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Between the EU and Turkey there is a long-standing relationship envisaging Turkey's inclusion in the EU as a full member, contingent to the fulfillment of conditions that have to be acknowledged by the European Union. A formal request of accession put forward by Turkey in 1987 was rejected in 1989, but a customs union between Turkey and the EU was enforced on 1st January 1996 - a unique feature with respect to other less developed EU neighbors. Despite the customs union, however, the decisions taken in November 1997 by the European Council in Luxembourg on the next EU enlargement round seem to exclude Turkey again.

Three decisions were taken in Luxembourg: (a) to start a process of accession to the EU including eleven countries, recognized in principle as eligible to membership; (b) to start negotiations for membership with six of these countries (the Czech Republic, Cyprus, Estonia, Hungary, Poland, Slovenia) reputed more prepared to enter the Union than the other five (Bulgaria, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia); (c) to establish a European Conference including the EU countries, the eleven countries above, and Turkey, aimed at bringing consistency to the different sets of relations being pursued in the greater European context.

These decisions have hurt Turkey for two reasons. First, Turkey's eligibility has been put off till the Greek calends and its political status in front of the EU made uncertain and ambiguous, even with respect to countries with a very debatable political and economic record (Slovakia and Romania). Second, starting negotiations with Cyprus while Turkey finds itself sidelined in the European game has been resented as an act of strong political hostility to be strenuously opposed.

Although the current state of EU-Turkey relations would suggest that the breaking off may - amidst growing tensions - go on for some time, there are many ambiguities which could result in positive changes and adaptations. The "no" expressed by the Union with respect to Turkey's prospects of membership is less clear-cut and definitive than it may look. The same can be said about Turkish aspirations to merge the country with the European Union.

Today's debate within the Turkish elite contemplates more options than just the European one. Most of the traditional kemalist elite seems to see Turkey as a primarily Western country, politically and military anchored to NATO, with a strong interest in developing economic cooperation with the EU, without necessarily entering it. On the other hand, during the short-lived premiership of Mr. Erdogan, the political religious elite showed a decisive interest in developing Turkey's relations with the non-Western world, though it did nothing to downgrade relations with the European Union. Though the international perspectives of the kemalist and religious elites are deeply different, both are convinced that post-Cold War Turkey must go its own way. Still, the self-established kemalist political legitimacy and culture demands a more explicit and organic link with Europe. Furthermore, many in Turkey, as well as in Europe and the US, are afraid that without such a European link, Turkey could not remain a member of the Atlantic Alliance either. For this reason, most of the incumbent kemalist elite, as convinced as it is of the

primarily Western identity of the country, is working towards re-opening an effective European perspective for Turkey.

On the other hand, after the decisions taken at the 1997 Luxembourg Council, European diplomacy (with its multiple and complex interactions between member states, as well as communitarian institutions) lets it be sensed that, like in Mozart's "Don Juan", the players of the EU enlargement process are regularly accompanied by a stone guest. There is no doubt that the decision taken in Luxembourg with respect to Turkey is not proving fully convincing for a number of EU members and the Commission, and efforts are being made to put the role of Turkey in the enlargement process set out in Luxembourg into a more politically acceptable perspective.

These remarks suggest that EU-Turkey relations may be adjusted. Against this backdrop, this paper draws some conclusions and makes some suggestions for restoring effective relations between Turkey and the European Union. In order to do so, the paper takes into consideration the impact on Turkey and its relations with the EU of three factors: (a) the resetting of the European architecture after the end of the Cold War; (b) transatlantic relations; (c) intra-EU relations and the Greek-Turkish dispute.

Post-Cold War Europe and Turkey

There were elements of ambiguity in Europe's attitudes towards Turkey even during the "hey day" of the common effort within NATO to contain the Soviet Union. There is no doubt, however, that the strategic and military transformations introduced by the end of the Cold War have objectively changed the European strategic setting and the role played in it by Turkey, as well as made opposition to Turkey's inclusion in the EU more stringent and open.

Turkey's strategic exposure¹ has increased tremendously in the nineties, but with respect to the Middle East, the Caucasus and Central Asia. With respect to Europe, its strategic and military role has, instead, ceased. Furthermore, Turkey's increased strategic exposure concerns areas that are not of primary strategic relevance in the EU perception.

The progressive estrangement between Turkey and the EU in the nineties is normally traced back to strategic factors. However, there are ideological, cultural and identity factors - strongly attuned to current European security thinking and extremely important for the EU's ongoing efforts to establish an expanded European security space - that seem no less relevant in explaining the tendency to exclude Turkey from such a space or refrain from giving it a distinctive position in it.

Let's look first at the strategic rationale of the European security architecture, in which enlargement plays a major role, and then at the impact of cultural, ideological and identity factors on this architecture.

The debate that took place in Europe immediately after the fall of the Berlin Wall was based on the trade-off between the deepening of the EU (then European Community) and its enlargement. Broadly, this debate came to the conclusion that EU integration had to be deepened while democracy and economy in the European East were reinforced with a view to including the region in the Union. After almost ten years the result looks different: enlargement is proceeding in the context of a politically weak and unbalanced

¹ F. Stephen Larrabee, "US and European Policy towards Turkey and the Caspian Basin", in Robert D. Blackwill, Michael Stürmer (eds.), *Allies Divided. Transatlantic Policies for the Greater Middle East*, Cambridge (Ma), London: MIT Press, 1997, pp. 143-73.

process of deepening. While the currency union has been achieved, the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) as well as the democratic institutions of the Union are lagging well behind. The subsidiarity principle has been construed as a shield against the lack of democratic control in the development of communitarian policies and institutions. However, it prevents such democratic control from being developed at the community level. As a result, the Union is growing loosely and weakly on the political and institutional planes, and enlargement, which was supposed to take place under the umbrella of a reinforced Union, is, on the contrary, one of the very factors of such loosening and weakening.

From a strategic point of view, the basic change in the trade-off between deepening and enlargement that has taken place in the nineties is explained by the perceivedly greater urgency of stabilizing Central-Eastern Europe (and, whenever possible, adjoining areas) than of reinforcing the Western core of the Union. In the eyes of Western European governments and analysts, external factors impinging on security (i.e. inter-state conflict, the absence of a strong and structured civil society, economic backwardness, ecological decay) and their feared consequences (mass immigration, ecological damage, exported political violence, etc.) are bound to make their influence felt earlier than any favorable process of political and institutional deepening of the Union. In fact, the strategic trade-off has been between stabilization and deepening: a greater and faster chance of stabilization in the greater European space has been preferred to the deepening of the Union. For this reason, the architecture of European security is going to be based on a numerous and variegated membership that prevents the emergence of a strong and cohesive political Union, but secures a stable community of states linked more by the spirit of the Act of Helsinki than by the grand hopes and objectives that underlay the Treaty of Rome.

If Europe is going to emerge as a loose commonwealth of distinctive nations likely to preserve their essential sovereign attributes, why should Turkey be excluded? From the point of view of security, this kind of EU is less a distinctive international player than a component of the European security framework envisaged by the OSCE Lisbon Declaration. In this sense, Heinz Kramer very aptly argues that the European reluctance to include Turkey might have been justified as long as the EU's basic rationale was the creation of a new and special political actor whose main task was to ensure economic prosperity for its member states and to bring Europe's weight to bear in international economic and political relations. In the future, however, the main task of the Union will be to organize and guarantee stability and security for all of Europe. ... Moreover, the original goal of an "ever closer union" among the people of Europe will become obsolete with the envisaged enlargement of the EU to twenty-five members over the next decade or so. Hence the issue of Turkey's participation should be re-evaluated under that perspective."²

Thus, the likely political trivialization of the EU would in itself solve the question of Turkey's inclusion in the Union. Of course, one can speculate about trends in the ongoing process of European integration and the forces that drive the latter. There are open debates about developing a European defense, establishing a European Security and Defense Identity (ESDI) within NATO and absorbing the WEU in the EU, the outcome

² Heinz Kramer, Friedemann Müller, "Relations with Turkey and the Caspian Basin Countries", in Robert D. Blackwill, Michael Stürmer (eds.), *op. cit.*, pp. 175-202; quotation p. 185-6.

of which could change the outlook of the European political identity and security architecture. But this is speculation. As things stand today, Kramer is right.

Still, while the weak political-institutional dimension of the European security architecture may allow for Turkey's inclusion, the cultural, ideological and identity dimension of the same architecture is basically opposed to such inclusion. The post-Cold War security thinking is strongly based on democratization, the state of law, and respect for human rights and minorities. Stability and security in today's Europe are regarded as essentially dependent on the democratic nature of the European polities, in both their governmental and societal layers. The accomplishment and reinforcement of democracy is not only a political option but the most effective and strategic factor of security and stability. At the same time, democracy is an ideological and identity factor in the sense that there is the feeling of a two-way correspondence between being democratic and being European. The consequence of these perceptions is that, even if Europeans were to accept the idea that their political structure is so loose as to include Turkey, the latter would still not be included because its polity is far away from the democratic standards Europe enforces and the identity deriving from the enforcement of those standards.

In sum, while the security architecture may be conducive to Turkey's inclusion in the EU, the security thinking on which that architecture is prominently predicated tends to exclude Turkey. The factors of identity and stability on which the post-Cold War European security architecture relies strongly oppose Turkish inclusion. The role of the military in the Turkish polity, the abuses of human rights and the rejectionist attitude towards the Kurdish culture are at the very roots of Turkey's exclusion.

Turkey and transatlantic relations

Transatlantic relations are characterized by a remarkable American-European harmony with respect to the European East, including Russia, and conversely by many and not negligible differences with regard to the regions south and east of the Mediterranean and the Black Sea: from North Africa, through Turkey, the Middle East, the Caucasus and Central Asia. These differences are not new. To some extent, they are a legacy of the Cold War debate on "area" and "out-of-area" allied security policies and are still based on different American and European concepts about the "Orient" and what is fitting to do with it. It may not be by chance that after its transformation, NATO is still - at least so far - operating in its old theater and its prospects to manage crises or conflicts in the southern regions remains an academic exercise.

Transatlantic post-Cold War differences pertain, on one hand, to the growing regional self-perception of the Europeans vs. the persisting strategic vision of the Americans. On the other hand, to the Euro-American divergence in assessing factors of risk and threat from the southern and south-eastern approaches to Europe: while the US tends to emphasize military and political risks, like proliferation of WMD and their delivery means, the EU members tend to underscore social, cultural and economic risks, like immigration, terrorism and international organized crime. The expanded role of Turkey towards the Middle East, the Caucasus and Central Asia is, therefore, appreciated differently in the EU and the United States. Both recognize this role but only the US puts it in a strategic perspective. The EU does not have a definite strategic perspective on the areas adjoining Turkey - nor does it want to have one. Consequently, EU members have policies on specific rather than all-regional issues; these policies rely basically on non-

military instruments; and, while member states' policies are diplomatically harmonized within the loose framework of the CFSP, they can easily be politically inconsistent and fragmented.

Will this situation change and the EU accept a strategic international role within the framework of a fresh transatlantic understanding? The kind of regionally-limited and inward-looking security architecture the EU has started to implement with its enlargement is hardly conducive to such a change. As mentioned in the previous section, however, there are also tendencies within the Union to work out a European strategic and military role, as shown by the recent ideas put forward by the British premier at the informal European Council of Pörschach (24-25 October 1998)³ and by the renewed Italian insistence on the need to absorb the WEU into the EU. This role is hardly acceptable to a number of EU members. Still, it may be feasible, thanks to the variability introduced by the Treaty of Amsterdam with "reinforced cooperation", which could enable EU members to act separately without separating.

Such a development would probably ease EU-Turkish relations. As said, it is however very uncertain. In the meantime, in the shorter term, the deep political understanding which commands transatlantic relations and the concrete existence of a Western defense network - from NATO to the WEU and the OSCE - of which Turkey is a part, contributes to keeping Turkey and most members of the EU together. There is no doubt that the firm European wish to make up for the breaking off caused by the Luxembourg Council that has emerged in its aftermath is also due to transatlantic links and the concerns that, despite differences, transatlantic partners continue to share. In this sense, it must be stressed that the strong negative impact of the emerging European security architecture on EU-Turkey relations is attenuated and to some extent even countered by the impact of transatlantic relations. Indeed, they can have a considerable impact on and act as a key-factor to re-shaping a viable EU-Turkish relationship.

Intra-EU relations and the Greek-Turkish dispute

The Europeans are divided about Turkey. The dividing line, however, is less between those who wish to include Turkey in the EU in the near future (very few indeed) and those who want to exclude it (or hold it at bay) than between the latter and those who would like to establish a positive and fruitful relationship with it - a relationship in which EU membership, while being in principle relegated to a more or less distant future, would not be the focus of present EU-Turkey relations.

This dividing line, it must be noted, cuts across civil societies, not necessarily only across countries and governments. For example, the attitude of the European business world is in general rather positive towards Turkey and, more often than not, is favorable to or not reluctant at all towards closer political links that would consolidate economic relations.

No European government, however, accepts the legal and political abuses which characterize Turkey's situation. Nor do they accept the role of the military in Turkish constitutional life. The declarations of the revolving EU presidency, such as the one of 21 January 1998 criticizing the dissolution of the Refah Party, regularly express a deeply

³ See *Atlantic News*, No. 3053, 28 October 1998, p. 3. Mr. Blair's ideas were previously introduced in an interview to *The Times*.

shared feeling, which is in turn largely supported by the parliaments and public opinion. Nevertheless, several governments do not fail to take into account the military and strategic role Turkey plays towards Europe's southern and south-eastern approaches, that is, the Middle East, the Caucasus and Central Asia. In particular, the governments of France, Italy and Spain consider Turkey an important balancing factor in the European security architecture.

To be sure, these southern European countries support the enlargement to Central-Eastern Europe that was discussed above. Still, they cannot ignore the specific nature and weight of threats and risks emanating from the southern areas, nor the fact that these cannot be met by the European security architecture being shaped by eastward enlargement of the Union. And they do not ignore that the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership set up in Barcelona at the end of 1995, based on the cooperative security blueprint drafted for the European East, has to work in a very different world from that of the enlargement - a definitely less cooperative and inclusionary world - and cannot really meet the challenges and the risks coming from southern areas. Hence the greater interest in Turkey than other EU member states.

All in all, a majority of EU states agree with the need for an important and structured relation with Turkey, though they have different ideas on how this relation must be shaped and implemented. For this reason, by deciding in Luxembourg to exclude Turkey, not only from early negotiations but from the process of enlargement itself, the European diplomacy misinterpreted the basic political will of EU members and made a gross diplomatic mistake. Diplomacy is of use, among other things, in managing situations that cannot be solved comfortably right away and require time and attention. But several EU states use it as a sword, as if they were facing Gordian knots. Thus, to avoid wasting time, the risk of second thoughts by EU partners and other headaches, the knot of the EU's relationship with Turkey has been severed, as was done with that of recognizing Croatia at the end of 1991.⁴

Beside diplomatic mismanagement, EU policy towards Turkey is made particularly difficult by the long-standing interference of the Greek-Turkish dispute and the viciousness which, as a consequence of the dispute, permeates relations between Greece, a member state, and the Union. This is a major structural challenge to EU-Turkey relations.

Without entering into the dispute and its complex details, what must be stressed here is that Greece has hardly tried to create a communitarian consensus towards its national issues. On the contrary, it has systematically misused the power of the Union by making it hostage to its bilateral relations with Turkey. This course has progressively deprived the Union of any capacity and credibility in mediating the dispute. The opening of the negotiations for the accession of Cyprus to the EU has dealt a final blow to that capacity, as the terms of the negotiations - as correct as they may be legally - completely overlook the interests of Turkey and the Turkish-Cypriot community and are therefore politically mistaken. This development has become so clear in the aftermath of Luxembourg that the EU position has been significantly corrected: the wording of the conclusions adopted by the EU Council of 5 October 1998,⁵ to comment on the first stage

⁴ Richard Holbrooke (*To End A War*, New York: Random House, 1998) says that "while the decision on Croatia was wrong, its importance should not be overstated" (p. 32), which is right from the point of view of the evolution of the Yugoslav conflict, but less so from the point of view of the EU and its integration.

⁵ See *Europe*, Documents, No. 2100, 14 October 1998. The conclusions have been termed "immoral" by the Greek Foreign Minister (*Europe*, No. 7316, 7 October 1998, p. 3).

of the enlargement negotiations and provide guidelines for the second stage, is definitely more precise about the Turkish-Cypriot involvement in the negotiations than the wording of the European Council conclusions in Luxembourg.

The nationalist and uncompromising course followed by successive Greek governments, particularly that by Mr. Andreas Papandreou, is now clearly declining. A non-official Greek view suggests that Greece has to “move away from a strategy of conditional sanctions, and towards one of conditional rewards.”⁶ Fellow EU members have never been conspicuous for their sympathy towards Greece, while using Greece to solve their concerns towards Turkey. With the advent of Mr. Kostas Simitis, things have a rather good chance of changing. A more sympathetic and constructive attitude on the part of EU members could be important in fostering such change and allow the EU to work out a more reasonable and inclusive stance towards Turkey. For the time being, however, even attempts at correcting the diplomatic *gaffe* in Luxembourg are taking place in an adverse intra-European framework.

Conclusions

The security architecture and security identity currently evolving in the EU, particularly in the framework of the enlargement towards the European East, require that deep changes take place in the constitutional and political setting of Turkey before it can be included in the Union. Such changes will not occur tomorrow, still there is no reason to rule them out. At the same time, the majority of EU members desire an important political and economic relationship with this country. In this context, while negotiations for membership cannot be initiated, Turkey can well be included in the process of enlargement. The existence of a longer-term perspective would have the effect of normalizing EU-Turkey relations and allowing Turkey to progress. On the other hand, it would be in tune with the pragmatism required by the fact that both partners are looking for new options and identities. Finally, such normalization would contribute to easing EU relations with the United States.

Reconsideration of the notion of “process of enlargement” adopted at the 1997 European Council of Luxembourg is the necessary condition for resumption of normal and positive EU-Turkey relations.

As just mentioned, the EU’s relations with Turkey, along with other “oriental” issues, is not irrelevant to the re-establishment of a significant and effective strategic and political dimension in the Atlantic Alliance. At the same time, while the EU as a whole is currently focusing on the regionally-limited and inward-looking security strategy of enlargement towards the European East, several members of the EU - in particular countries in southwestern Europe and Great Britain - are also sensitive to the need for a degree of global and strategic EU capacity in connection with NATO. In this sense, they are not at all indifferent to Turkey’s increased strategic exposure towards the Middle East, the Caucasus and Central Asia. They look on it as an asset rather than as a liability.

A revamping of the EU’s political and strategic dimension in the framework of the broader transatlantic sphere would help foster closer relations with Turkey.

⁶Theodore Couloumbis, “Strategic Consensus in Greek Domestic and Foreign Policy Since 1974”, *Thesis*, Vol. 1, No. 4, Winter 1997-98, p. 12.

It must be noted that this conclusion is somehow at odds with Turkish thinking about the Western security architecture. Like Norway and Iceland, Turkey looks with suspicion at the attempts to develop an ESDI within NATO, lest the latter be weakened. However, the Western security constellation as it stands today, with a strong NATO and a weak or non-existent EU defense component, is not a factor that can foster an inclusionary EU-Turkey relationship. One can understand that Turkey wishes to consolidate the new NATO⁷ and take advantage of NATO to reinforce its positive relationship with the United States. But this could be in opposition with its desire to strengthen its relations with, let alone be included in, the EU. By the same token, Turkey's political motives to acquire full member status in the WEU, even before becoming a EU full member, should be clarified.⁸

The exclusion of Turkey from the process of enlargement at Luxembourg and the beginning of the negotiations for the accession with Cyprus have definitively excluded the Union from any political role in the Cyprus dispute (as well as in the whole Turkish-Greek dispute). This development, complicated by the process of re-armament taking place in Cyprus and around it, has also curbed any other possibilities for mediation from other sides. The real stumbling block on the road to EU-Turkish normalization today is Cyprus.

A reformulation of the terms of the EU-Cyprus negotiations is needed to make the intra-Cypriot talks for a bi-zonal and bi-communitarian federation more credible and effective. This would allow the US and the UN to resume their mediations and open up the possibility, in time, of a federated Cyprus becoming an EU member.

⁷ To consolidate the "new" NATO, for the "old" NATO didn't prove very helpful when Turkey felt threatened by the Gulf War developments: at that time, Germany and other European members of NATO maintained that Art. 5 regarded Europe and not the Middle East.

⁸ Larrabee (*op. cit.*, p. 169) maintains that having Turkey in the WEU would provide the advantage of its association to European military planning and intervention in those crises in which the US would not take part and intervention would be entrusted to the WEU in the framework of the CJTFs mechanism approved by the June 1996 North Atlantic Council in Berlin. In practice, all this is still very uncertain, in particular because the destiny of the ESDI is uncertain, as is that of the WEU. Furthermore, the WEU is not just a military mechanism: for example, what if the WEU is absorbed into the EU (be it as a new pillar or as part of the CFSP)? In this case, Turkey could not just play the role of a smart Western marquis, but would have to show a relevant interest in developing a European identity.