between Mosul and Gaziantep in early 2010 following a 100-year break.¹³

Another important development that affected bilateral economic relations came with the permission from the Iraqi Oil Ministry for the export of the oil in the north via a pipeline to Yumurtalık. The Baghdad government refused to recognize oil agreements signed by the KRG and declared that 60,000 barrels of oil per day would be exported from several oil fields in the north and the

marketing of this oil would be done by the Iraq State Oil Marketing Company, not by the Regional Government.¹⁴ The spokesman for the Iraqi Oil Ministry also stressed in the same declaration that the revenue would go to the Iraqi people and that the export of oil via Yumurtalık would increase Iraq's export capacity.

Turkey's focus on economic issues in bilateral relations has been welcomed by the Kurdish officials in Iraq. In remarks about his satisfaction with the new policy of Turkey, Barzani said that they are planning to establish a free trade zone on the Turkish border at Zakho.¹⁵ The year 2009 was also a year in which Turkish investments in northern Iraq increased in terms of value and volume. In order to support commercial relations, the Turkish government took several steps to facilitate business relations with the KRG. At the end of the year, along with Foreign Minister Davutoğlu, State Minister responsible for Foreign Trade Zafer Çağlayan went to Iraq and attended the Turkey-Iraqi Kurdish Region Business Forum in Erbil. At this meeting, it was stressed by the officials that despite the global economic recession, Turkey's exports to Iraq increased by 50 percent in 2009, whereas Turkey's total exports declined by 30 percent.¹⁶

Iraqi Kurdish authorities argued that bilateral relations between northern Iraq and Turkey reached US\$7.5 billion by the end of 2008 and, as a result of the complementary nature of economic relations, it was only natural to have

Another important indicator of Turkey's policy of establishing contact with every actor in Iraqi politics came with the visit of Mukteda al Sadr to Turkey on 2 May 2009.

better economic relations in the future.¹⁷ In 2009, Iraq continued to be a good market for Turkish products. In terms of bilateral trade, 20 percent of Iraq's imports came from Turkey and Turkish exports to Iraq equaled US\$5 billion at the end of 2009, with a bilateral trade volume exceeding US\$6 billion.¹⁸ Iraq is a rising market for Turkish contractors, which provide important economic input to Turkey. In 2003, the value of Turkish contracting services in Iraq was equal to US\$242 million, and by the end of 2009 this figure reached US\$1.231 billion with 44 projects.¹⁹

The contacts with Erbil represent an important change in Turkish foreign policy. That Barzani, a figure seen by the Turkish public as supporting terrorist activities, was visited by a Turkish foreign minister is a striking example of the change in the Turkish attitude towards the Kurdish question and the change of Turkish policy towards Iraq.²⁰ During his November 2009 visit, Davutoğlu also stopped in Mosul and had meetings with Turcoman officials coming from Kirkuk, Talafer and Tuzhurmatu.

The change in Turkish policy in the Middle East in general and in Iraq in

particular has been closely followed by the public in the countries in the region. Aware of Turkish support for Lebanon, a Lebanese journalist in his column invited Davutoğlu to come to Lebanon to support their efforts in overcoming problems.²¹ Beside these calls, the restructuring of Turkish foreign policy by engaging with Erbil has been recognized by a number of observers. The visit of the Turkish foreign minister to Erbil was described by the Arab media as a “historic” visit and Turkey’s increasing influence in the region was highlighted.²² Turkey’s new approach was welcomed by some people in the region but was also criticized by some other, such as by some of the Turcomans living in Iraq who criticized Davutoğlu’s visit to Erbil given the uncompromising attitude of Barzani on the issue of Kirkuk.²³

Beside Turkey’s increasing contacts with Barzani and with other high-level visits, another important indicator of Turkey’s policy of establishing contact with every actor in Iraqi politics came with the visit of Mukteda al Sadr to Turkey on 2 May 2009. Mukteda al Sadr, an important Shiite figure in Iraqi politics, who was in self-imposed exile in Iran since the large-scale military operation of Iraqi Prime Minister Maliki against his forces in early 2008, came from Iran and met not only with Prime Minister Erdoğan, but also with some other Iraqi figures in Turkey.²⁴

This visit was an important example of Turkey’s new approach in its Iraq

policy. In the past, Turkey had been criticized because of its focus on first Turcomans only, and then later on just Turcoman and Sunni groups in its policy towards Iraq. In the last couple of years, however, Turkey has established contacts with other actors in Iraq. Ankara now feels free to have contacts with actors like Sadr, who has close contacts with Iranian officials. With these contacts, Turkey aimed to gain first-hand information about Iraq before the elections there in 2009, strengthening relations with different groups that might be influential in the elections, and communicating its expectations and views to several actors in Iraq. After his meetings with the President and Prime Minister in Ankara, Sadr said that he was “happy about the role played by Turkey in the region and was awaiting increasing help from Ankara in overcoming the problems in Iraq.”²⁵ From Sadr’s point of view, this visit was important in increasing his influence in Iraq before the elections, since he was welcomed as an important actor in regional politics.

Another important example of this approach in 2009 was the visit of Ammar al Hakim, head of the Islamic Supreme Council of Iraq, who replaced his father, Abdelaziz al Hakim, who had died of cancer in Tehran on 26 August 2009. Just a few months after taking over the leadership, Ammar al Hakim visited Turkey in November and met with President Gül and Foreign Minister Davutoğlu.²⁶ In their declarations after

the meetings with al Hakim, both Gül and Davutoğlu stressed Turkey's equal distance from different groups in Iraq, whereas al Hakim said that with its consulates in Mosul and Basra, Turkey had opened up to different groups in Iraq and they are respectful of Turkey's stance on issues relating to Arabs and Muslims.²⁷ Al Hakim also visited Jafaris in Turkey, and his visit to Ankara was important both for Turkey and for Al Hakim to strengthen their positions before the coming elections.

Contacts and meetings with Iraqi officials continued until the end of 2009. At the end of the year, the Iraqi deputy president and member of the Islamic Supreme Council of Iraq, Adel Abdelmehdi, visited Turkey on 30 December. In his visit, Abdelmehdi met with President Gül, Prime Minister Erdoğan and Foreign Minister Davutoğlu and discussed the developments in Iraq and the planned elections.²⁸ After the official meetings, Abdelmehdi and Davutoğlu visited wounded Iraqi nationals in hospitals in Ankara who had been taken to Turkey for medical treatment. This development can be interpreted as a sign of the humanitarian dimension of Turkish policy towards Iraq and its desire to fulfill its responsibilities as a neighbor. The same development is also a sign of the multidimensional nature of Turkish policy, since it was no longer based only on security concerns, but also aimed to increase reciprocal human contacts to have stable relations.

This new approach was supported by possible contribution of non-governmental organizations, the so-called 'second track' of policymaking. In this respect, bringing injured people from Iraq to Turkey for medical treatment contributed to the image of Turkey as fulfilling its humanitarian and neighborly duties. In addition, the activities of several Turkish NGOs in Iraq in helping orphans and other people whose lives had been affected by the war has contributed enormously to the image of Turkey in Iraqi society.²⁹ Similar to the policy of the Turkish government to have contacts with every actor in Iraq, Turkish NGOs have copied this policy to a certain extent and carry out their activities not only in areas dominated by Turcomans or Sunni Arabs, but also in different parts of Iraq. This approach has also shown that Turkish government's emphasis upon the territorial integrity of Iraq is also shared by Turkish NGOs.

Another factor that affected Turkish-Iraqi relations in 2009 was the Kurdish opening in Turkey. Although the 'opening process' was an issue of debate in terms of domestic politics, it supported Turkish relations with Iraq, especially with Iraqi Kurds. The Iraqi Kurdish authorities were generally positive about the policy and in an interview with Turkish journalists, Barzani said that he supported this process and that a solution is possible through peaceful and legal methods.³⁰ These developments show that it is not possible to detach issues of domestic and foreign policy completely from one another and

also in order to have successful foreign policy, one should overcome domestic problems first.

Turkey, Iraq and the US signed an agreement to establish a trilateral mechanism to combat terrorism. During Zebari's visit, Turkey and Iraq agreed to establish a 'command center' in Erbil.

The most important development that affected Turkish-Iraqi relations in 2009 was the establishment of the "High Level Strategic Cooperation Council" during Prime Minister Erdoğan's visit to Baghdad following preparatory meetings in Istanbul in September.³¹

Security Issues

After the terrorist attack against the Aktütün military post on the Iraqi border in the autumn of 2008, Turkish concerns about border security increased again and the future policies of Turkey towards Iraq became focused on ensuring stability in bilateral relations. Here, being aware of the negative outcomes of relying only on military tools, Turkey continued its contacts with Iraqi and US authorities to reach a solution. In 2008, Turkey, Iraq and the US signed an agreement to establish a trilateral mechanism to combat terrorism. During Zebari's visit, Turkey and Iraq agreed to establish a 'command center' in Erbil.³² This command center is just a small bureau

and became operational in February; however, through this Turkey, Iraq and the US aimed to coordinate their efforts against the PKK with the participation of military and intelligence personnel from the three countries.³³ This shows that steps are being taken to effectively coordinate efforts of the three countries against the PKK and that there is a policy of rapprochement with the Kurdish government in Iraq which means that Turkey has realized that without the contribution of the Kurdish authorities it will be very difficult to find a permanent solution for PKK terrorist attacks.

Within the framework of the trilateral mechanism, another meeting took place in April 2009 in Baghdad. The Turkish side was represented by Interior Minister Beşir Atalay and steps taken in the three months prior to that meeting in fighting terrorism were discussed, along with the measures to be taken by the Iraqi administration to end the presence of the PKK in Iraq, and it was agreed to close PKK-related parties and organizations in Iraq.³⁴ Contacts between Turkey and Iraq continued, including at the military level. Turkish Deputy Chief of General Staff Hasan Iğsız and Iraqi Deputy Chief of General Staff Nasir Abadi signed an agreement covering "cooperation in military issues in terms of education, technical and scientific matters and sharing of secret documents in case of need."³⁵ In this way, military cooperation between Turkey and Iraq was not confined to the struggle against terrorism but was extended to other

areas. The third meeting of the trilateral mechanism was at the ministerial level and took place in Turkey. At this meeting, the Turkish delegation was headed by Interior Minister Atalay and the Iraqi delegation was headed by National Security Minister Şirvan al Vaili. Turkish demands concentrated on issues such as the closure of the Makhmur Camp, deployment of more Iraqi soldiers to the Iraqi-Turkish border, handover of PKK terrorists to Turkey, and intelligence sharing.³⁶

Meetings of the trilateral mechanism to combat the PKK continued and at the end of the year, Turkish Interior Minister Atalay, along with a number of MPs from the governing party, went to Erbil to attend a security meeting. The aim of these MPs was not to attend the official meeting on security but to get the support of Kurdish figures in Iraq for the Turkish government's Kurdish opening. Dengir Mir Mehmet Firat, MP from Adana, met with Masud Barzani in Selahaddin and informed him about the steps taken by the Turkish government and asked for his support for the process. In response, Barzani said that they supported the initiative and believed that the policy would be successful.³⁷

There had been bilateral and trilateral security mechanisms in the past to overcome the terrorist threat emanating from Iraq; however, these mechanisms were not successful. We can say that the steps taken in 2009 were more successful than before due to the cooperation

mechanism established between Turkey and the US after Turkish Prime Minister Erdoğan's visit to Washington in November 2007. In Washington, Turkey argued that the US was responsible for security in Iraq as it is the main occupying force and that the US should fulfill its responsibilities. According to US officials, the main reason behind the increasing American cooperation with Turkey was the advancement of the security situation in Iraq.³⁸ In line with the positive developments in different parts of Iraq beginning in 2007 and continuing on into 2008, according to US sources, the US concentrated on problems in northern Iraq.

Turkey's assurance that it would maintain the territorial integrity of Iraq, Ankara had the chance for better cooperation from Iraqi figures in overcoming Turkish security concerns.

Another important development that brought results for Turkey's counter-terrorism efforts was the advancement of Turkey's relations with different groups in Iraq, especially with the Kurds. With the improvement of relations with the Sunni and Shiite groups in Iraq and Turkey's assurance that it would maintain the territorial integrity of Iraq, Ankara had the chance for better cooperation from Iraqi figures in overcoming Turkish security concerns. The same was also true for the Kurdish groups in Iraq.

Turkey declared during its cross-border operations that the target was PKK terrorists and not the authority of the Kurdish groups in Iraq; Turkish forces then acted in line with this declaration. Consequently, the attitude of the Kurdish groups towards Turkey started to change. The main reasons for the change in the atmosphere between Turkey and Kurdish authorities in Iraq were the following: the limited duration of the Turkish cross-border operations against the PKK, the utmost caution shown for the protection of civilians during the operations, and, more importantly, Turkey's engagement with the Kurdish authorities in Iraq to keep them informed about Turkish intentions.

The awareness of both Turkey and the Kurdish authorities in Iraq about the need to work together for the future of Iraq after the planned withdrawal of US troops from Iraq has played an important role in the rapprochement between the two sides. After scheduling the withdrawal of US troops from Iraq, the KRG had several problems with Prime Minister Maliki and realized that better relations with Turkey were in their best interest. According to a report about the relationship between the Iraqi Kurds and the central administration in Baghdad, prepared by the International Crisis Group in July 2009, despite several problems, many Kurdish leaders perceive Turkey as the most important ally in the region.³⁹ Given the influence of Iran on the Shiite groups in Iraq and concerns about its intentions for Iraq, there is an

Turkey believes that regional stability and security directly affects its security.

interest in cooperation both for Turks and the Kurds in Iraq. Therefore, in case of a possible problem with the central administration in Baghdad, Turkey may act as an important outlet for the Kurds to have contacts with the outside world.

The Kurds in Iraq were in an advantageous position just after the invasion as a result of their cooperation with the US. However, they were faced with the danger of losing this influence, especially after the central administration in Baghdad increased its power and strengthened its authority in different parts of the country and relations between Baghdad and Erbil became tense. Along with the inclusion of Sunni groups into political life and the decline in the expectations for an independent Kurdish state, accompanied by economic benefits, it is only natural that the Kurds of Iraq should pursue a policy of friendship with Turkey instead of one of enmity.⁴⁰

Turkey's Mediation Efforts between Iraq and Syria

In the past, Turkey had pursued a policy of isolation from regional issues; however, in the last couple years we have seen a policy of increasing engagement in the Middle East. Turkey believes that regional stability and security directly

An example of Turkey's increasing influence and efforts to play a role in the solution of regional problems came in August 2009.

affects its security. Nearly ten years ago, Turkey was on the brink of war over Syria's refusal to expel Öcalan and needed Egyptian mediation. Today, however, Ankara increasingly plays an active role in the solution of regional problems. This role of Ankara is closely followed by the states in the region and their media. For example, Saudi newspapers have drawn attention to Turkey's efforts to calm the tense situation between Syria and Iraq.⁴¹ Most Arab commentators have seen the efforts of Turkey as an example of its new policy and followed it with interest. Although most of the time this interest is in positive terms, there have been some concerns about the increasing activism of Turkey in the Middle East. In particular, some former members of the Baath Party were jealous about the important role Turkey, a non-Arab country, was playing in the solution of an Arab issue and voiced these criticisms with references to Turkey's imperial Ottoman background.⁴² However, even in these criticisms (beside the concerns about Turkey and its historical legacy), there were also praise since Turkey has continuously rejected arguments of 'neo-Ottomanism'.

An example of Turkey's increasing influence and efforts to play a role in the solution of regional problems came

in August 2009 after the two bombings in Baghdad that targeted the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs where 95 people died and around 600 were wounded. When the Iraqi government blamed former Baath members residing in Syria, relations between Iraq and Syria became tense.⁴³ These attacks could be interpreted in different ways. First of all, the reputation of Prime Minister Maliki, who was successful in the elections in the early months of that year because of his image as a powerful figure that could bring order and security to the country, was damaged after these attacks. Second, these twin attacks on the two ministries made it clear that even the heavily guarded 'Green Zone' was not secure enough. This fact was a serious blow to the image of Maliki, who had tried hard to build his reputation over the years. Consequently, Maliki argued that the perpetrators of the attacks were supported by Syria and claimed that he had information about meetings of Syrian intelligence agencies with former Baath members and other extremist Sunni groups, and they were unhappy about the Syrian policy of accommodating these people.⁴⁴

Iraqi security officials said that significant numbers of al Qaeda members are infiltrating into Iraq, and an important part of the security problem in the country is caused by these people who were carrying Syrian passports, and that hundreds of these people had been captured by the Iraqi security forces.⁴⁵ The Syrian response to the allegations

that came just after the bombings and continued for some time was to reject the arguments by saying that their country was sheltering 1,200,000 Iraqi refugees and these allegations were politically driven.⁴⁶

The friction between Syria and Iraq did not decline after the reciprocal statements but instead increased. At this point, in order to find a solution to the problem, and to overcome tensions between the neighbors which threatened the fragile balance in the region, Turkey entered the scene. Foreign Minister Davutoğlu visited Baghdad and Damascus to listen to the arguments of both sides and to try to mediate between them. Davutoğlu first went to Baghdad, had meetings with the President, Prime Minister and Foreign Minister to try to understand their position on the issues. While Iraqi officials had given the names of two Baath members and demanded that Damascus hand over these people, the Syrian side rejected the allegations.⁴⁷ Davutoğlu made it clear that the aim of Turkey was to contain the issue and to build trust between the two capitals.⁴⁸ One of the most important issues for Turkey was the danger of losing the gains in its fight against the PKK that it had developed with good relations in the region. Referring to Turkey's struggle with terrorism, Davutoğlu said to the Baghdad administration that "in the past you did not respond to our concerns about terrorism, but now you should realize that cooperation is necessary against terrorism", and to Damascus he

said that "without peace with Baghdad, we cannot have peace in the region; be serious and candid towards Iraq."⁴⁹ These calls of Davutoğlu are reflections of Turkish expectations that solutions to regional problems can be found within the region.

The political tension between Iraq and Syria made several issues clear.

Iraq and Syria did not change their positions over the bombings and tensions remained high for some time. Then, Ankara invited representatives of both countries to Turkey. The Iraqi delegation, headed by Deputy Undersecretary of the Iraqi Interior Ministry General Hüseyin Kamal, came to Ankara.⁵⁰ Iraqi Government spokesman Ali Debbağ said that this delegation brought to Turkey proof that the attack was carried out by the people who are living in Syria and have connections with al Qaeda.⁵¹ In this framework, another effort to reconcile the positions of Syria and Iraq was the meeting of Turkish, Iraqi and Syrian foreign ministers, along with the Secretary General of the Arab League, in Istanbul. In these meetings, a breakthrough was not achieved but both countries made their arguments at the level of foreign ministers.⁵²

The Iraqi government aimed to internationalize the issue by calling on the UN Security Council to investigate the bombings. Contacts between Syria

and Iraq continued after the Istanbul meeting with the help of Turkey and another meeting of the ministers was hosted by Davutoğlu in New York. Davutoğlu said that “they continue to build confidence for the solution of the problem and their aim is to reach a solution before the internationalization of the problem.”⁵³ Although a concrete result was not achieved from these meetings, the progress satisfied both sides, and tensions have since decreased.

Solutions to regional problems are crucial for the construction of the peace that Turkey aims to establish with its foreign policy.

The political tension between Iraq and Syria made several issues clear. First of all, although Iraqi security concerns are in a decline, stability is still fragile and terrorist groups in Iraq have the ability to continue their activities. Second, besides the historical distrust between Iraq and Syria, the Baghdad administration has concerns about Baathists and suspects that Damascus is using Baathist groups against Iraq. Third, Turkey should expend a great deal of effort to protect the stability in the region.

Some commentators have argued that Turkey has exaggerated the efforts of its mediation in its foreign policy, especially in the Middle East, spent unnecessary energy for these efforts, and that the states in the Middle East do not see the

Turkish role as important.⁵⁴ Criticisms about the energy spent by Turkey might have some value; however, it should be kept in mind that the Turkish efforts are not only for sake of being an actor in regional politics. Solutions to regional problems are crucial for the construction of the peace that Turkey aims to establish with its foreign policy. By playing a role of mediator, arbitrator or facilitator between Iraq and Syria, between Israel and Syria, or on the Iranian nuclear issue, Turkey is serving its own foreign policy interests. In the last couple of years, Turkey has developed a special strategy to increase its trade with neighbors and consequently Turkey’s trade with neighboring countries increased eight-fold between 2000 and 2007. With the help of its foreign policy, Turkey is in a way aiming to serve its own economic interests.⁵⁵ This policy of the government in foreign policy is described by some academics as the “rise of the trading state.”⁵⁶ In order to continue these commercial activities, naturally, a secure and peaceful environment is required.

Local Elections in Iraq

The local elections in early 2009 in Iraq were an important turning point from the standpoint of stability in Iraq. The elections took place on 31 January in 14 provinces of Iraq (other than the provinces of the Kurdish region, namely Duhok, Erbil and Sulaimaniah, and also Kirkuk due of the problems about the status of this city). The State of Law

coalition headed by Prime Minister Nuri Maliki had great success. Turnout was higher than in the 2005 elections and Turkish observers participated in the monitoring process along with other international observers.⁵⁷ The common conclusion about the results of this election was that Iraqi people opted for the unity and integrity of the country.

These local elections were important from the standpoint of domestic politics since local assemblies have a say over the budget of the governorates and the elections of governors. Turnout was high even in places like Ramadi, where turnout in the 2005 elections was just 2 percent, and it was generally accepted that the improvement in the security conditions played a crucial role in electoral participation.⁵⁸ The election results showed that people, regardless of sectarian differences, were not happy with their local governors. Similar to the characteristics of local politics all over the world, the Iraqi people also voted based on the services provided by the local officials, not just according to ethnic or sectarian factors.⁵⁹ Another significant outcome of the Iraqi local elections was the decline of the religious parties. Prime Minister Maliki was successful with his image of a strong man, who had secured the unity and integrity of the country with operations against the Mahdi Army of al-Sadr and protected the rights of not only the Shiite groups but also of

the whole of Iraq. It has been argued, however, that the decline of the religious parties and the use of state resources for Maliki's party were factors behind the success of the prime minister in the election.⁶⁰

Another important result of this election was related to the high turnout of Sunni voters. In the 2005 elections, as a result of a boycott of the election by the Sunni groups, the Kurdish parties were successful in governorates like Ninova (Mosul). This time, however, Sunni groups participated in the elections and the Kurdish parties lost their advantageous positions. The transfer of the administration of some governorates from the Kurdish parties to the Sunni parties and decline of religiously-motivated parties were interpreted as signs of a desire for centralization and a demand for a unified Iraq.⁶¹

Another important political development in Iraq in 2009 was the elections for regional parliament and president of the Kurdish region in July that resulted in the success of the Goran (Change) movement in the Sulaimaniah region. There were 24 parties and 2.5 million voters who participated in the elections and the average turnout was around 74 percent. In city centers such as Erbil, Duhok and Sulaimaniah, this figure was above 90 percent.⁶² The biggest surprise of the election was

Another significant outcome of the Iraqi local elections was the decline of the religious parties.

The transfer of the administration of some governorates from the Kurdish parties to the Sunni parties were interpreted as signs of a desire for centralization and a demand for a unified Iraq.

the arrival of the Goran movement, a breakaway party from the PUK, as a new actor in the politics of the region. The Goran movement argued that the Kurdish region was badly administered, with widespread bribery and corruption, saying that the Kurdish region was being governed like a 'Soviet republic' with no independent judiciary and no democracy.⁶³ The rhetoric of the opposition focused on the status of newly-moneyed people, heavy reliance on oil resources and mismanagement of the oil revenues by the followers of Barzani and Talabani.⁶⁴ With this opposition, Goran got the support of a significant number of people and won 28 out of 111 seats with 23 percent of the total votes. Of these MPs, 19 came from Talabani's stronghold, Sulaimaniah. Christian groups in the region were also satisfied to a large extent with the results of the elections.⁶⁵

The emergence of a new actor in the Kurdish region, along with the KDP, PUK and religious parties, was seen as a sign of democratic development and this new environment should have an effect on the policy of Turkey towards Iraq. Some commentators have argued that the existence of dynamic public

opinion other than clan-based structures in the Kurdish region was a sign of a new democratic process and the Turkish approach towards the region should relax.⁶⁶ Some other commentators have interpreted the election results as proof that no government can remain in power in a democratic environment and from now on the parties will follow policies to not antagonize neighboring states.⁶⁷

In this paper, it was argued that the Kurdish opening in domestic politics and the Turkish decision to engage with all actors in its Iraqi foreign policy has positively affected Turkish-Iraqi bilateral relations. In addition to the change in Turkish policy, several factors were important in the moderate policy pursued by the Kurdish administration towards Turkey. Clearly, the KRG has moderated its stance towards Turkey since it has to act carefully domestically. In addition to that, the Kurdish administration's positive response to Turkey's new stance shows that it was aware of the danger of directly opposing Turkey after the planned US withdrawal.

Conclusion

Developments in 2009 have proved that Iraq is already preparing for the post-occupation period. The overall advancement of security conditions, the functioning of democratic institutions in the local elections, the steps taken towards the stabilization of the economy, and the improvement of relations with

Turkey attest to this. The most striking development in Turkey's policy towards Iraq was the steps taken by Ankara to end the dominance of security issues in bilateral relations and the diversification of bilateral ties. In the area of security, thanks to the functioning of cooperation mechanisms with the US and Iraqi officials, better results have been achieved in comparison with the past. Here, Turkey's engagement with the Kurdish authorities in Iraq has played an important role as well.

An important step that strengthened political and economic relations was the creation of the High Level Strategic Cooperation Council. Here the aim was to create economic interdependence and to solidify grounds for diversified relations. Turkey's trade relations with Iraq improved greatly in 2009 and despite the global economic crisis, Turkish

The most striking development in Turkey's policy towards Iraq was the steps taken by Ankara to end the dominance of security issues in bilateral relations

exports to Iraq increased by 50 percent that year. Beside the improvement in political and economic relations, Turkey has acted as a mediator between Iraq and Syria. With several high-level reciprocal visits, Turkey's relations with Iraq have increasingly had a multifaceted nature. Turkish businessmen have become important actors in Turkish policy. The Kurdish initiative in Turkey has positively affected relations with Iraq, especially with the Kurds of northern Iraq. Another important indicator of the changes of Turkish policy towards Iraq was Turkish Foreign Minister Davutoğlu's visit to Erbil and his meeting with Masud Barzani. In doing so, Turkey continued its engagement with different actors in Iraq and took an important step to overcome reciprocal prejudices and develop more stable relations.

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Turkish Foreign Policy Towards Afghanistan: 2009-2010

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Abstract

One of the most critical foreign policy issues for Turkey in 2009 and 2010 was the US expectation that Turkey would contribute more troops to Afghanistan within the framework of the AfPak Strategy. The US requested Turkey to send troops to combat missions in Afghanistan and expand the mandate of the Kabul Central Command southward to an area where conflicts had intensified. In effect, Turkey was asked to review its policy of not taking part in armed conflicts in Afghanistan. As a response to American requests, Turkey increased its diplomatic efforts to establish peace and stability in the region in 2009 and 2010, including tripartite summits between the governments of Afghanistan and Pakistan. This article examines Turkish foreign policy towards Afghanistan in 2009 and 2010 in light of basic principles formulated within the general framework of its initial reactions since 2001: supporting international cooperation, not taking part in armed conflicts, protecting civilians and acting in accordance with the UN Security Council resolutions.

Key Words

Turkey, Afghanistan, AfPak Strategy, ISAF, American Operation.

Introduction

The Afghanistan crisis, which has been one of the turning points of the international system of the post-Cold War era, has played a very significant role in identifying newly-emerging perceptions of security, threat and interest in Turkish foreign policy. Since Turkey is a country located in a geographical position adjacent to the areas of conflict in the post-Cold War era, its historical and cultural ties have made it an important player in these conflicts. However, since Turkey mostly took part in international peacekeeping activities rather than political and diplomatic processes in the beginning of the post-Cold War era, Ankara is considered to be a significant military actor in regional politics. From this perspective, the immediate reaction of Turkey just after American operations in Afghanistan constituted an answer to this question: Will Turkey remain a country which is seen as an important

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player only in terms of its military potential and capacities?

After the attacks of September 11, almost all states concentrated mainly on the question of how they would respond to the new international atmosphere rather than the question of who was behind these attacks. The answer to this question was more important for Turkey than for any other state. Turkey became a very significant actor in the post-September 11 international atmosphere, because of the following factors: Turkey was the only Muslim country in NATO; Ankara's long-term experience in fighting terrorism; and the possible demand of the US to use Turkey's air space and the Incirlik air base.

The September 11 attacks and the American operation in Afghanistan that started on 7 October 2001 shaped the formulation of the basic principles of Turkish foreign policy towards Afghanistan. In this article, Turkish foreign policy towards Afghanistan between 2009 and 2010 will be evaluated in light of Turkey's initial reactions to and policies towards the new international atmosphere in 2001.

The American Operation in Afghanistan and Turkish Foreign Policy

Immediate official statements of Turkey after the September 11 condemned

the terrorist attacks against the US and international terrorism in general.¹ In these statements, the emphasis was on Turkey's long-standing struggle against terrorism.² The initial reactions of Turkey were very deliberate and responsible regarding the discussions on Islam and terror.³ In those days, Turkey benefitted from the situation by expressing its view on terror to Europe and to the world. Turkey also reminded others that, for several years, it has been defending the necessity to make Article 5 of the NATO Charter operational against terrorist attacks, but Western countries had not responded to these requests. However, appreciating the NATO decision to operate under Article 5, Turkey declared through official statements made by the president, the prime minister and the minister of foreign affairs that it would fulfill its obligations arising from this Article.⁴ In this framework, referring to the strategic partnership between Turkey and the US, it was also stated that Turkey supported the international cooperation in the fight against terrorism and, in case of necessity, Ankara would be open to American requests for the use of Turkish airspace and airports by American transport aircraft.⁵ However, in order to understand Turkey's Afghanistan policy, we should highlight an important point. Although in the beginning Turkey had a positive attitude towards the American demands for the use of Turkey's airspace and airports, it was reluctant to provide troops for a possible military operation. Turkey stated that if a military operation were to happen, instead of providing troops, it would provide military

education and intelligence aid to the Northern Alliance forces.⁶

When the US launched an operation in Afghanistan with the UK on 7 October 2001, as a first reaction, Turkey declared that it would act under the framework of NATO and support international cooperation. Turkey also expressed its concerns about the protection of civilians during the operation.⁷ The Turkish official view stated by the Presidency, the Prime Ministry and the General Staff between 11 September and 7 October was that Turkey's contribution to the operation would be within the framework of Article 5 of the NATO Charter, but after a very short period of time the government asked the permission of the Turkish Parliament to send troops abroad. The Turkish Parliament approved the request to send troops abroad on 10 October 2001. In addition to this development, on October 31, Turkey showed a positive attitude towards the American requests to send Turkish troops by deciding to dispatch a special operations team of 60 soldiers.⁸ This team would perform their duties in the northern region of Afghanistan under the control of Northern Alliance forces. If necessary, the team would take part in armed conflicts. In fact, this decision contradicted the principle of not entering into any armed conflict that had been formulated at the beginning of the crisis.

Turkey stated that if a military operation were to happen, instead of providing troops, it would provide military education and intelligence aid to the Northern Alliance forces.

After the fall of Taliban-controlled cities and regions, the issue of deploying an international military force to Afghanistan came to the international agenda in November 2001. After this development, instead of sending a limited number of troops, Turkey started to discuss the possibility of leading an international peacekeeping force with a large military contribution. During these discussions, Turkey's main concerns concentrated on the questions of the size and length of its contribution and the region, where Turkish troops would be deployed. Turkey's willingness to deploy its troops only in the Kabul region was emphasized by official statements at different levels.⁹ UN Security Council Resolution 1386,¹⁰ adopted on 20 December 2001, was very significant for Turkish foreign policy as well as for the future of Afghanistan. With this resolution, the Security Council authorized the establishment of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) consisting of 4,500 troops, for the maintenance of security in Kabul and surrounding areas under the command of the UK, with forces and assets from 18 other countries. At the initial stage, Turkey declared its support of ISAF with its willingness to contribute 267 troops.

In accordance with UN Security Council Resolution 1413 adopted in May 2002, Turkey started to lead ISAF

II and its command continued until February 2003. From 20 June 2002 until 10 February 2003, Turkey's contribution increased to a battalion-sized task force with approximately 1,300 troops. Turkey ran the Kabul International Airport and the Multinational Headquarters under the mandate of the ISAF, which was composed of 4,800 personnel from 22 countries. From February 2003 to August 2004, Turkey contributed around 300 personnel to ISAF operations.

After NATO took over the command and coordination of ISAF on 11 August 2003 and the ISAF mission was expanded beyond Kabul to throughout Afghanistan, the task of the Senior High Civil Representative of Afghanistan was given to Turkey in January 2004. Turkey's contribution to peacekeeping activities in Afghanistan and being the only Muslim country in NATO were determining factors behind this decision.

From 13 February 2005 until 4 August 2005, Turkey led ISAF for the second time. During its command, Turkey provided the single largest contingent in ISAF, with 1,700 troops in the force.¹¹ Turkey assumed the leadership of the Regional Command Capital for 8 months from 6 April 2007 to 6 December 2007 when it contributed 780 personnel to ISAF. Turkey established a Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) in the district center of Meydan Sehir in Wardak Province in November 2006. Civilian and military personnel work together in the Wardak PRT, whose

mission includes: “[d]evelopment of the administrative and judiciary system; training of the Afghan Police Force and increasing their capabilities; conducting activities aimed to improve and support infrastructure, and public works and social support to raise the life quality of local population.[sic]”¹²

The perspective of international law was very strong in Turkey's foreign policy towards Afghanistan after the September 11 attacks.

As indicated above, the perspective of international law was very strong in Turkey's foreign policy towards Afghanistan after the September 11 attacks and the US/UK-led operation. The basic principles of insistence to operate in accordance with Article 5 of NATO, supporting international cooperation, not taking part in armed conflicts, protection of civilians and acting in accordance with the UN Security Council resolutions have been clearly emphasized by Turkey since the launch of the operation. It should be stressed that, from time to time, Turkey came to a position contrary to the parameters of international law. After the US/UK-led operation that was not authorized by UN resolutions, Turkey has come to take part in this military intervention by passing decisions in the Turkish Parliament to send troops abroad. However, since the US/UK-led operation lasted for only a short time, in which Turkey did not take part, the

immediate formation of ISAF based on UN Security Council Resolution 1386 enabled Turkey to act in accordance with international law.¹³

Tough Years for Afghanistan (2009-2010): The AfPak Strategy of Obama and Afghanistan in Turkish Foreign Policy

In order to concentrate on the occupation of Iraq, the US handed over the command of ISAF to NATO in August 2003. In this way, many states, including Turkey, deployed troops to Afghanistan within the framework of NATO once again. However, handing over the command of ISAF to NATO was not sufficient to ensure security and stability in Afghanistan. On the contrary, Afghanistan increasingly has been mentioned as a second Vietnam for the US. The Taliban forces which withdrew to the eastern and southern parts of the country after the US/UK-led operation in 2001 increased their ability to inflict dramatic damage on NATO forces with the support of secure areas provided by its borders with Pakistan.¹⁴ The heavy casualties of English, Canadian and French forces, as well as those of the US in 2008, compelled the incoming American President Barak Obama to rethink the American policy towards Afghanistan and Pakistan, which are located at the center of the fight against terrorism.

The AfPak Strategy of President Obama, as declared by his National Security Advisor James Jones on 27 March 2009, can be considered as a response to the increasing number of American casualties in Afghanistan in 2008. The statement of Obama affirming his decision to send 17,000 additional troops to Afghanistan in February 2009 confirmed this strategy. The US wanted to send a message that, with this strategy, the US would focus on Pakistan, along with Afghanistan, in fighting against terrorism in the new era. It was stated in the strategy that the US would be cooperating with these two important regional players, Pakistan and Afghanistan, on many fields but specifically in intelligence sharing, military cooperation at borders, trade, energy, and economic development.¹⁵ With the AfPak Strategy, these two countries became the focal point of Obama's foreign policy and this strategy aimed at cracking the resistance of the Taliban. In this context, this strategy also aimed at increasing military and economic aid to Pakistan, cooperation for border security and intensification of diplomatic relations with Russia and India along with Afghanistan and Pakistan.

The most significant element of the new American strategy was the decision confirming the deployment of 30,000 more troops in Afghanistan. At the time, there were almost 110,000 allied troops there, 70,000 of which were American soldiers. The commander of NATO in

Afghanistan recommended expanding the number of troops to 150,000. Thereafter Obama declared that the US would send 30,000 more troops to Afghanistan and he called on allied forces to support this new initiative. As a response to this call, NATO's Secretary General declared that allied forces would contribute 5,000-7,000 more troops to support the new American strategy.

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The American request to send more troops to Afghanistan, was conveyed to Turkey during the NATO Summit held in April 2009, as well as during Obama's visit to Turkey. This development illustrated that Turkey was asked to take part in armed conflict under the framework of this new American strategy. It was reported that NATO demanded 5,000 more troops from all NATO member countries and 1,000 of them were asked from Turkey.¹⁶ However, Turkey reiterated its previous position after this demand and emphasized that 1,750 Turkish troops were already deployed in Afghanistan and Turkey was determined not to send combat troops. Turkey's contribution to Afghanistan was mainly focused on training of the security forces and improvement of social and economic conditions of the people and it has also given importance to civil support projects in Afghanistan. Since Turkey has a very positive image in

the eyes of Afghan people, Ankara was reluctant to send combat troops to take part in armed conflict.

Turkey supports the basic elements of the AfPak strategy of the Obama administration, except for sending combat forces to Afghanistan. Turkey agrees with the American government on the basic issues like protecting security and stability, holding democratic elections, increasing economic development, preventing civil casualties, and reconstruction. Moreover, the demand to increase the number of American and NATO troops was not welcomed, not only by Turkey but also by other NATO member countries. For example, Germany refused to send troops to the southern regions in which the conflicts are concentrated. Meanwhile, Canada declared its plan to withdraw its troops from Afghanistan in 2011. American and European public opinion also increasingly demanded their countries to withdraw their troops from Afghanistan.

The confidential report prepared by the commander of NATO forces in 2009, which depicted an extremely negative picture about the security situation of Afghanistan, was seized by the *Washington Post*. The McChrystal Report¹⁷ maintained that if the number of troops in Afghanistan is not increased, the US would lose the war and the Afghan government would be endangered. The report also emphasized the necessity to protect the Afghan government rather than to crack down on the resistance.

The Turkish government had concerns about the possible losses of Turkish troops in a conflict.

This report clearly shows the failure of the US and the security vulnerability in Afghanistan. In addition, the impact of corruption in the Afghan government on the resistance and the increasing sympathy for al-Qaeda because of ill-treatment and torture in prisons were also indicated in the report. The report revealed that the US and NATO forces could not prevent financial and logistical assistance from going to al-Qaeda and they experienced serious intelligence weaknesses.¹⁸

The Turkish government had concerns about the possible losses of Turkish troops in a conflict, since taking part in armed conflicts could result in Turkey losing the sympathy of the Afghan people and undermining its humanitarian activities. The visits of Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ahmet Davutoğlu, to Pakistan and Afghanistan, on 9-13 June 2009 were significant because these visits showed that no change would occur in Turkish foreign policy towards Afghanistan. Davutoğlu's visit in May to the Şah Mansur refugee camp, in which 4 million Pakistani refugees live because they had been displaced as a result of operations launched by the Pakistani army against the Taliban,¹⁹ showed that Turkey was concerned about the humanitarian dimension of the issue. After his visit to Pakistan, Davutoğlu

went to Afghanistan and visited shrines, mosques, hospitals and schools in some provinces, before arriving in Kabul. He referred to the peace messages of Mevlana during his visit to Mezar-ı Sherif, the center of Belh province, which is the homeland of Bahaeddin Veled, the father of Mevlana. He gave the message that “we have not forgotten Afghanistan” by coming together with Hashim Zari, the Governor of Shibirgan, and promised to build a mosque, a school and a hospital there. Davutoğlu's visit to the Afghanistan-Turkey Friendship Children's Hospital and Habibe Kadiri School for Girls in the town of Akca²⁰ also showed that Turkey placed much emphasis on the civilian dimension of the Afghanistan problem.

One of the crucial events of 2009 in Afghanistan was the controversial elections which were held on 20 August. It was controversial because it was impossible to have legitimate and fair elections in a country that was experiencing the highest level of security problems in the world. The fighting between the Taliban and the NATO forces in the eastern and southern regions prevented millions of Afghan people from casting their votes. The operations of the US/UK against the Taliban in the Helmand region before the elections that were designed to create a secure environment, there were not successful at all. The general elections that were held in Afghanistan for the second time after the American intervention, witnessed the race among President Hamid Karzai, Abdullah

Abdullah – the former foreign minister who was an important name from Rabbani's group-, Ramazan Besherdost– the former planning minister who was educated in French schools and was known as a defender of human rights-, and Ashraf Gani– finance minister of the Karzai government who had top positions in the World Bank and UN missions.²¹

Karzai was reelected as president for the second time as a result of these controversial elections. Although in recent years, Karzai has been seriously criticized by the Western media for corruption and nepotism, but he was still an indispensable name for the coalition forces.²² Karzai began his second term with a swearing-in ceremony held in the capital, Kabul, where he said that the priority in the country was to put an end to the violence. Karzai promised that Afghan forces would take the control of the country's security within five years with NATO's assistance and he would fight seriously against corruption,²³ because he has lost the confidence of the Afghan people as well as that of international actors due to the allegations of corruption. Therefore, he became the president again in order to meet several conditions of the coalition forces, especially the US. The primary conditions were: the Afghan government and security forces would take more responsibility in ensuring the security in

the country and they will cooperate with Pakistan in different areas, fight against corruption, prevent drug trafficking and provide representation of all groups in the new Afghan government. However, it was difficult for Karzai to meet all of these conditions given his first term's legacy since he is not supported by all ethnic groups in the country, particularly the Tajiks, Hazaras, Uzbeks and Turkmens. During his first term he was mostly the supported by the Pashtuns and carried out policies that satisfied mainly them.²⁴

Davutoğlu was among the high-level attendees of Karzai's inauguration ceremony. Along with many states, especially the US, UK, France and Pakistan, Turkey also believed that Karzai should fulfill these conditions

Ensuring security and stability in Afghanistan very much depends on an international coalition taking into account the demands of local actors.

because the security vacuum created by the Taliban forces was a major source of concern for Turkey. It seemed that the American and NATO troops newly dispatched to Afghanistan would not be able to overcome this security problem. Ensuring security and stability in Afghanistan very much depends on an international coalition taking into account the demands of local actors. From the beginning, Turkey defended this principle and preferred to stand at an equal distance from different members of the international coalition. The visit by Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan on 27 October 2009 can be considered

Turkey does not perceive Afghanistan as a question to be resolved only within the borders of Afghanistan, but believes that a regional approach must be developed.

as an important turning point in terms of Turkey-Pakistan relations in the context of Afghanistan.²⁵ Historic ties between the peoples of Pakistan and Turkey enable these two countries to play an important role in ensuring stability and peace in Afghanistan and the region. Pakistan, by supporting the Pashtun resistance movement Hizb-ul Islami and its leader Gulbeddin Hikmetyar during the Soviet occupation, had played a significant role in the rise of the Taliban movement after 1994. Pakistan is arguably the power that ensured the Taliban came to power in Afghanistan in a very short time. Pakistan, by using the Islamic resistance groups in Afghanistan against India in the Kashmir problem, has provided training for the Kashmiri insurgents in many parts of Afghanistan under the control of Taliban.²⁶ With the AfPak strategy, the US has sent a message that Pakistan should change its policy in Afghanistan and the region. Otherwise, Pakistan will continue to be named as a bastion of terrorism, which is expressed by the US and UK frequently. Indeed, these two states, on the one hand, request Pakistan to continue its goodwill towards the AfPak strategy, but on the other hand, they continue to pressure Pakistan by playing the India card.²⁷

In 2009 and 2010, Turkey increased its diplomatic efforts to establish peace and stability in the region. The “Turkey-Afghanistan-Pakistan Tripartite Summit” held on January 25, 2010 was the fourth summit of the process initiated in 2007. At the Summit in which President of Afghanistan Hamid Karzai, President of Pakistan Asif Ali Zardari and President of Turkey Abdullah Gül participated, the mechanisms to improve cooperation between the Afghani and Pakistani governments were discussed. Issues related to military training in Afghanistan were also discussed through negotiations of the General Staffs and the security services. The training of soldiers and police forces in Afghanistan in quarterly periods and increasing the cooperation with Afghanistan in the fight against terrorism were also agreed in the negotiations under the framework of the summit between Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and President Hamid Karzai. The tripartite declaration also included the opening of 68 schools by Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, built by the TİKA (Turkish International Cooperation and Development Agency). Additionally, these three countries agreed to increase their cooperation in the field of education.²⁸

The “Friendship and Cooperation Summit in the Heart of Asia”, held on 26 January 2010 in Istanbul, was another indicator of the approach that intense diplomacy should be used. In the declaration issued at the end of the summit attended by countries

neighboring Afghanistan, the main directions of Turkey's foreign policy were highlighted once again and the importance of regional cooperation was emphasized. The following expressions were also included in the declaration: "A safe, secure and prosperous Afghanistan is a vital element of regional peace and stability, the risks and problems are common and all forms of terrorism and illegal drug trafficking affect all countries in the region."²⁹ These summits have indicated that Turkey does not perceive Afghanistan as a question to be resolved only within the borders of Afghanistan, but believes that a regional approach must be developed for the solution of the problem. One of the most important elements of the regional approach is to increase cooperation with Pakistan, since Pakistan is a major party to the problem.

The successful tripartite summits were led by Turkey in order to thaw relations between the governments of Afghanistan and Pakistan.

According to Turkey, increasing high-level relationships and cooperation between Afghanistan and Pakistan is vital for peace and stability in the region. The successful tripartite summits were led by Turkey in order to thaw relations between the governments of Afghanistan and Pakistan. As a result of these tripartite summits, the "Summit of the Neighboring Countries of Afghanistan"

was also held under the leadership of Ankara. Along with Turkey, Pakistan and Afghanistan, high-level representatives from Iran, China, Russia, UK, US, Japan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, UAE, OIC, UN, NATO and the EU also participated at the Summit, so that it had extensive international participation.

Another summit on Afghanistan with extensive international participation was held in London on 28 January 2010. "The London Conference," attended by foreign ministers and high-level representatives from around 70 countries, was the eighth of a series of such conferences done since 2001. Previously, the series of conferences were held in Bonn and Berlin in 2001, London in 2006, Rome in 2007, Paris in 2008, and Moscow in 2009 for the reconstruction and future of Afghanistan. What made the London Conference different from earlier conferences was that it showed that the integration of moderate elements of the Taliban into the Afghan political structure was possible by getting them to accept the constitution and lay down their arms under the framework of a compromise with Karzai.³⁰ In addition, transfer of the responsibilities of international forces to local units was also on the agenda of the Conference. It was decided that in order to enable the Taliban militants to participate in the political process, a fund of \$140 million will be created by the participant countries. Afghan President Karzai promised to fight against corruption effectively. It was also decided that the

international forces will withdraw from Afghanistan after the Afghan soldiers reach the ability to ensure stability in the country.³¹

In the years 2009 and 2010, NATO and US troops took serious casualties in Afghanistan. As a result, European and American public opinion have increased calls for the withdrawal of troops from Afghanistan. The requirement for 30,000 to 35,000 additional troops in order to put the AfPak strategy in practice clearly indicated the failure of the US and NATO in Afghanistan.

The above-mentioned warnings of General McChrystal, the ISAF Commander, expressed in his report invited the ire of the Obama administration and the general was removed from his office in June 2010 because of his criticisms in an article published in *Rolling Stone* magazine; General David Petraeus replaced him. It has been known that General McChrystal openly criticized Obama's policy towards Afghanistan. Considering that the biggest losses since 2001 occurred in 2008 and 2009 it seems that there is no reason to say that the US policy has been successful in Afghanistan. Obama declared that the Afghanistan strategy would not change with General David Petraeus. Obama also stated that the withdrawal will begin from July 2011 but would continue for a few years.

One of the most critical foreign policy questions for Turkey in 2009

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and 2010 was the US expectation that Turkey would contribute more troops to Afghanistan within the framework of the AfPak Strategy. The US demanded Turkey to send troops to combat in Afghanistan and expand the mandate of the Kabul Central Command southward to an area where conflicts had intensified. In short, Turkey was asked to review its policy of not taking part in armed conflicts. These requests, which had come to the agenda several times before 2009, were clearly stated for the first time. Turkey has undertaken the command of ISAF twice so far. By undertaking the Kabul Central Command of ISAF for the second time in November 2009, Turkey ensured the security of the region, provided logistical support, and gave support for infrastructure. In addition, it continued the military training activities in Afghanistan.³² Turkish trainers and consultants are serving in military high schools. Turkey also continued its activities in the fields of health and education. It has contributed to the building or restoration of 27 primary and elementary schools since 2001. As a result, 38,000 students had the opportunity to study with the support of Turkey. Turkey has also pioneered the opening of a high school for girls and a women's development center. According

to the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, “in Afghanistan, Turkey has implemented the most comprehensive development assistance program in the history of the Turkish Republic.”³³

Conclusion

The varied contributions of Turkey are often covered and praised by international media. Turkey increased the number of troops from 800 to 1,750 after undertaking the Kabul Central Command of ISAF. It has also assumed the duty of forming and organizing the

Military Academy. Despite its increased support in all these fields, Turkey has not supported the idea of sending combat troops to Afghanistan. Except for sending troops to combat in the operation and making concessions on the definition of its task area, Turkey has responded positively to the new strategy for Afghanistan. In order to increase the capacity of Afghan security forces, which is one of the basic preconditions for the withdrawal, it is expected that Turkey would provide more contributions in terms of training and organization for the Afghan forces.³⁴

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Internet References:

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