MEDITERRANEAN PAPER SERIES 2011

TURKEY: RELUCTANT MEDITERRANEAN POWER

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Cover photo: France's President Nicolas Sarkozy (L) welcomes Turkey's Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan (R) at the start of a EU-Mediterranean summit in Paris, July 13, 2008. © Charles Platiau/Reuters/Corbis

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TURKEY: RELUCTANT MEDITERRANEAN POWER

AN INTRODUCTODUCTORY NOTE

NATHALIE TOCCI

Geographically, Turkey is undeniably an actor of the Mediterranean. In the 20th century, however, Turkey shied away from being a player in the Mediterranean. In recent years this seems to be changing. Over the last decade, Turkish foreign policy has been going through a period of profound flux and reinvigoration. In view of this, this set of papers explores a number of interlinked questions. First, does the transformation in Turkish foreign policy mean that Turkey is or has become a power of and in the Mediterranean today? If so, of what does that power consist? More specifically, how does Turkey's power in the region compare and contrast with the European Union (EU)'s policies toward the Mediterranean, notably the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) and the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (EMP) — Union for the Mediterranean (UfM)? Looking across the Atlantic, instead, are there U.S.-inspired causes of Turkey's newfound role in the Mediterranean and what are its implications for the transatlantic alliance and for Turkey's prospects of joining the EU?

In order to explore these questions, three papers build upon and speak to one another. Meliha Altunışık opens the debate by addressing the general question: has Turkey ever been and is it today a "Mediterranean power"? Altunışık traces the evolution of Turkey's Mediterranean policies, or lack thereof, highlighting how Turkey has never historically conceptualized a comprehensive Mediterranean policy. Over the last two decades, two external developments — the end of the Cold War and the EMP — induced Turkey to think about the Mediterranean as a distinct region, giving rise in the 1990s to the first inklings of Turkish Mediterranean policies. Throughout the 1990s, these policies revolved to a large extent around Cyprus, the Eastern Mediterranean, and Syria, and were heavily imbued with a hard security flavor, as epitomized by Turkish war threats against Syria and the crises with Greece and Cyprus in those years. At the turn of the century, another set of external developments catalyzed a further shift in Turkey's approach to the Mediterranean: the resolution of the crisis with Syria, rapprochement with Greece, and Turkey's EU candidacy. They all induced greater engagement with the (Eastern) Mediterranean on one hand and, more importantly, a gradual de-securitization of Turkey's approach to the region on the other. These trends accelerated with the advent of the Justice and Development Party (AKP) governments, during which not only the external environment but also Turkey's domestic political, social, and economic systems became ripe for deeper involvement in the Mediterranean.

Kemal Kirişci develops this discussion by exploring what, precisely, Turkey's newfound role in the Mediterranean consists of and how these Turkish policies compare to the EU's own approach to the region. The de-securitization of Turkey's Mediterranean policies has meant that a deeper level of engagement has primarily taken the form of an expansion of trade, movement of persons, and implicit policies of democracy and good governance promotion by Turkish state and non-state actors. Interestingly, Kirişci's analysis points to the fact that, unlike the EU, Turkey tends to lay more importance on the economic, social, political, and cultural opportunities than the threats and challenges stemming from the region. Simply put, Turkey appears to be adopting a quintessentially

functionalist approach in the best European tradition. It appears to be pursuing an integration process, which has been accompanied by improved relations with its neighbors. Turkey, of course, is far from resolving all the problems in its neighborhood, but it is nonetheless contributing to making the region more stable, prosperous, and secure. Paradoxically, in fact, Turkey's policies in the Mediterranean appear to quite effectively match the EU's declared goals in the region, goals that the EU in practice, through its ENP and EMP-UfM, appears to have sidelined in favor of a security approach towards illegal migration, terrorism, and organized crime.

That said, both Altunışık and Kirişci concur that Turkey, despite its deeper involvement in the Mediterranean, does not have a well-defined and structured "neighborhood policy" in the region resembling the EMP and ENP. For essentially geographic reasons, Turkey remains interested above all in the Eastern Mediterranean and the Middle East, with the Maghreb now certainly falling within the Turkish radar screen, but occupying the minds of Turkish policy-makers, business actors, and civil society organizations relatively little. Rather than a Mediterranean vision, Turkey continues to view the Eastern Mediterranean, the Middle East, and the Balkans as distinct sub-regions. While ascribing some importance to the Mediterranean as a waterway, the Mediterranean as such continues to be conceptualized at the periphery of different regions. In many respects, although Turkey's modus operandi appears to be "European in spirit," its vision of the Mediterranean is far more similar to that of the United States than the EU.

Indeed, as explored by Nathalie Tocci in the third and final paper, without minimizing the importance of domestic and regional factors explaining Turkey's (re)discovery of the Mediterranean, many are the U.S.-inspired causes for Turkey's deeper engagement with the region. Expressions of American hard and soft power in the Middle East, epitomized by two Gulf wars and democracy promotion policies, respectively, contributed to creating a vacuum in the region that Turkey has willingly filled. These developments, in turn, have had important implications on EU-Turkey relations. The destabilization of Iraq has interlocked with European debates on the EU's borders to Turkey's net disadvantage. Turkey's increasingly active role in the Middle East, including its steadily improving ties with its southern neighbors and its mediation efforts, albeit praised by many, have fueled the notion in Europe of Turkey as a useful Middle Eastern ally rather than a fellow member of the EU: Turkey as a "privileged outsider" rather than a "natural insider." Even more starkly, the conceptualization of Turkey as a model for the Muslim world and the broader discursive framework of the "clash of civilizations" in which it is embedded have represented a critical impediment to Turkey's EU membership.

What does all this entail, and what are the policy implications for the EU, Turkey, and the United States? As for the EU, European actors would be well-advised to take note of Turkey's experience and the possibility that a degree of regional integration through trade and the movement of people can be achieved without imposing strict conditionalities and, above all, by setting aside a security-first lens that erects physical, paper, and psychological walls

between "Europe" and the "Mediterranean." It is also critical not to fall into the trap of viewing Turkey's Mediterranean policies as evidence of Turkey's "drift to the East." After all, Turkey began to engage its northern neighbors first and only recently started engaging the Mediterranean. In terms of trade and movement of people, this level of engagement is still only a fraction of that with its northern neighbors, not to mention that with EU countries.

Turkey ought to pay attention to making policies sustainable over the long term. Turkey's transformation and reform process is generally recognized as having slowed down. Its relations with the EU have deteriorated considerably. Regardless of who is to blame, it is doubtful that Turkish democratization and economic growth can continue apace and, in turn, that Turkey can continue to represent a pole of attraction in the Mediterranean without the EU. Despite all the pessimism, Turkey's EU accession process remains of the essence.

As for the United States, in order for Washington to positively spur Turkey's accession process and thus a constructive Turkish role in the Mediterranean, it should add nuance to its arguments and factor in the repercussions they may have in Europe. Europeans are inclined to shy away from a "strategic" view of the world, of Europe and of EU enlargement. They can and should be reminded of the strategic implications of Turkey's EU membership by their American counterparts. But Americans must also recognize that overemphasizing geo-strategy in EU-Turkey ties can be a double-edged sword. Turkey's opponents in Europe argue that many, if not more, of Turkey's strategic assets could be reaped by developing a strategic cooperation with non-EU member Turkey. American supporters of Turkey's EU membership must thus not simply argue that Turkey's EU membership would entail important strategic benefits. They must argue convincingly that such strategic benefits can only be reaped with Turkey fully within the EU. Likewise, Americans ought to be careful when raising arguments regarding Turkey's role as a "model" for the Muslim world or, more recently, its "drift" to the East. They have a boomerang effect on the EU, consolidating the — alas — widespread view of Turkey's "difference." To his credit, U.S. President Obama has articulated a far more nuanced identity case for Turkey in Europe, which does not rest on black-and-white civilizational categories, but instead highlights the multiple layers of the European identity of which Turkey is part. Relatedly, Americans ought to discuss with their European counterparts the value of Turkey as an actor in its neighborhood that is concomitantly more European, more democratic, more conservative, and more Islam-friendly. In its interactions with Europeans as well as through its relationship with Turkey, the United States can help reconcile the notion of Turkey's Europeanness with its transregional nature, thus driving at the heart of and contributing to the EU's debate over its own identity.

This report is one of several exploring the evolving perceptions and policies of Mediterranean actors. These studies were produced in the framework of the multi-year GMF-IAI strategic partnership, and co-published by IAI and GMF's Mediterranean Policy Program.

TURKEY AS A "MEDITERRANEAN POWER"

Meliha Benli Altunışık

Introduction

From a geographic point of view, Turkey is clearly a Mediterranean country. However, Turkey has not formulated a comprehensive Mediterranean policy. This paper aims to understand the evolution of Turkey's perspective on the Mediterranean and recent attempts to conceptualize and construct a Mediterranean region within Turkish foreign policy. It is argued that although mainly external factors such as the end of the Cold War and the EU's own construction of the Mediterranean region have induced Turkey to think about the Mediterranean as a distinct region, Turkey has failed to develop a comprehensive Mediterranean vision and thus a strategy towards this region. This study discusses the evolution of the Turkish perspective and policies towards the Mediterranean beginning with the establishment of the Turkish Republic, with particular emphasis on the post-Cold War era. It then analyzes the reasons for the absence of a comprehensive Mediterranean vision within Turkish foreign policy.

1 Turkey and the Mediterranean in the Inter-War Years

The interwar years were marked by the efforts of the newly established Republic of Turkey to consolidate itself domestically and internationally. During those years, Turkey aimed to secure its borders by entering into multilateral arrangements with its neighbors. In the Balkans and the Middle East, Turkish policy was successful, in that Turkey strove to secure and consolidate its borders through the signing of the Balkan Pact (1934) and the Sadabad Pact (1937), respectively. In the Mediterranean region, however, Turkish efforts struggled to succeed, as this was a region, unlike the Balkans and the Middle East, where Ankara had to deal with larger political powers. Turkey felt that the great power rivalry in the Mediterranean was undermining stability and that Turkey itself was increasingly threatened by the policies of Italy under Mussolini towards the Eastern Mediterranean. Turkey's responses to these Mediterranean challenges were typical examples of a middle power's diplomacy: Ankara tried to mediate between the great powers and sought multilateral solutions to the security challenges in the region.[1] Thus, Turkey enthusiastically supported the French proposal for a Mediterranean Pact. When that failed and Ankara felt threatened by the increasing Italian military presence in the Eastern Mediterranean, Turkey sought and achieved the revision of the Straits regime in Montreaux in 1936. The Montreaux Convention permitted Turkey to remilitarize the Straits and imposed new restrictions on the passage of combatant vessels, thus allowing Turkey to prevent any Italian encroachment into the strategic passageway.

[1] Barlas, D. (2005), "Turkish Diplomacy in the Balkans and the Mediterranean: Opportunities and Limitations for Middle Power Activism in the 1930s," *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol. 40, No. 3 (July), pp. 441-464.

2 Turkey and the Mediterranean During the Cold War

Turkey managed to stay out of World War II, yet with the advent of the Cold War, it decided to be part of the U.S.-led Western bloc for security and identity reasons. During the Cold War years, Turkey mostly viewed the Mediterranean from the lens of the East-West conflict. In fact, right at the beginning of the Cold War, the Mediterranean emerged "as one of the key theaters of confrontation between the U.S. and the USSR."[2] As a member of NATO in control of the strategic Bosphorus Straits, Turkey was crucial for the Western alliance in limiting the Soviet presence and influence in the Mediterranean. Turkey itself perceived any extension of Soviet sea power to the Mediterranean as a threat to the Straits. At the height of the Cold War, Turkey shared the United States' concern about Arab nationalism allied with the Soviet Union and was thus disturbed by the rise of Arab nationalist regimes in major countries in the Mediterranean basin, namely Egypt and Syria. Similarly, the Arab nationalist challenge to the Western-oriented Lebanese regime was considered a threat and Turkey contributed to the United States' military intervention in that country in 1958 by allowing the United States to use its bases in Turkey. Finally, the Arab-Israeli conflict was considered a cause of instability in the Mediterranean basin within the context of Cold War rivalries. However, with the eruption of the Cyprus issue in 1963 and the consequent deterioration of relations between Turkey and Greece and ensuing bilateral problems in the Aegean, the Mediterranean gained new and additional meaning for Turkey.

Notwithstanding their relevance to Turkey's strategic thinking, these issues were not conceived within the framework of Mediterranean security. Instead, the Cyprus issue and Aegean problems were seen as bilateral issues between Greece and Turkey.[3] Unlike the situation in the Middle East, here the perspective was of a conflict, not between two blocs, but rather between two NATO allies. As a result, Turkey began to develop a political and military strategy that was partially independent of NATO in the region.

Thus, during the Cold War, Turkey perceived the Mediterranean simultaneously as an area of both inter-bloc and intra-bloc competition. Yet, starting in the mid-1960s, the Cyprus issue in its own right dominated how Turkey viewed the Mediterranean. Overall, Turkey's Mediterranean perspective included an eastern dimension, whereas the western Mediterranean was hardly factored into Turkish foreign policy at all. The only exception were the increasing economic ties with Libya after the oil boom of 1973-74.

[2] Padaliu, E.G.H. (2009), "A Sea of Confusion: The Mediterranean and Detente, 1969-1974," *Diplomatic History*, Vol. 33, No. 4 (September), p. 736.

[3] Kirisci, K. (1999), "Turkey and the Mediterranean" in S. Stavridis *et al.* (eds.), *Foreign Policies of the European Union's Mediterranean States and Applicant Countries in the 1990s*, London, Macmillan, p. 250.

3 Rediscovering the Mediterranean in the Immediate Post-Cold War Period

After the end of the Cold War, Turkey's interest in Mediterranean issues, including security, was not immediately reflected in Turkish foreign policy. Indeed, Turkey only gradually developed its thinking on the Mediterranean and largely as a response to other actors' increasing interest in the region. For most of the 1990s, Turkey was faulted as being slow in conceptualizing the Mediterranean region as a whole, and separate divisions in the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs focusing on Europe, the Middle East, and the Balkans dealing with various issues related to the region were seen both as a reason and as proof of Turkey's lack of a Mediterranean policy.[4]

The development of Turkey's thinking on the Mediterranean in the 1990s occurred as a response to two main developments. First, Turkey felt the need to respond to the European Union (EU) and NATO's Mediterranean initiatives. Ankara viewed the EU and NATO's initiatives differently. Turkey was rather skeptical towards the EU's Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (EMP), the so-called Barcelona Process, which was launched in 1995. The main problem was that Turkey, as an aspirant EU member, resented its inclusion in this new grouping. There was some suspicion that its inclusion in the EMP could be a new way for the EU to handle its relations with Turkey short of full membership.[5] But there were other problems as well. The EU's focus on "soft" security issues, particularly on migration, was not appealing to Ankara, which still perceived "hard" security as the be all and end all of Eastern Mediterranean concerns. Moreover, in its early years, Turkey could not benefit from the financial instrument of the Barcelona Process, MEDA, due to the Greek veto. Hence, there was no financial incentive to engage in it either. As a result, Turkey was not very eager about the EMP, although it accepted to participate in it. By contrast, Turkey was more interested and supportive of NATO's Mediterranean initiative.[6] The fact that Turkey is a member of NATO and thus has a say in its decision-making and implementation led Turkey to be more active in NATO's Mediterranean Dialogue. Furthermore, with its emphasis on the Eastern Mediterranean and hard security issues, Turkey in the 1990s was closer to NATO in terms of its view of the Mediterranean.

The second development at the end of the Cold War that induced Turkey to re-conceptualize the Mediterranean was the end of bipolarity in the international system, which led to a "shift from the global to the regional level in security understandings."[7] In Turkey, this also resulted in the emergence of multiple regional identities. In the

[4] Tayfur, M.F. (2000), "Security Co-operation in the Mediterranean," *Perceptions: Journal of International Affairs*, Vol. 5, No. 3 (September-November), p. 183.

[5] See, for instance, Taşhan, S. (1996), "Mediterranean Security and Western Security Institutions," *Foreign Policy* (Ankara) Vol. 20, Nos. 3-4, p. 31; Öniş, Z. (1999), "Turkey, Europe, and Paradoxes of Identity: Perspectives on the International Context of Democratization," *Mediterranean Quarterly*, Vol. 10, No. 3 (Summer), pp. 107-136.

[6] Tayfur, M.F. (2000), *op. cit.*, p. 141.

[7] *Ibidem*, p. 63.

words of Prime Minister Bulent Ecevit in 1995: "Turkey has a unique position in the world. Turkey is historically, geographically, and culturally both a European and Balkan, a Mediterranean and Middle Eastern, a Caucasus and Asian country."[8] This new understanding not only referred to Turkey's Mediterranean identity, but also to the reconstruction of the (Eastern) Mediterranean as a separate geostrategic and cultural space with extended boundaries beyond its geographical reference points. Thus, from this geostrategic perspective, the greater Mediterranean region involved the Balkans, the Caspian, the Black Sea, the Middle East, and the Gulf. This greater geostrategic space was perceived as offering Turkey both opportunities and complex security challenges.

Thus, Turkey was catapulted to the center of the new geopolitics that emerged after the end of bipolarity, away from its peripheral/flank position during the Cold War years. This development provided Turkey with political and economic opportunities, especially in the newly transformed regions of the Balkans and the Caspian. But most importantly, this new geopolitical constellation brought with it the challenge of chaos and instability around Turkey. New conflicts broke out in the Balkans, the Caucasus, and the Middle East. Furthermore, the Cyprus conflict also deteriorated in the 1990s. In order to deal with these crises around itself, Turkey adopted a more assertive and multi-dimensional foreign policy.

The renewed emphasis on Cyprus occurred in parallel to a new security conceptualization of the Eastern Mediterranean. After the end of the Cold War, an openly strategic view of the Cyprus problem gained ground in Turkey. For Turkey, as Ian Lesser argues, long-standing issues such as Cyprus became "embedded in a wider sense of geographical rivalry."[9] In the 1990s, as Ankara developed its strategic thinking on the Eastern Mediterranean, it began to view Cyprus as a strategic asset. During the Cold War, Turkey had placed primary emphasis on the protection of the Turkish Cypriot community on the island. In the 1990s, however, Turkey began arguing openly that Cyprus, which is 40 miles off Turkey's coast, is critical to the security of Anatolia as well. Then-Prime Minister Ecevit summed up this view when he declared: "We now believe not only that Turkey is guarantor of the security of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC), but at the same time we consider the existence of the TRNC to be a necessity for the security of Turkey."[10] Cyprus was also portrayed as a strategic asset guaranteeing sea access across the Mediterranean and to the Middle East, as well as the protection of Caspian oil that would flow through the then-planned Baku-Tbilisi-

[8] Kazan, I. (2002), "Cyprus and the Eastern Mediterranean, seen from Turkey," in Diez, T., *The European Union and the Cyprus Conflict: Modern Conflict, Postmodern Union*, Manchester, Manchester University Press, p. 63.

[9] Lesser, I. (2000), *Bridge or Barrier? Turkey and the West after the Cold War*, Santa Monica, RAND Corporation, p. 33.

[10] Fırat, M. (1998), "AB-Kıbrıs İlişkileri ve Türkiye'nin Politikaları," (EU-Cyprus Relations and Turkey's Policies) in Özcan, G. and Kut, Ş. (eds.), *Türkiye'nin Ulusal Güvenlik ve Dış Politika Gündeminde Doksanlı Yıllar: En Uzun On Yıl*, İstanbul, Boyut, p. 275, cited in Kazan (2002), *op.cit.*, pp. 60-61.

Ceyhan pipeline.[11] This strategic perspective on Cyprus, in short, emphasized Cyprus as a "stationary aircraft carrier" in the Eastern Mediterranean, centrally located to control sea access and influence in the oil-rich Middle East.

The end of the Cold War did not immediately create a peace dividend for Cyprus. On the contrary, the Cyprus issue and the problems in the Aegean continued to dominate Turkey's security perspective. In the 1990s, there was a general deterioration of Greek-Turkish relations as well as several crises related to Cyprus. Turkey and Greece came to the brink of military confrontation over the Imia/Kardak islets in the Aegean in 1996. Greek Cypriot plans to install Russian S-300 anti-aircraft missiles on their territory sparked a crisis in 1997. The Cyprus conflict and the Aegean problems continued to be seen as bilateral problems with spillover effects, particularly on Turkey's relations with its Western allies and with Russia. However, as a result of the emergence of a new geostrategic nexus, these bilateral problems were seen as tied to a larger context as well.

In addition to the Cyprus conflict, deteriorating relations with Syria in the 1990s increased Turkey's challenges in the Eastern Mediterranean. Until the signing of the Adana Agreement with Syria in October 1998, Turkey perceived Syria as a threat to its security interests. Syria's support for the Kurdish Workers' Party (PKK), seen as a foreign policy tool aimed at exerting pressure on Turkey, accentuated tensions in the already problematic relationship between the two countries due to disputes over the water flow from the Euphrates River and Damascus' claims over the Turkish province of Hatay (former Ottoman Sandjak of Alexandretta).

Challenges and opportunities related to Cyprus and Syria in the 1990s thus induced Turkey to cast its Mediterranean policy in Eastern Mediterranean terms. Within the Eastern Mediterranean, Ankara mostly emphasized hard security issues and perceived threats. Furthermore, with the end of the Cold War, Turkey began viewing security concerns in the Eastern Mediterranean as being tightly interlinked and set within a broader geographic space, which stretches well beyond the Mediterranean itself. As such, Turkey's perspective was closer to NATO's than to that of the EU. However, Turkey felt the need to respond to the EU's developing policy towards the region. Whereas in the past Ankara viewed the Mediterranean through the lens of the East-West conflict, in the 1990s, beyond the above mentioned national security prerogatives, Turkish policymakers started viewing the Mediterranean "from the lens of Turkey's European vocation."[12]

In response, Turkey developed a set of policies in the eastern Mediterranean basin. These policies prioritized realist foreign policy instruments, namely strengthening Turkey's defense posture, threatening to use force as well as aligning militarily with Israel. In the 1990s, Turkey embarked on an extensive military modernization program and

[11] Ozveren, E. (2003), "Geo-Strategic Significance of Cyprus: Long-term Trends and Prospects," *Perceptions: Journal of International Affairs*, Vol. 7, No. 4 (February), pp. 35-50.

[12] Bilgin, P. (2004), "A Return to 'Civilizational Geopolitics' in the Mediterranean? Changing Geopolitical Images of the European Union and Turkey in the Post-Cold War Era," *Geopolitics*, Vol. 9, No. 2, (Summer), p. 285.

threatened to use force in Imia/Kardak, in the S-300 missiles crises with Greece and Cyprus, and against Syria. Finally, Turkey developed military cooperation, joint training, and intelligence sharing with Israel. As part of the security cooperation between the two countries, Turkey conducted joint naval exercises in the Eastern Mediterranean with Israel. Jordan also participated in these exercises as an observer.

By the late 1990s, however, the first signs of change in Turkish foreign policy started to emerge and these were reflected in the Mediterranean as well. Three important developments in 1998 and 1999, two of which were directly related to the Eastern Mediterranean, opened up the possibility of change in previous policy. A first major turning point in this respect was the improvement of Turkish-Syrian relations after the October 1998 crisis that brought the two countries to the brink of war. Normalization of Turkish-Syrian relations for the first time since the establishment of Syria introduced a completely new element in the Eastern Mediterranean. This development also eased an important tension in Arab-Turkish relations. Second, in 1999 Turkish-Greek relations improved considerably. Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs Ismail Cem and his Greek counterpart George Papandreou initiated a step-by-step rapprochement between the two countries by using confidence-building measures. This development contributed to another major one in December 1999: Turkey was recognized as a candidate country for EU membership at the Helsinki European Council meeting. As Öniş argues, this decision opened the way for Turkey's transition from "a Cold War warrior to a benign regional power."[13]

Towards the end of the 1990s, Turkey also sought to develop relations with the Maghreb countries. Cem's visits to the Maghreb countries came after a long period of absence of Turkey from this sub-region. As a result, cooperation protocols and action plans were signed with the Maghreb countries. Attempts were made to expand economic relations in energy, trade, and construction.[14]

[13] Önis, Z. (2003), "Turkey and the Middle East after September 11: The Impact of the EU Dimension," *Turkish Policy Quarterly*, Vol. 2, No. 4 (Winter), pp. 84-85.

[14] Available at Ministry of Foreign Affairs website, www.mfa.gov.tr.

4 Turkey's Mediterranean Policy During the AKP Governments

When the Justice and Development Party (AKP) formed a majority government in December 2002, it built on the limited changes and efforts in the 1990s and took them to a new level. Current Minister of Foreign Affairs Ahmet Davutoğlu in his book *Strategic Depth*, which he wrote while still an academic before entering the AKP, re-evaluates Turkey's geopolitical structure and proposes a strategy based on the politics of basins. The Mediterranean is one of these basins.

Davutoğlu criticizes Turkish foreign policy for not having a long-term and coordinated sea and waterway strategy suited to its own geography. This, he argues, is difficult to explain as the histories of the Byzantine and Ottoman Empires show that a country located on the Anatolia-Balkan axis can only be a real power if it controls the surrounding seas and waterways.[15]

Davutoğlu identifies the "three most important geopolitical areas of influence": 1) "near land basins," namely the Balkans, the Middle East and the Caspian; 2) "near maritime basins," namely the Black Sea, the Adriatic, the Eastern Mediterranean, the Red Sea, the Gulf, and the Caspian Sea; and 3) "near continents," namely Europe, North Africa, South Asia, Central Asia, and East Asia.[16] In the post-Cold War era, these regions, separated previously by the bipolar static structure, are engaging in new interactions. The Balkans, the Middle East, and the Caucasus constitute three interaction zones. This new conceptualization also gives a new geopolitical meaning to seas and waterways. The Eastern Mediterranean is at the center of this geography and Turkey stands at the center of this new geostrategic and geopolitical space. This is significant for two main reasons: First, Turkey can increase its international standing through these regional areas of influence. Second, without developing a general Mediterranean strategy and specific Eastern Mediterranean strategy, and without coordinating these strategies with near land and continent basin strategies, neither the Aegean nor the Cyprus problem can be evaluated in a strategic and comprehensive manner.[17]

Davutoğlu's analysis bears important similarities with the perspective Turkey as a whole started developing on the Mediterranean in the 1990s. In fact, because of this, Davutoğlu's book became highly popular in the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the military. This perspective focuses on the interconnectedness between concentric regions around Turkey, and on the strategic importance of seas and waterways, and places Turkey at the center of this geostrategic space. With its emphasis on the Eastern Mediterranean, this analysis also reflects the importance attributed to the Mediterranean in post-Cold War Turkish foreign policy. Davutoğlu's arguments provided a very eloquent explanation of the strategic importance of Cyprus, within a larger geopolitical context, in Turkish foreign policy. Nevertheless, it is still important to note that in Davutoğlu's analysis, Turkey, which stands at the center of different regions and waterways, is the focus. Thus, the Mediterranean becomes important

[15] Davutoğlu, A. (2001), *Stratejik Derinlik* (Strategic Depth), Istanbul, Kure Publications, pp. 151-152.

[16] *Ibidem*, p. 118.

[17] *Ibidem*, pp. 156-170.

as only one of the regions surrounding Turkey. As such, it is important both for Turkey's peace and stability and as an arena for Turkey's power projection. In other words, although there are growing signs of an attempt to develop policies towards the Mediterranean as a region, Turkey still views this area as one among several neighborhoods surrounding Turkey.

Davutoğlu, first as chief advisor at the Prime Minister's office and later as Minister of Foreign Affairs, has been the most influential figure on foreign policy issues in the AKP governments. His views on the Mediterranean basin have become part of official Turkish policy. The views on Turkey's new geostrategic position expressed by Abdullah Gül, the first AKP Minister of Foreign Affairs in January 2004, reflected Davutoğlu's geostrategic perspective on land and sea basins: "Turkey's national interests have stretched over very different geographies and areas due to, among others, the geostrategic position of Turkey that cannot be defined with a single geographic region and that constitutes the intersection point of continents and basins."[18]

Although the AKP's perspective on the Mediterranean built on a trend that had been in the making since the 1990s, it also represented an important break in Turkish foreign policy in several respects. The major shift occurred in Turkey's Cyprus policy under the first AKP government. With the rise to power of the AKP, the Turkish government actively began to support a resolution of the Cyprus problem. The government believed, as Davutoğlu stated, that "the status quo cannot be sustained under dynamic conditions."[19] Accordingly, the government supported the UN-brokered Annan Plan in 2004. The shift in Turkey's Cyprus policy in the early years of the AKP government has both domestic and foreign policy explanations.[20] However, what is equally significant is that this shift was embedded in a larger policy. Cyprus was considered a fundamental aspect of Turkey's new Eastern Mediterranean policy. This policy was based on the premise that Turkey's Eastern Mediterranean policy cannot be indexed to Cyprus alone and that Cyprus should be seen in a comprehensive network of relations, including with Syria, Israel, Egypt, and Greece. More importantly, according to the AKP government, Turkey's interests in Cyprus cannot only be defined in terms of military threat perceptions, but also of transport, energy, trade, and tourism on the southern Mediterranean coast of Turkey. Hence, resolving the conflict came to be viewed as a fundamental Turkish interest.[21]

The AKP's perspective on the Eastern Mediterranean region emphasizes peaceful

[18] Gül, A. (2007), *Yeni Yuzyılda Turk Dış Politikasının Ufukları* (The Horizons of Turkish Foreign Policy in the New Century), Ankara, TC Dışişleri Bakanlığı Yayınları, p. 68.

[19] Ahmet Davutoğlu interview, NTV Basın Odası, 13 May 2004, cited in Zengin, G. (2010), *Hoca: Türk Dış Politikasında "Davutoğlu Etkisi"* (The Professor: "The Davutoglu Effect" in Turkish Foreign Policy), Istanbul, Inkılap Press, p. 371.

[20] Tocci, N. (2005), "Europeanization in Turkey: Trigger or Anchor for Reform?," *South European Society and Politics*, Vol. 10, No. 1, pp. 73-83.

[21] Davutoğlu, A. (2007), *Türkiye Soylesileri 1* (Turkey Interviews 1), Istanbul, Kure Publications, cited in Zengin (2010), pp. 372-374.

cooperation and economic diplomacy beyond Cyprus. In this context, the rapprochement with Greece, which had started in 1999, expanded under the AKP governments. Similarly relations with Syria, which picked up after 1998, continued to develop. The two countries engaged in extensive security, political, and economic cooperation. Unlike the 1990s, Turkey improved its relations with the Arab world more broadly, and its popularity increased among Arab public opinion.[22] Turkey mediated in conflicts in the Middle East and in the Balkans. Turkish mediation between Israel and Syria culminated in indirect talks in 2008. Similarly, Turkey played several mediation roles in Lebanon and Israel-Palestine. Recently, Turkey successfully mediated between Bosnia and Serbia. Although not all of Turkey's mediation efforts ended in success, the very fact that Turkey was accepted as a mediator by a very diverse group of countries, some of which had had quite tense relations with Turkey in the past, demonstrated Turkey's increased and transformed status and image in its neighborhood.

Turkey also began to emphasize the importance of consolidating economic and cultural relations in the Mediterranean basin. Davutoğlu, at the meeting of the Political Committee of the Europe-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly in Istanbul, declared that 'Turkey wants the resolution of all conflicts in the Eastern Mediterranean, including Cyprus' and it wants the region to reemerge as the center of trade, politics, and culture as it used to be in the past." Developing trade links in the Eastern Mediterranean region has been an important part of AKP foreign policy. The Middle East's share of Turkey's trade has increased in recent years.[23] In a meeting of the Turkish-Arab Cooperation Forum in Istanbul in June 2010, Davutoğlu declared that Turkey aims to create a free trade zone without visa restrictions initially with Syria, Lebanon, and Jordan, but then expanding further west in the southern Mediterranean region. He declared: "We want a vehicle to be able to leave Turkey and reach Morocco without stopping at any border gates."[24]

An important aim of the AKP's Mediterranean policy has thus been to improve relations with the countries in the region, to favor diplomatic solutions to existing problems and to create a zone of peace and prosperity. To pursue this vision, policy tools such as trade, visa-free travel, and mediation have been used. Two challenges directly related to Turkey and its policies, however, remain. First, the Cyprus problem remains unresolved, challenging the above-mentioned vision of the AKP. Second, the deterioration of Turkish-Israeli relations also challenges the AKP's vision of the Mediterranean and of Turkey's role as a peace-broker in the region. The Israeli commando attack on May 31, 2010 of a Turkish ship in international waters, part of an aid flotilla bound for the Gaza Strip, and the killing of nine Turkish citizens further

[22] Altunışık, M. (2010), *Turkey: Arab Perspectives*, Istanbul, TESEV Publications, http://www.tesev.org.tr/UD_OBJS/PDF/DPT/OD/YYN/ArabPerspectivesRapWeb.pdf.

[23] Kirişçi, K. (2009), "The transformation of Turkish foreign policy: The rise of the trading state," *New Perspectives on Turkey*, No. 40, pp. 29–57.

[24] "Davutoglu Proposes Regional Trade Alliance at TAC Meeting," *Today's Zaman*, 11 June 2010.

deteriorated Israeli-Turkish relations and added a new element of tension in an already conflict-ridden region. The rift in Israeli-Turkish relations since the late 2000s has led to a change in the political geography of the Eastern Mediterranean: namely, Israel's attempt to forge closer ties with Greece. In fact, Greece and Israel organized a joint military exercise, Noble Spartan, in 2008 and Israeli pilots were allowed to practice in the Greek airspace. A second such exercise was cancelled by Greece in response to the flotilla attack as two Greek ships were also involved.[25]

The AKP policy on the Mediterranean still focuses largely on the east. However, the AKP governments have also expanded ties to the Maghreb, even though Turkey's presence and interest in this region remains limited. Since the AKP's rise to office, several high-level visits have taken place with the Maghreb countries, particularly with Algeria and Morocco. Turkey and Algeria signed a Friendship and Cooperation Agreement in 2006 during Prime Minister Tayyip Erdoğan's visit. Algeria is an exporter of liquefied natural gas and liquefied petroleum gas to Turkey, which constitutes a significant portion of trade between the two countries. However, Turkish exports have also started to grow particularly after 2004 and have reached over US$1 billion. In addition, more than 130 Turkish companies have invested in Algeria. In particular, Turkish construction companies have received approximately $2 billion worth of commissions. Libya is another major energy provider for Turkey; it exports crude oil. The two countries are still negotiating a Free Trade Agreement (FTA). Although Turkey signed FTAs with Morocco and Tunisia, trade with these countries remains limited. There are several Turkish companies, however, particularly in textiles and tourism, that have invested in Tunisia and one Turkish company is currently building two large airports in that country.[26] Turkey has also started viewing the Maghreb as one of the openings to sub-Saharan Africa, a region Turkey has been trying to penetrate economically in recent years. As a result, Turkey's trade with the Maghreb has increased from $6 billion in 2005 to $11 billion in 2009.

Far more than the Maghreb, another sub-region of the Mediterranean in which Turkey has engaged deeply, both in political and economic terms, is the Balkans. Turkey is the fourth largest investor in Bosnia after Austria, Slovenia, and Germany. Turkish companies have built the largest university campus in the Balkans in Sarajevo. In late 2008, Turkish Airlines bought 49 percent of the Bosnian national airline and is currently negotiating with Serbia to acquire the Serbian state airline JAT. Since January 2010, Turkey has allowed Serbian exports to enter Turkey customs free and the two countries have reciprocally lifted visa requirements. Turkey has also successfully mediated five rounds of talks between Bosnia and Serbia aimed at restoring diplomatic ties between the two countries.[27]

[25] www.bbc.co.k/news/world_middle-east-11556442.

[26] This information was compiled from the website of Turkish Foreign Ministry, www.mfa.gov.tr.

[27] Alic, A., "Turkey's Growing Influence in the Balkans," July 9, 2010, http://oilprice.com/Geo-Politics/Europe/Turkeys-Growing-Influence-in-the-Balkans.html.

As hinted above, energy security policy continues to have an important Mediterranean dimension. The transportation of regional energy resources, i.e., Middle Eastern and Caspian oil and gas to world markets, has become an integral part of how Ankara views the Mediterranean. Through the restoration of the Kirkuk-Yumurtalık oil pipeline and the realization of the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan (BTC) oil pipeline,[28] as well as with planned gas pipelines Turkey aims to turn its Eastern Mediterranean coast into an energy hub.

One significant problem regarding energy, however, is related to oil exploration rights around Cyprus. In 2003, the Republic of Cyprus started delineating the sea boundaries between itself and its coastal neighbors and the limits of the continental shelf. Turkey dubbed these moves as "provocative" and argued that they would undermine the equal rights and interests of the Turkish Cypriot people vis-à-vis the island's natural resources.[29] In February 2003, the Republic of Cyprus signed an Exclusive Economic Zone agreement with Egypt. In January 2007, a similar agreement was signed with Lebanon. Since then, Turkey began to exert pressure on these countries to alter their stance with respect to Cyprus. To date, the Lebanese parliament has not ratified its agreement with Cyprus. In the meantime, Turkey signed a protocol on oil exploration with the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC) in October 2010. The Cyprus energy nexus clearly has the potential to escalate and further complicate the Cyprus conflict and the stability of the Eastern Mediterranean.

A final element of Turkey's Mediterranean policy emphasizes the importance of Turkey's military presence in the region. Recently, a Turkish Navy Task Force (TDGG) was created for the Mediterranean. This development was significant not only because it demonstrated Turkey's interest in establishing its military presence in the Mediterranean, but also because it indicated that such interest did not only concern the east, but the Mediterranean as a whole. In May 2010, the fleet began its tour of the Mediterranean countries to facilitate port visits and conduct bilateral military exercises.[30] As part of the tour, the fleet visited Tunisia, Algeria, Spain, Italy, Montenegro, Croatia, Bosnia, Albania, and Egypt.

[28] The Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan oil pipeline, which became operational in 2006, has an export capacity of 1 million barrels per day, i.e., approximately 1.5 percent of world oil supply.

[29] *Today's Zaman*, May 29, 2009.

[30] Şafak, E. (2010), "Akdeniz Turu" (A Tour of the Mediterrannean), *Sabah*, July 2, 2010, www.sabah.com.tr/Yazarlar/Safak/2010/0702/akdeniz_turu.

5 Conclusions

With the end of the Cold War, Turkey began viewing the Mediterranean as a region with intrinsic – rather than global bipolar – strategic value. As such, it began to develop its conception of and policy towards the region. Initially, this policy centered on the Cyprus conflict. Turkey enhanced its strategic and security-driven appreciation of Cyprus and the Eastern Mediterranean. In addition to Cyprus and the Aegean dispute, other Eastern Mediterranean preoccupations occupied Turkish minds in the 1990s. The Turkish-Syrian crisis, the Arab-Israeli conflict, and energy security were seen as the most immediate threats to Turkey emanating from the region. A security lens dominated Turkish views on the Mediterranean during this period and Turkey privileged the use of hard security instruments to engage with Mediterranean issues.

By the end of the 1990s, a number of developments catalyzed a further shift in Turkey's approach to the Mediterranean: the resolution of the crisis with Syria, the rapprochement with Greece and Turkey's EU candidacy induced a gradual desecuritization of Turkey's approach to the Mediterranean. Hence, the first attempts were made to develop better political and economic relations with several countries in the Mediterranean basin. The AKP governments built on this legacy and took it to a new level. The AKP governments used political, diplomatic, and economic means to transform Turkey's relations with the countries in the region and to increase Turkish influence in this major geostrategic area. Security considerations did not disappear altogether, however, not least because of the continuation of conflicts in the region.

Overall, Turkey has not developed a comprehensive Mediterranean vision and strategy. There are two main reasons for this. First, due to history and geography, Turkey has been interested largely in the Eastern Mediterranean. Its recent attempts to develop relations with the western Mediterranean countries, while important, remain limited, piecemeal, and bilateral in nature. Second, Turkey cannot construct a Mediterranean region in the way the EU has attempted to do.[31] Although there have been efforts to develop a comprehensive vision of the Eastern Mediterranean since the end of the Cold War, Turkey's interests have largely fallen under four portfolios: Cyprus, the EU, the Balkans, and the Middle East. There are increasing links between these portfolios, yet they are still regarded as having their own separate dynamics. One can perceive the Mediterranean either at the center or at the periphery of different regions. Despite rhetoric to the contrary, in practice Turkey continues to view the Mediterranean at the periphery of different regions. The Cyprus problem instead is still considered *as sui generis* due to its connections to Turkish domestic politics as well to EU relations.

Turkey's approach to the Mediterranean is thus closer to the United States' view. Lesser's views of the United States in the Mediterranean effectively characterize Turkey's role too. Like the United States, Turkey, while a major power in the Mediterranean, "has never felt a need to frame an explicit Mediterranean strategy" and its approach

[31] The presence of a Mediterranean region in security terms is largely debated academically. For a summary of these debates see Lecha, E. S. (2010), "Converging, Diverging and Instrumentalizaing European Security and Defence Policy in the Mediterranean," *Mediterranean Politics*, Vol. 15, No. 2, especially pp. 232-233.

"has been driven by distinct European and Middle East policies."[32] That said, Turkey's recent policies in the Mediterranean largely resemble those of the EU in terms of the specific foreign policy objectives and instruments used. It is because of these similarities that Turkey, although reluctant to participate in the UfM — viewed as yet another French ploy to exclude Turkey from the EU — ultimately found the idea of functional cooperation in the Mediterranean appealing. Perhaps most important of all, setting aside parallels between Turkey on the one hand and its transatlantic partners on the other, is that Turkey increasingly perceives itself as an actor in its own right and is thus developing policies largely independent of its relations with its Western allies. Within this context, the Mediterranean is just another area in which Turkey is trying to assert itself politically, socially, economically, and militarily.

[32] Lesser, I. (2009) *The US, the Mediterranean and Transatlantic Strategies*, http://www.realinstitutoelcano.org/wps/portal/rielcano_eng/Content?WCM_GLOBAL_CONTEXT=/elcano/elcano_in/zonas_in/ari141-2009.

Comparing the Neighborhood Policies of Turkey and the EU in the Mediterranean

Kemal Kirişci

Introduction

European integration has been thoroughly successful in creating a zone of peace and stability on the continent. In view of this, the European Union (EU) has attempted to replicate its internal logic and ethos within the domain of its neighborhood relations. In 1995, the EU launched the European Mediterranean Partnership (EMP), also known as the Barcelona Process, followed by the European Neighborhood Policy (ENP) in 2004. Since 2008, these two policies have been supplemented by the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM). Through these policies, the EU has aimed to export stability, peace, and prosperity by encouraging countries in this area to reform themselves in return for greater access to the EU's internal market, easier movement of people, and enhanced political dialogue. In the case of the southern Mediterranean countries, however, the EU has not had much success. The gains with respect to democratization and expansion of freedoms have been modest at best. The grand objective of achieving a free trade area between the EU and the Mediterranean countries remains on paper. Trade between the EU and the southern Mediterranean countries has increased, but it has not entailed deeper economic integration between the two shores. The southern Mediterranean countries have remained essentially energy exporters and have failed to gain greater access to the EU's internal market. Restrictions on the movement of people imposed by the Schengen regime have rendered the possibility of expanding business and civil society interactions very remote.

In Turkey, however, an increasingly conspicuous aspect of foreign policy is the extent to which relations with the southern Mediterranean have expanded economically, socially, and politically. During the Cold War, Turkey's relations with its neighborhood were limited and problematic. The 1990s saw economic relations and the movement of people between Turkey and the ex-Soviet world expand. Yet, Turkish foreign policy during this period remained locked in intense conflict with a string of neighbors ranging from Armenia, Cyprus, and Greece to Iran, Iraq, and Syria. This earned Turkey the reputation of being a "post-Cold War warrior" and led it to be perceived as a liability rather than an asset for European and transatlantic security policies.[1] This situation began to change in the late 1990s. Yet the breakthrough did not come until the Justice and Development Party's (AKP) arrival in power and the "zero problems policy" associated with the current Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ahmet Davutoğlu. Davutoğlu has openly stated that Turkey is taking the European integration project as an example for encouraging greater economic, political, and social integration as a vehicle to achieve greater stability and prosperity in Turkey's neighborhood.

Taking the cue from these observations, this paper studies Turkey's "neighborhood policy" in the southern Mediterranean and compares it with that of the EU. Of course, it is difficult to speak of a Turkish neighborhood policy similar to that of the EU. Turkey does not have a policy that comes anywhere close to the EMP or ENP. Turkey's neighborhood policy has features of a policy by default and as a byproduct of Davutoğlu's "zero problem policy" and domestic economic develop-

[1] Jung, D. (2004), "Turkey and the Arab World: Historical Narratives and New Political Realities," *Mediterranean Politics*, Vol. 10, No. 1, March, p. 12.

ments. Yet, this default policy has come to look increasingly like the ENP in the sense that it is encouraging — and achieving — greater economic integration, mostly measured in increased trade and movement of people across frontiers that were once impenetrable. In line with traditional functionalist thinking in international relations, this policy is encouraging growing regional integration and offering prospects of reconciliation and reform. Furthermore, there is growing recognition that, even if unwittingly, Turkey is involved in democracy promotion-like activities in its neighborhood. It may be too ambitious and too early to say whether these activities will approximate the objectives of the EMP and ENP. But it is timely to assess, preliminarily, whether current trends in Turkish foreign policy resemble the declared goals and means of EU foreign policy in the southern neighborhood.

The paper proceeds in three steps. It first discusses briefly the EMP and ENP, with a focus on its activities related to democracy promotion, trade, and movement of people. It then examines the forms and underlying causes of Turkey's neighborhood policy in general. Finally, it looks at the Mediterranean dimension of this policy and compares it with that of the EU.

1 The EU's Mediterranean Policy

EU policy towards the Mediterranean is composed of three distinct but interrelated policies. The first is the EMP, launched in 1995. Second, following the eastern enlargement in 2004, the EU developed the ENP, which aimed at strengthening bilateral relations with those neighboring countries, including in the southern Mediterranean, not expected to enter the Union. Third, in 2008, these policies were supplemented by the French-driven UfM, aimed at developing concrete cooperation projects between the two shores of the Mediterranean. Overall, these policies aspire to achieve greater cooperation and integration, short of full EU membership, with its neighborhood in order to "promote a ring of well-governed countries to the East of the EU and on the borders of the Mediterranean with whom we can enjoy cooperative relations."[2]

The EMP and ENP have achieved an impressive level of institutional development accompanied by an *acquis* that identifies the areas and the terms, as well as the tools of cooperation. This acquis most importantly promises trade liberalization and a "stake" in the internal market for partner countries. This is also accompanied by promises of support for increased "people-to-people" contacts. Trade and movement of people are seen as two key avenues for increasing the level of integration between the EU and the neighborhood. However, these promises are implicitly made conditional on the neighborhood countries meeting a set of complex requirements. These range from the need to adopt EU rules concerning access to the internal market, to strengthening border controls and combating corruption, illegal migration, and terrorism, to making progress on democracy, human rights, and good governance reforms.

It is not the purpose of this paper to assess these policies with respect to the southern Mediterranean. However, the literature indicates that overall progress has been slim.[3] True, the "Barcelona process has created a constructive political and institutional infrastructure of comprehensive partnership between the region and Europe."[4] However, particularly in political terms, authoritarianism and the lack of rights and freedoms have persisted and often deepened.[5] Countries such as Israel stand out as exceptions, followed by other relative success stories such as Morocco. Yet even in these cases, critical problems persist, ranging from deepening conflict and human rights violations in Israel-Palestine to persisting authoritarian rule. For the region as a whole, the meager

[2] European Council (2003), *A Secure Europe in a Better World. European Security Strategy*, December 12, 2003, available at http://ue.eu.int/pressdata/EN/reports/78367.pdf

[3] Emerson, M. (2008), "Making sense of Sarkozy's Union for the Mediterranean," *CEPS Policy Briefs*, No. 155, March, p. 3 and Behr, T. (2010), "The EU's Middle East failure" in T. Archer, T. Behr and T. Nieminen (eds.), *Why the EU fails: Learning from past experiences to succeed better next time*, Helsinki, Finnish Institute of International Affairs, p. 43.

[4] Emerson, M. and Noutcheva, G. (2005), "From Barcelona Process to Neighborhood Policy: Assessements and Open Issues," *CEPS Working Document*, No. 220, March, p. 6.

[5] Results reported in Table 2, page 18. See also Commission of the EC (2010), "Taking stock of the European Neighborhood Policy," *Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council*, COM (2010) 207, Brussels 12/05/2010, p. 3.

consolation appears to be that none of these countries have become "failed states."

In the area of trade, progress has also been limited. Institutional steps have been taken towards creating a free trade zone. Association Agreements with most of the countries of the neighborhood are in place. However, these agreements have fallen well short of meeting the goal set in 1995 of achieving a free trade zone by 2010. Trade gains have been achieved but are limited. This is partly because of the inability of these countries to adopt and implement the EU acquis on the internal market. However, there is also considerable EU resistance to opening the internal market to agricultural imports from the southern Mediterranean. Energy and related products constitute the bulk of EU imports from the region. This bias for trade in energy is also reflected in the Maghreb countries' larger share in the EU's trade with the region. Trade with the Maghreb countries constituted over 4.4 percent of overall EU trade in 2008, an increase from 3.5 percent in 1995. Trade with the Mashriq Mediterranean countries fell from 1.45 percent of overall EU trade to 1.24 percent in the same period. Furthermore, trade integration between the EU and the southern Mediterranean has not been impressive when compared with the EU's eastern neighbors. Table 1 (page 39) shows how EU trade with the southern Mediterranean countries increased by 69 percent between 2004 and 2008 compared to a 146 percent increase with the eastern ENP countries. The latter increase is almost double the average 79 percent increase in the EU's overall trade with its neighborhood.

Similar remarks can also be made about the movement of people. The Schengen visa regime requires a visa for the nationals of all the southern Mediterranean countries to enter the EU.[6] The EU does not keep statistics on the number of entries by foreign nationals into the Schengen area. However, data on the number of Schengen visas granted each year shows that it is not as difficult for the nationals of the eastern neighbors to enter the EU as it is for those of the southern Mediterranean. As noted in Table 2 (page 40), the number of Schengen visas issued between 2003 (the first year for which data was available) and 2009 increased from just under 1.5 million to just over 2.5 million for all ENP countries excluding Israel (which is exempt from visa requirements). The increase in the number of visas issued to the nationals of eastern ENP countries was almost 190 percent. The corresponding increase for the Mashriq countries was a meager 14 percent, while there was no increase at all for the Maghreb. The situation is likely to persist as the EU has foreseen visa facilitation and liberalization for Eastern Partnership countries but not for the southern Mediterranean.[7]

The results presented in Table 1 and 2 make it difficult to argue that the EMP and ENP have been particularly successful with respect to trade integration and increasing "people to people" contacts as far as the southern Mediterranean is concerned. The EU may have developed an impressive and well articulated neighborhood policy but, despite claims

[6] Council Regulation No 453/2003, March 6, 2003 amending Regulation (EC) No 539/2001.

[7] Commission of the EC (2010), *op. cit.*, makes references to the possibilities of visa facilitation and liberalization for European neighbors, but no such reference is made in the case of the southern Mediterranean.

to the contrary,[8] the results evidently fall well short of what the Union set out to achieve. It is difficult to envisage how integration between the two shores of the Mediterranean can be achieved if the EU preaches one policy and practices another. This discrepancy risks aggravating the very problems — such as illegal migration, terrorism, ill-governance, and de-development — that the EU aims to overcome and fails to "prevent the emergence of new dividing lines between the enlarged EU and its neighbors."[9] Might there be useful lessons that the EU could draw from Turkey's neighborhood policy?

[8] ENPI (2010), "Five years of European Neighbourhood Policy: More trade, more aid, more people to people contacts," IP/10/566, Brussels, May 12, 2010.

[9] European Commission (2004), "European Neighbourhood Policy: Strategy Paper," *Communication from the Commission*, COM(2004) 373 Final, Brussels, May 12, 2004.

2 Turkey's "Neighborhood Policy"

In sharp contrast to the EU, Turkey does not have a well-defined and structured neighborhood policy. Its policy has emerged from practice and includes several components. The "zero problems with neighbors" component is probably the best known and has evolved to include mediation efforts to resolve conflicts in Turkey's neighborhood. Davutoğlu's "zero problems policy" during the AKP's first term helped take relations with a number of countries beyond a narrowly defined security agenda. Until that time, for example, Cyprus, Armenia, and Northern Iraq were viewed through a strict security lens. Business and trade relations with these countries were off the agenda. By the late 1990s and early 2000s, under the previous government, relations with Greece and Syria had begun to improve through a process of de-securitization. The AKP continued on this path, consolidating the rapprochement with these two countries. With respect to Cyprus, the AKP government introduced a dramatic U-turn, reversing the long-standing Turkish dictum, "no solution is the solution," and supporting the UN sponsored Annan Plan. In its second term, the AKP launched another historic rapprochement, this time with Armenia.[10] The case of relations with the Kurds of Northern Iraq is also something of a success story. The Kurdish regional administration in Northern Iraq and, subsequently, the Kurdish Regional Government (KRG) were traditionally seen as a grave threat to Turkish security and territorial integrity. Yet, the government was able to transform attitudes and improve relations with the KRG in a conspicuous manner. In this regard, Davutoğlu also embarked on an ambitious agenda of multiple mediation in Turkey's neighborhood. This included mediation efforts between Israel and Syria, Israel and Pakistan, Israel and Hamas, Afghanistan and Pakistan, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Serbia, Iran and the West, and several efforts within the Arab world.

Another particularly conspicuous development is the way economic and trade interests forced their way into Turkey's neighborhood policy. This was a function, on one hand, of the diminishing role of traditional security-oriented foreign policy actors such as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the military and, on the other hand, of the rise of new foreign policy actors such as the Ministries of Energy, Trade, Transportation, and the Interior. The Undersecreteriat of the Prime Minister's Office for Foreign Trade (DTM) has become a particularly influential bureau shaping the economic dimension of Turkish foreign policy. Furthermore, Turkish business associations ranging from Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey (TOBB) and the Turkish Industrialists and Businessmen's Association (TÜSIAD) to the Independent Industrialists and Businessmen's Association (MÜSIAD), and the Turkish Confederation of Businessmen and Industrialists (TUSKON), among others, have become more active over time. In an interview with *Turkishtime*, Davutoğlu noted that the business world has become a primary driver of Turkish foreign policy.[11]

[10] This process culminated in the signing of two protocols re-establishing bilateral relations. Domestic politics and external factors, however, have impeded the ratification and implementation of the protocols.

[11] Interview with Ahmet Davutoğlu (2004), "İş Dünyası artık Dış Politikanın Öncülerinden," *Turkishtime*, April-May.

The AKP government has also attributed greater importance to economic issues with the rise of the "Anatolian Tigers," i.e., entrepreneurs and industrialists from Anatolian heartland cities such as Aksaray, Bursa, Çankırı, Çorum, Denizli, Düzce, Gaziantep, Kahramanmaraş, Kayseri, Konya, Malatya, and Yozgat, which boomed as a result of the economic liberalization of the 1980s, and whose trade interests lie especially in neighboring countries around Turkey.[12] These are cities and provinces where the public has tended to be more conservative and pious, constituting a natural constituency for the AKP. Increased trade has brought higher levels of employment and wealth to these cities and provinces, helping the AKP consolidate and increase its electoral share in these regions.[13]

It is against this backdrop that Davutoğlu's "zero problems policy" and mediation efforts dovetailed with economic considerations. Turkey's neighborhood is characterized by a multitude of conflicts. Yet it is precisely in this area that Turkish business and trade relations are expanding, generating a domestic demand for a more stable and secure neighborhood. Stronger trade relations require predictability, which can be guaranteed only through greater political stability. Turkey's efforts to mediate between Iran and the west are at least partly driven by economic considerations. Iran is a very important market for Turkish products. Turkey runs a large trade deficit with Iran. Furthermore, the Iranian market is heavily protected and difficult to penetrate. For example, the Turkish airport construction and management company, TAV, after having built Tehran's new international airport, failed to secure the right to manage it.[14] Similarly, the Turkish communications company Türk Telekom was denied access to the Iranian market. The government is under considerable pressure, especially from the "Anatolian Tigers," to improve relations with Tehran.[15] Hence, the AKP government's push for Iran's admission into the WTO, objection to sanctions and attempted mediation between the West and Iran. This was conspicuously reflected in the remarks of the Turkish president and minister of foreign affairs at the UN in September 2010, who noted that

[12] There is not a commonly agreed list of "Anatolian Tigers." The above list has been compiled from a number of sources including Demir, Ö., Acar, M., and Toprak, M. (2004), "Anatolian Tigers or Islamic Capital: Prospects and Challenges," *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 40, No. 6, pp. 166-188; Pamuk, Ş. (2008), "Economic change in twentieth century Turkey" in R. Kasaba (ed.), *Cambridge History of Turkey*, Volume 4 Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, pp. 266-300; and European Stability Institute (2005), *Islamic Calvinists: Change and Conservatism in Central Anatolia*, Berlin, ESI, September.

[13] The AKP's votes increased from around 47 percent of the total vote in these provinces in 2002 to around 59 percent in 2007. Data from Higher Election Board of Turkey (Yüksek Seçim Kurumu), www.ysk.gov.tr

[14] Although TAV had won the bid to manage the Tehran airport, and in spite of considerable pressure from the Turkish government and a favorably disposed Khatami administration, the Iranian Majlis blocked the deal. For details, see International Crisis Group (2010), *Turkey and the Middle East: Ambitions and Constraints*, Europe Report No. 203, 7, April, p. 17.

[15] "Turkish tigers press Iran trade amidst fears of sanctions," *Daily Star*, June 28, 2010.

sanctions against Iran were against Turkey's economic interests.[16]

Inadvertently, EU-Turkey relations also play a role in inducing the AKP government to develop a neighborhood policy with a strong trade dimension. The EU's Schengen visa policy requires Turkish nationals to obtain a visa in order to enter the EU. This practice has long been a source of massive complaint in Turkey.[17] The Turkish Economic and Development Foundation (IKV) has systematically compiled these complaints.[18] Turkish business people, in particular, object to the fact that while their goods travel freely to the EU, they are unable to do so in person. They have argued that this not only puts them at a disadvantage vis-à-vis their European counterparts who enjoy visa-free travel to Turkey, but also makes it much more difficult for them to promote their goods and expand their markets within the EU. One analyst posited that the cost of the "visa issue" to Turkish trade with the EU stands at US$5 billion.[19] The government has raised this issue with the EU regularly.[20] However, the unwillingness or inability of the EU to revise its visa policy led business organizations and local chambers of commerce, particularly in regions bordering Iraq and Syria, to push for a liberalization of Turkey's own visa policies towards these countries. The government responded to their calls. Building upon the legacy of Turgut Özal, who liberalized Turkey's visa policy towards the former Soviet world and the Balkans, and breaking from its previous practice of harmonizing with the Schengen regime, Turkey liberalized its visa regime for the nationals of numerous Middle Eastern and African countries. Syria became the first country to benefit from this new policy in October 2009. When announcing this decision, Erdoğan stated: "They may have the Schengen visas in the EU, so we decided to create a Shamgen visa" making a pun on the Turkish name of Damascus, Şam.[21] As Table 3

[16] Reported in *Radikal*, September 23, 25, and 26, 2010. See also Weymouth, L. (2010), "Turkey's President on its relations with Iran, Israel, and the U.S.," *The Washington Post*, September 22, 2010, available at: http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/09/21/AR2010092105114.html. A summary of the speech can be found in *Hürriyet*, September 25, 2010, available at: http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/n.php?n=gul-looks-to-future-in-speech-at-columbia-university-2010-09-25

[17] Doğan, E. (2009), *Impact of Visa Regimes over Travel Decisions and Patterns of Turkish Citizens*, MireKoç Report, Istanbul, Koç University.

[18] Özler, Z. and Özsöz, M. (2010), "Visa Hotline Project," Final Report, Economic Development Foundation Publications No. 231.

[19] Interview with Can Baydarol, *EurActiv*, September 28, 2009.

[20] NTVMSNBC (2010), "Bağış: AB Vizesini Kaldırmaya Çalışıyoruz," January 22, http://www.ntvmsnbc.com/id/25047650/. Chief EU negotiator Egemen Bağış repeated these points at a conference "How to keep the Engine Running? Five years of Turkey-EU accession negotiations and beyond," October 1, 2010, Heinrich Böll Stiftung and Istanbul Policy Center, Istanbul. See also "Vize insan haklarına aykırı," October 14, 2010, *Radikal Daily*, http://www.radikal.com.tr/Radikal.aspx?aType=RadikalHaberDetay&ArticleID=1023600&Date=14.10.2010&CategoryID=101

[21] Işık, T. (2009), "Bu da Türkiye-Suriye Vize Açılımı," *Radikal Daily*, September 17, available at:

(page 41) shows, this liberal visa policy has seen an increase in the number of entries from Turkey's immediate neighborhood of over 330 percent between 1995 and 2008. This policy has also opened the way for Turkish business to travel to these countries without visas.

Visa liberalization is probably one of the most conspicuous aspects of Turkey's neighborhood policy. It also explains the massive expansion in Turkey's trade with its neighborhood. It was again a characteristic of Özal's foreign policy to encourage trade with neighboring countries. Yet, as Table 4 (page 42) shows, Turkey's trade with its immediate neighborhood expanded mostly during the last decade, doubling from just under 14 percent to about 25 percent of overall trade between 2002, when AKP came to power, and 2008. By contrast, Turkey's trade with the EU in percentage terms diminished from about 49 percent in 1995, when the customs union between the EU and Turkey was signed, to 41 percent in 2008. Today, Turkey has a string of free trade agreements, six of which are with Balkan countries and six with Arab countries, as well as with Georgia, Israel, and EFTA countries. This expansion of trade has been accompanied by a growing number of Turkish enterprises investing in these countries, notably in Bulgaria, Georgia, Romania, Russia as well as some Middle Eastern countries.

Interestingly, Prime Minister Erdoğan and Minister of Foreign Affairs Davutoğlu draw different lessons from Turkey's "neighborhood policy." Erdoğan, not unlike Özal, has developed close relations with Turkey's business world, often expressing support for the "Anatolian Tigers," while distancing himself from established large business centered mostly around Istanbul and represented by TÜSIAD. He also takes a pragmatic view of international business and trade, often at the expense of identity or norm-related issues. Greater economic integration with Turkey's neighborhood means growth for the Turkish economy and that in turn benefits the electoral performance of AKP. Davutoğlu, in contrast, is more conscious of the role of trade and economic integration in creating a more stable and peaceful neighborhood. On numerous occasions, the minister of foreign affairs and other members of the AKP cabinet have argued that Turkey emulates what European integration has achieved in Europe by encouraging greater economic integration and interdependence in Turkey's neighborhood.[22] They have also pointed out that they do not see a conflict between Turkey's EU membership aspirations and its desire to expand relations with the neighborhood and beyond.[23] Davutoğlu actually foresees free movement of goods and people taking place from the city of Kars in eastern Turkey to the Atlantic and from Sinop on the Black Sea coast to the Gulf of

http://www.radikal.com.tr/Radikal.aspx?aType=RadikalDetay&Date=&ArticleID=954878

[22] The desire to emulate the experience of the EU in regional integration has been noted by Ibrahim Kalın, the chief advisor of the prime minister, see International Crisis Group (2010), *Turkey and the Middle East: Ambitions and Constraints*, Europe Report No. 203, April 7, p.11.

[23] "10 ülke tercihli ticareti onayladı," *Anadolu Ajansı*, available at: http://www.aa.com.tr/tr/10-ulke-tercihli-ticareti-onayladi.html

Aden.[24] Such developments would fit perfectly with his long-standing vision of Turkey as a "central power" enjoying "strategic depth."

A final and perhaps silent aspect of Turkey's neighborhood policy is democracy promotion. In contrast to the EU and the United States, Turkey does not have an openly declared democracy promotion policy. As a country that is still struggling to consolidate its own pluralist democracy, this is no surprise. However, both at the governmental and the civil society level, Turkey is involved in democracy promotion-like activities in its neighborhood. In 2008, the Turkish International Cooperation and Development Agency (TIKA) channeled almost $800 million in development aid to 98 countries, many of them in Turkey's neighborhood.[25] Some of the projects supported by TIKA in these countries involved matters of "good governance" and "empowering women." Ever since a Turkish national was elected as secretary general of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC), there have been efforts to pursue similar projects among the members. Turkey pressed to include "good governance" and "expansion of political participation" in the OIC's Ten Year Program of Action in 2005 and its Charter at the Dakar Summit in March 2008.[26]

Turkish leaders regularly raise democracy-related issues at various regional forums and at bilateral level. When doing so, their emphasis on local ownership and on the fact that Turkey's own democracy is a "work in progress" increases the receptiveness to their words. Turkey's liberal visa policy also allows students, civil society activists, and others to come to Turkey and observe this "work in progress." Turkish NGOs increasingly engage their counterparts in the neighborhood on cultural, educational, environmental, and women's projects, while Turkish business associations interact with their counterparts abroad diffusing liberal market values. The Turkish media and TV programs are closely followed in neighboring countries, especially in the Middle East. These developments, accompanied by a growing interest in Turkey's reform process and economic development produce a "demonstration effect." Indeed, a 2009 survey in the Arab world revealed that 61 percent of respondents saw Turkey as a model.[27] Similar results can also be observed in the Arab Public Opinion Poll 2010.[28]

Davutoğlu's "zero problems" with neighbors policy, the AKP government's efforts to expand trade and freer movement of people, and Turkey's democracy promotion-like activities do not amount to a "neighborhood policy" comparable to the EMP and

[24] "Yeni Bir Ortadoğu Doğuyor," *Milliyet*, June 10, 2010, available at: http://www.milliyet.com.tr/yeni-bir-ortadogu-doguyor-/ekonomi/sondakika/10.06.2010/1249276/default.htm

[25] *2008 Annual Report*, Ankara, TIKA.

[26] Interview with an official from the OIC Secretariat, October 2009.

[27] Akgün, M. et al. (2009), *The Perception of Turkey in the Middle East*, Istanbul, TESEV Yayınları, pp. 21-22.

[28] Telhami, S. et al. (2010), "2010 Arab Public Opinion Poll," available at: http://www.brookings.edu/~/media/Files/rc/reports/2010/08_arab_opinion_poll_telhami/08_arab_opinion_poll_telhami.pdf

ENP. Nevertheless, there is an undeniable overlap between the declared objectives of these policies. Both the EU and Turkey aim to achieve greater integration with their geographic neighbors in order to foster a friendly, peaceful, stable, and prosperous neighborhood. The difference between the EU and Turkey is that, unlike the EU, Turkey appears to be making some progress in practice. In an attempt to gauge this progress, the next section examines Turkey's neighborhood policy towards Mediterranean countries and compares it to that of the EU.

3 Turkey and the Mediterranean

Traditionally, Turkey never had a policy towards the Mediterranean per se. The Eastern Mediterranean has of course been of immediate concern for a long time because of the Cyprus conflict.[29] Otherwise, the rest of Eastern Mediterranean was construed as part of the Middle East. Furthermore, Turkey traditionally shied away from being called a Mediterranean country and resisted being labeled as such by the EU for fear that this could undermine its EU membership prospects. This was also one of the main reasons motivating Turkey's initial energetic opposition to French President Nicholas Sarkozy's idea of the UfM in May 2007.[30] The rest of the Mediterranean, or the Maghreb, was traditionally beyond Turkey's foreign policy horizon. All this is changing. In the last few years, Turkey's relations with the countries along the southern shores of the Mediterranean has been significantly transformed. Political relations with the Arab world have been improving while those with Israel have taken a serious downturn. Yet, what remains common to Turkey's relations with these Mediterranean countries, including Israel, is that trade and movement of people are playing a growing role.

Turkish relations with Israel have been problematic since Erdoğan clashed with Israeli President Shimon Peres in January 2009 at the Davos World Economic Forum. Relations took a turn for the worse with the *Mavi Marmara* incident in May 2010. Despite Erdoğan's anti-Israeli rhetoric and his government's threat to break diplomatic relations with Israel unless Israel apologizes for the killing of nine Turkish nationals on board the *Mavi Marmara*, not one word has been uttered about abrogating the free trade agreement with Israel. This is particularly significant considering that Necmettin Erbakan, the leader of the Refah party, from which the AKP emerged, virulently objected to this agreement. Similarly, even if there has been an important decline in the numbers of Israelis coming to Turkey,[31] the government has not attempted to introduce visas for them. The decline in foreign trade between Israel and Turkey from $3.4 billion in 2008 to $2.6 billion in 2009 was more a product of the global financial crisis than of the crisis in Israeli-Turkish relations. The fall in percentage terms is less than the fall that occurred in overall terms or in trade with the EU. In these two years, Turkey's overall trade and trade with the EU declined by 27 percent and 25 percent, respectively, compared to a 23 percent decline in trade with Israel. Furthermore, during the course of 2010, business and trade with Israel picked up again.[32] In the first six months of 2010, trade with Israel increased by 43 percent compared to 2009. The increase in trade with the EU during the same period was only 25 percent.[33]

[29] Altunışık, M. (2011), *Turkey as a 'Mediterranean Power,'* IAI-GMF Mediterranean Papers Series, January 2011.

[30] Emerson, M. (2008), *Making sense of Sarkozy's Union for the Mediterranean*, CEPS Policy Briefs, No. 155, March, p. 1.

[31] Israeli nationals' entry into Turkey declined significantly in 2009. Based on TUIK data, the number declined from 558,183 in 2008, to 311,582 in 2009.

[32] Kraft, D. (2010), "Despite Raid, Mostly Business as Usual for Israel and Turkey," *New York Times*, July 2.

[33] Calculated from data on www.tuik.gov.tr

Similar observations can be made with respect to Arab Mediterranean countries. Turkey's trade with both the Maghreb and Mashriq countries has increased significantly, even if the ranking of these countries in relation to Turkey's overall trade remains relatively low (Table 5, page 43). The overall increase in trade from 1995 to 2008 of 319 percent (Table 5) is a little under the 332 percent increase in EU-Turkish trade, but significantly below the 808 percent increase in trade with Turkey's neighborhood (Table 4). The increase in trade with the Mashriq has been smaller, but is expected to increase significantly in the coming years. Of course, the expansion of trade with Israel of 628 percent is a record in itself and is clearly a function of the free trade agreement between Israel and Turkey signed in 1996. Additionally, the structure of the Israeli economy is much more compatible with the Turkish economy than that of the Arab countries of the Mediterranean. However, one distinguishing aspect of Turkish trade especially with the Maghreb countries is that it is becoming more diversified.

Trade is probably an important aspect of Turkey's neighborhood policy, which sets it apart from the EMP and ENP. In spite of the promises to create a free trade area between the EU and EMP countries, this EU objective remains only on paper. An important consequence is that trade between the EU and the southern Mediterranean is still dominated by energy. Furthermore, the EU has resisted opening its markets, especially to agricultural goods. This complicates the prospects of developing a more diversified and export-oriented industrial base for these countries. Naturally, Turkey is not a match for the EU. Its overall trade with the southern Mediterranean countries in 2008 stood at just under €12 billion compared to more than €189 billion for the EU (Table 1). Yet, unlike the EU, the composition of Turkey's imports from Mediterranean countries has become less and less dominated by energy over time, particularly in the case of the Mashriq (Table 6, page 44). Turkey is becoming more open to at least partly manufactured exports than the EU. Clearly, these exports to Turkey are not at a level that could engender the kind of transformation in the southern Mediterranean economies that exports to the EU could. Nevertheless, Turkey is offering these countries an opportunity to develop more diversified trade with Turkey.

A more liberal visa policy has been an especially striking characteristic of Turkey's neighborhood policy. However, this is a policy that has been extended to some of the Arab Mediterranean countries only recently. The number of entries of nationals of Mediterranean countries increased from about 500,000 in 1995 to 1.35 million in 2008 (Table 3). This is a modest increase of about 150 percent compared to the 367 percent for EU nationals and the 333 percent increase for Turkey's immediate neighbors during the same period. Furthermore, most of this increase is associated with Israeli nationals. Visa requirements for Moroccan and Tunisian nationals were lifted in 2007 and the increase from 2007 to 2009 was 74 percent and 35 percent, respectively.[34] Visa requirements for Lebanese and Syrian nationals were only lifted in 2009, and the increase from 2008 to 2009 was 33 percent and 25 percent, respectively.

[34] All figures are obtained from www.tuik.gov.tr.

However, most of these entries were suitcase traders involved in economic activity in a way similar to that of the early 1990s when Turkey opened its borders to nationals of the former Soviet world. In that case, following an initial period of suitcase trade, both the numbers of entries from and trade with the former Soviet world exploded. The increase in the number of people entering Turkey from the former Soviet world between 1995 and 2008 was just under 400 percent, while trade over the same period increased by 800 percent.[35] Just as a more liberal visa policy played a central role in the expansion of trade with Turkey's northern neighborhood, it would be reasonable to expect a similar expansion with the southern Mediterranean over time following the liberalization of visas.

Such an expectation may materialize sooner rather than later because of the energetic way in which Turkey has been pushing economic integration, especially with Lebanon, Jordan, and Syria. In July 2010, Turkey led the effort for the establishment of a "Close Neighbors Economic and Trade Association Council" with these three countries. The Council aims to establish a free trade area within five years based on the recognition that "free trade agreements contribute to the expansion of world trade, to greater international stability, and in particular, to the development of closer relations among our peoples."[36] This objective is not that different from the objectives of the EMP and ENP. Only time will tell whether the Council will achieve its objectives. Yet, Turkey already has free trade agreements with Jordan and Syria and the one with Lebanon is nearing ratification. These steps are clearly in line with Davutoğlu's ambitous vision of an integration project leading to free movement of goods and people from the city of Kars to the Atlantic, and from Sinop to the Gulf of Aden.[37]

[35] These figures are calculated from the above tables for former Soviet republics neighboring Turkey, as well as for Bulgaria and Romania. Georgia was not included in the calculation of the average entries from the former Soviet world because of the over 50,000 percent increase in entries from Georgia to Turkey between 1995 to 2008. Its inclusion would have skewed the average significantly.

[36] *Joint Declaration on Establishing "Close Neighbors Economic and Trade Association Council" for a Free Trade Area between Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, and Turkey*, July 31, 2010.

[37] "Yeni Bir Ortadoğu Doğuyor," *Milliyet*, June 10, 2010, available at: http://www.milliyet.com.tr/yeni-bir-ortadogu-doguyor-/ekonomi/sondakika/10.06.2010/1249276/default.htm

4 Conclusions

Turkey does not have a well-defined and structured "neighborhood policy" resembling the EMP or ENP. Yet, since the end of the Cold War, Turkey has pursued policies that have increased the level of integration, first, with the countries of the former Soviet world and, more recently, with the southern Mediterranean. This integration process has been accompanied by improved relations with its neighbors. Turkey is far from resolving all the problems of its neighborhood. However, its policies so far are not that divorced from the goals of the ENP and EMP. Turkey, too, aspires to building a "ring of friendly and well-governed" countries and, in some respects, can be viewed as "doing the European Neighborhood Policy for the EU."[38]

This paper has shown that the major difference between the EU and Turkey does not derive so much from the absence of a well-structured Turkish neighborhood policy as from the EU's tendency in practice to view its southern neighborhood from a security-dominated perspective. The EU puts more emphasis on security issues, such as combating illegal migration, terrorism, and organized crime, than it does on making its internal market accessible to goods, services, and people from its neighborhood. Turkey, instead, perceives fewer threats from its neighborhood and expects security to emerge from increased trade and movement of people. Turkey seeks security through a typically functionalist approach by increasing interdependence between itself and its neighbors, an approach the EU itself appears, in practice, to have abandoned.

There are a number of lessons that can be drawn from this. The first is simply to recognize Turkey's experience and the possibility that a degree of regional integration in the form of greater trade and movement of people can be achieved without imposing conditionality. Instead of demanding and expecting countries to meet criteria before being "rewarded," why not adopt the view that greater trade and movement of people will gradually empower neighboring countries to develop the capacities needed to meet these criteria? The second lesson is to recognize the significance of transforming a security-first into an engagement-first approach to the neighborhood. For many decades, Turkey saw its neighborhood as a source of threat and maintained high protective walls around itself. Today these walls are being dismantled. So far, this is benefiting Turkey's economic growth and enabling the neighborhood to access a growing Turkish market. It is also allowing the people of Turkey's neighborhood to experience a country in full transformation and whose democracy is a "work in progress," taking all the lessons that such an experience entails back home with them. This is in sharp contrast to the EU's well-developed democracy promotion policy, which does a lot of preaching but denies the people of its neighborhood the possibility of experiencing the EU's democracy and economy first hand. Lastly, it is also important not to fall into the trap of viewing Turkey's Mediterranean policies as evidence of Turkey's "change of axis." After all, Turkey began to engage its northern neighbors first and only started recently to engage the Maghreb and Mashriq. This

[38] Aydın Düzgit, S. and Tocci, N. (2009), *Transforming Turkish Foreign Policy: The Quest for Regional Leadership and Europeanization*, Commentary, Brussels, CEPS, November.

level of engagement in terms of trade and movement of people is still a fraction of that with its northern neighbors, not to mention that with EU countries.

Still, there are a number of issues that Turkey will need to pay attention to if its neighborhood policy is to be sustainable. Turkey's transformation and reform process is generally recognized as having slowed down. Can Turkish economic growth and Turkey's engagement with its neighborhood continue if Turkey's reforms and democratization are interrupted? Turkey's relations with the EU have deteriorated considerably. The blame for this deterioration is clearly not solely Turkey's. Regardless of this, can Turkish democratization continue apace without the EU, and can Turkey's attraction for its neighborhood continue without strong relations with the EU? Similar observations can be made about EU-Turkish trade relations. Even if the EU's share in Turkey's overall trade has diminished, the EU remains a critical trading partner for Turkey. There is far more compatibility between the Turkish economy and the economy of the EU than any other economy in the neighborhood, except perhaps Israel's. Can the Turkish economy be internationally competitive without maintaining and fostering stronger trade relations with the EU? Likewise, despite the crisis in Turkish-Israeli relations, Turkey will need to keep its criticism within reasonable limits if it genuinely wishes to contribute to peace and stability and economic integration in the neighborhood.

Finally, Turkey will soon have to recognize that rhetorical reference to the importance of democratization may not be sufficient in the long run. This does not necessarily mean that Turkey has to start developing a full-fledged democracy promotion policy like the EU or the United States. It may also be unrealistic to expect Turkey to develop and introduce notions of conditionality. Yet, Turkey's image will suffer in the long run if Turkish foreign policy blatantly contradicts the values and norms that are central to democracy. Turkish pragmatism in foreign policy can, if measured, be wise. Yet, some degree of adherence to democratic principles in the conduct of foreign policy is also of the essence.

Table 1 – Trade between the EU and EMP Countries in 1995 and 2008

EU	1995				2004				2008				% of Inc. 1995-2008	% of Inc. 2004-2008
	Import	Export	Total	% of Tot.	Import	Export	Total	% of Tot.	Import	Export	Total	% of Tot.		
Israel	4.658	9.663	14.321	1,47%	8.610	12.756	21.366	1,07%	11.241	14.055	25.296	0,88%	77%	18%
Maghreb	18.013	15.889	33.902	3,49%	42.227	29.426	71.653	3,58%	81.295	45.475	126.769	4,41%	274%	77%
Mashriq	4.171	9.913	14.084	1,45%	7.250	14.920	22.170	1,11%	12.502	23.087	35.589	1,24%	153%	61%
European ENP	2.303	3.635	5.938	0,61%	11.997	15.885	27.882	1,39%	31.598	37.122	68.720	2,39%	1057%	146%
Total	29.145	39.100	68.245	7,02%	70.084	72.987	143.071	7,15%	136.636	119.739	256.374	8,92%	201%	79%
EU Total*	473.799	498.305	972.104	100%	1.032.358	969.303	2.001.661	100%	1.564.946	1.309.818	2.874.764	100%	196%	44%

*Belgium and Luxembourg not included in 1995 EU Total due to lack of data

**EU-15 in 1995; EU-25 in 2004; EU-27 in 2008

***millions Euro

****Maghreb: Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya; Mashriq: Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, Egypt; European ENP:Armenia, Azerbaijan,Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, Ukriane

Source: EUROSTAT

Table 2 – Schengen Visas Issued for the Nationals of the Southern Mediterranean and Eastern ENP Countries in 2003 and 2009

EU	2003		2009		% of Inc.
	Total	% of G.Total	Total	% of G.Total	
Algeria	233.572	2,99%	189.155	1,76%	-19%
Libya	34.588	0,44%	46.465	0,43%	34%
Morocco	317.536	4,07%	345.130	3,21%	9%
Tunisia	102.809	1,32%	108.366	1,01%	5%
MAGHREB	688.505	8,82%	689.116	6,40%	0%
Egypt	78.836	1,01%	107.918	1,00%	37%
Jordan	26.517	0,34%	29.095	0,27%	10%
Lebanon	66.423	0,85%	60.905	0,57%	-8%
Syria	35.543	0,46%	38.826	0,36%	9%
MASHRIQ	207.319	2,66%	236.744	2,20%	14%
Armenia	14.927	0,19%	29.039	0,27%	95%
Azerbaijan	13.255	0,17%	27.302	0,25%	106%
Belarus	169.739	2,18%	424.267	3,94%	150%
Georgia	14.558	0,19%	49.412	0,46%	239%
Moldova	16.796	0,22%	53.641	0,50%	219%
Ukraine	324.547	4,16%	1.011.243	9,39%	212%
EX-SOVIETS	553.822	7,10%	1.594.904	14,82%	188%
TOTAL	1.449.646	18,58%	2.520.764	23,42%	73%
GRAND TOTAL	7.803.460	100%	10.764.935	100%	38%

*Countries in 2003 data: AT,BE,DE,DK,EL,ES,FI,FR,IT,LU,NL,PT,SE
Countries in 2009 data: AT,BE,CZ,DE,DK,EE,EL,ES,FI,FR,HU,IT,LT,LU,LV,MT,NL,PL,PT,SE,SI,SK
**Visa types: A+B+C+D in 2003; A+B+C+VTL+D+"D+C"
***Netherlands and Portugal are not included in 2003 Total due to lack of data
Source: Compiled from data obtained from EU Consillium

Table 3 – Entry into Turkey of Persons from its Neighborhood in 1995, 2002, and 2008

TURKEY	1995		2002		2008		% of Inc. 1995-2008	% of Inc. 2002-2008
	Total	% of Total	Total	% of Total	Total	% of Total		
Bulgaria	157.830	2,33%	834.070	6,30%	1.255.343	4,77%	695%	50%
Greece	123.921	1,83%	279.751	2,11%	572.212	2,17%	362%	105%
Romania	284.920	4,21%	180.106	1,36%	447.419	1,70%	57%	148%
Moldova	-	-	46.079	0,35%	141.514	0,54%	-	207%
Russia	1.074.858*	15,89%	946.494	7,14%	2.879.278	10,93%	168%	204%
Ukraine	24.063	0,36%	193.038	1,46%	730.689	2,77%	2937%	279%
Armenia	-	-	17.572	0,13%	63.855	0,24%	-	263%
Azerbaijan	146.971	2,17%	163.114	1,23%	459.593	1,75%	213%	182%
Georgia	1.517	0,02%	161.687	1,22%	830.184	3,15%	54625%	413%
Iran	349.655	5,17%	432.281	3,26%	1.134.965	4,31%	225%	163%
Iraq	15.363	0,23%	15.758	0,12%	250.130	0,95%	1528%	1487%
Syria	111.613	1,65%	126.428	0,95%	406.935	1,55%	265%	222%
Neigh. Total	**2.118.160**	**31,32%**	**3.396.378**	**25,64%**	**9.172.117**	**34,83%**	**333%**	**170%**
EU	3.182.641	47,06%	7.708.214	58,18%	14.871.907	56,47%	367%	93%
Maghreb	89.914	1,33%	135.296	1,02%	194.546	0,74%	116%	44%
Mashriq	182.451	2,70%	212.436	1,60%	593.217	2,25%	225%	179%
Israel	261.012	3,86%	270.262	2,04%	558.183	2,12%	113%	107%
Total	**533.377**	**7,89%**	**617.994**	**4,66%**	**1.345.946**	**5,11%**	**152%**	**118%**
Others	1.164.312	17,22%	1.931.769	14,58%	3.628.616	13,78%	266%	88%
Grand Total	**6.762.956**	**100%**	**13.248.176**	**100%**	**26.336.677**	**100%**	**289%**	**99%**

*Total entry from Commonwealth of Independent States

**EU-15 in 1995 and 2002; EU-27 in 2008. Data is not available for Malta and Cyprus.

***Maghreb: Morocco,Algeria,Tunisia,Libya; Mashriq: Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria

Source: T.C. Emniyet Genel Müdürlüğü

Table 4 – Foreign Trade between Turkey and its Neighbors in 1995, 2002, and 2008

TURKEY	1995				2002				2008				% of Inc.	% of Inc.
	Import	Export	Total	% of Tot	Import	Export	Total	% of Tot	Import	Export	Total	% of Tot	1995-2008	2002-2008
Bulgaria	311	142	453	1,02%	538	401	939	1,01%	1.232	1.456	2.688	1,19%	493%	186%
Greece	156	162	318	0,72%	334	622	956	1,03%	784	1.646	2.430	1,08%	664%	154%
Romania	285	233	518	1,17%	704	598	1.302	1,41%	2.375	2.693	5.068	2,24%	878%	289%
Moldova	12	6	18	0,04%	5	42	47	0,05%	49	135	184	0,08%	922%	291%
Russia	1.611	959	2.570	5,79%	4.107	1.255	5.362	5,79%	21.231	4.392	25.623	11,34%	897%	378%
Ukraine	663	153	816	1,84%	1.055	331	1.386	1,50%	4.090	1.482	5.572	2,47%	583%	302%
Azerbaijan	17	125	142	0,32%	70	245	315	0,34%	628	1.135	1.763	0,78%	1142%	460%
Georgia	39	53	92	0,21%	147	109	256	0,28%	353	682	1.035	0,46%	1025%	304%
Iran	534	208	742	1,67%	973	352	1.325	1,43%	5.536	1.382	6.918	3,06%	832%	422%
Iraq	-	97	97	0,22%	-	-	-	-	885	2.703	3.588	1,59%	3599%	-
Syria	200	211	411	0,93%	532	283	815	0,88%	428	766	1.194	0,53%	191%	47%
TOTAL	3.828	2.349	6.177	13,93%	8.465	4.238	12.703	13,72%	37.591	18.472	56.063	24,81%	808%	331%
EU	13.035	8.571	21.606	48,71%	24.601	19.503	44.104	47,62%	50.495	42.902	93.397	41,33%	332%	112%
G. TOTAL	27.614	16.742	44.356	100%	54.478	38.137	92.615	100%	136.441	89.559	226.000	100%	410%	144%

*millions euro

Source: TUIK

Table 5 – Foreign Trade between Turkey and Mediterranean Countries in 1995, 2002, and 2008

TURKEY		1995				2002				2008				% of Inc. 1995-2008	% of Inc. 2002-2008
		Import	Export	Total	% of Tot.	Import	Export	Total	% of Tot.	Import	Export	Total	% of Tot.		
MAGHREB	Algeria	346	209	555	1,25%	1.187	547	1.734	1,87%	2.211	1.110	3.321	1,47%	498%	92%
	Libya	298	184	482	1,09%	803	173	976	1,05%	227	731	958	0,42%	99%	-2%
	Morocco	41	51	92	0,21%	72	147	219	0,24%	242	641	883	0,39%	860%	304%
	Tunisia	36	62	98	0,22%	76	129	205	0,22%	242	529	771	0,34%	687%	276%
	TOTAL	721	506	1.227	2,77%	2.138	996	3.134	3,38%	2.922	3.011	5.933	2,63%	384%	89%
MASHRIQ	Egypt	162	190	352	0,79%	127	346	473	0,51%	632	975	1.607	0,71%	357%	240%
	Jordan	16	131	147	0,33%	20	123	143	0,15%	17	314	331	0,15%	125%	132%
	Lebanon	15	123	138	0,31%	44	198	242	0,26%	120	453	573	0,25%	315%	136%
	Syria	200	211	411	0,93%	532	283	815	0,88%	428	766	1.194	0,53%	191%	46%
	TOTAL	393	655	1.048	2,37%	723	950	1.673	1,81%	1.197	2.508	3.705	1,64%	254%	121%
	Israel	129	185	314	0,71%	581	910	1.491	1,61%	975	1.311	2.286	1,01%	628%	53%
	GRAND TOTAL	1.243	1.346	2.589	5,84%	3.442	2.856	6.298	6,80%	5.094	6.830	11.924	5,28%	361%	89%

*millions Euro
Source: TUIK

Table 6 – Turkish and EU Energy Imports (mineral fuels, lubricants, and other related materials) from Mashriq and Mahgreb Countries

	Turkey				EU			
	1995		2008		1995		2008	
	Total	% of Grand Tot.	Total	% of Grand Tot.	Total	% of Grand Tot.	Total	% of Grand Tot.
Maghreb	625	86,67%	2.171	74,30%	10.380	57,63%	53.304	65,57%
Mashriq	271	68,89%	406	33,80%	2.474	59,32%	7.201	57,60%
Israel	2	1,42%	160	16,37%	38	0,82%	944	8,39%
TOTAL	898	72,19%	2.737	53,72%	12.892	48,03%	61.449	58,50%

*millions Euro

Source: TUIK and EUROSTAT

FILLING THE VACUUM:
A TRANSATLANTIC VIEW OF TURKEY IN THE MIDDLE EAST

Nathalie Tocci

Introduction

Turkey's rediscovery of the Mediterranean and the Middle East has attracted much attention lately. Whether the cause is praise, interest, or concern, the academic, policy, and media worlds have turned to the issue. Turkey's strategic cooperation councils established with Syria and Iraq; its visa-free agreements with Libya, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, and Syria; its ambitions to create a free trade and visa zone with Lebanon, Syria, and Jordan; and its mediation attempts between Israel, Hamas, and Syria have all solicited interest and applause. At the same time, the tensions with Israel, the open political channels to Hamas and Hizbollah, and the apparent warmth towards the Iranian regime have raised eyebrows, particularly amongst conservative circles in the United States and Europe.

Addressing these developments with a transatlantic perspective, this paper tackles two questions. First, what have been the U.S.-inspired causes of the transformation of Turkey's Middle East policies? Turkey's rediscovery of its southern neighborhood can be attributed to a significant degree to domestic economic, political, and societal determinants. As emerges fully in Meliha Benli Altunışık's and Kemal Kirişci's contributions to this paper series, Turkey is very much an agent in its own right. Without belittling this domestic level of analysis, however, many have been the international and, in particular, U.S.-inspired triggers of Turkey's role in the Middle East.

Second, and turning to the other side of the Atlantic, what have the implications of this transformation in Turkish foreign policy been on Turkey's relationship with the European Union?

1 Mapping the Evolution of U.S. and Turkish Policies in the Middle East

American Hard Power and the Impact on Turkish Foreign Policy

The Cold War had only just come to an end when a new hot war erupted on Turkey's doorstep: the August 1990 Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, which triggered a UN-mandated and U.S.-led military intervention to expel Iraqi forces from Kuwait. Turkey's cooperation in the Gulf War effort and the ensuing U.S. policy towards the region provided Ankara with the opportunity to reconfirm its strategic value to the West.[1] Yet while doing so, the Gulf War also gave way to Turkey's assertiveness in the Middle East.[2] In view of the aggravation of the insurgency of the Kurdish Workers' Party (PKK) in Turkey after the emergence of a de facto autonomous Northern Iraq, the first Gulf war opened the way to regular Turkish military incursions into Iraq to destroy PKK bases.[3] The U.S. refrained from criticizing Turkey's anti-PKK incursions as a tacit quid pro quo for Turkey's reluctant acceptance of Northern Iraq's de facto autonomy (and its six monthly renewal vote on the U.S./U.K. use of the Incirlik base to monitor the no-fly zones in Iraq).

The Gulf War and its implications not only induced Turkey to intervene militarily in Iraq, it also aggravated relations with two other neighbors: Syria and Iran. Secularist Turkey's relations with Iran had been strained since the 1979 Islamic revolution, but in the 1990s, Iran's implicit tolerance of the PKK exacerbated tensions with Turkey.[4] This went to the point of Turkish war threats in the mid-1990s and air raids against PKK camps in Iran in 1994 and 1999.[5] The post-Gulf War evolution of the Kurdish question also aggravated Turkish-Syrian relations, already strained by Syria's historical grievances over the Turkish province of Hatay and the long-standing dispute over the waters of the Euphrates River.[6] Between the late 1980s and 1998, Turkey argued that Syria was the PKK's major backer, harboring PKK leader Abdullah Öcalan, and accused Damascus of using the PKK to exert pressure on Turkey regarding the dispute over the Euphrates. The climax came in October 1998 when Turkey mobilized 10,000 troops on the Syrian border, forcing Damascus to change its strategy on the PKK. This led to Öcalan's expulsion from Syria, the closing down of PKK camps in the country, and the end of Syrian logistical support to the PKK, as well as the signature of the Adana Agreement establishing Turkish-Syrian security mechanisms.

The deterioration of Turkish-Syrian relations in the 1990s triggered Turkey's alliance with Syria's foe,

[1] Barkey, H. J. (2003), "The Endless Pursuit: Improving U.S.-Turkey Relations", in M. Abramowitz (ed.), *The United States and Turkey: Allies in Need*, Washington, The Century Foundation, pp. 207-249.

[2] Makovsky, A. (1999), "The New Activism in Turkish Foreign Policy", *SAIS Review*, Vol. 19, No.1, pp. 92-113.

[3] Lundgren, A. (2007), *Unwelcome Neighbour. Turkey's Kurdish Policy*, London, I. B. Tauris.

[4] Aras, B. (2001), "Turkish Foreign Policy Towards Iran: Ideology and Foreign Policy in Flux", *Journal of Third World Studies*, Vol. 18, No. 1, pp. 105-124.

[5] Larrabee, S. and Lesser, I. O. (2001), *Turkish Foreign Policy in an Age of Uncertainty*, Santa Monica, RAND, p. 148.

[6] Altunışık, M. and Tür, Ö. (2006), "From distant neighbours to partners? Changing Syrian-Turkish relations", *Security Dialogue*, Vol. 37, No.2, pp.229-48.

Israel.[7] From a Turkish perspective, an alliance with Israel both rallied favor in Washington and mounted pressure on Damascus. Hence, between 1993 and 1996, Turkey and Israel signed a framework agreement encompassing tourism, economic cooperation, and educational exchanges, an agreement on environmental cooperation, and a free trade agreement. Most significantly, in February 1996, the two signed a military training and cooperation agreement, which was followed by further agreements on military technology transfers, joint military research, regular strategic dialogue, and military exercises.

While antagonism towards Syria provided the rationale for Turkey's alliance with Israel, the launch of the U.S.-led Arab-Israeli peace process through the 1991 Madrid conference and the 1993 Declaration of Principles made the alliance politically feasible.[8] The Turkish public has traditionally been sensitive to the Palestinian question, rendering a military alignment with Israel a hard sell domestically. [9] The peace process and the climate of hope it brought to the Middle East facilitated the Turkish-Israeli alliance. In the context of the peace process, Turkey participated in the Arms Control and Regional Security Working Group of the Madrid multilateral process and in 1997 joined the Temporary International Presence in Hebron. Turkey has also provided economic assistance to the nascent Palestinian Authority.

The importance of the Middle East Peace Process as the bedrock on which the Turkish-Israeli relationship was founded has become increasingly evident since its collapse in the 21st century.[10] Particularly since 2009, relations have been hampered by Turkish accusations of Israel's conduct in the Israeli-Arab conflict[11] and Israeli rhetorical retaliation.[12] The crisis deepened further in June 2010 when the Mavi Marmara incident catapulted Turkish-Israeli tensions into a full-blown bilateral conflict. Today, the Turkish-Israeli relationship seems to have undergone a structural turn. This does not necessarily mean that Turkish-Israeli

[7] Bengio, O. (2010), *The Turkish-Israeli Relationship: Changing Ties of Middle Eastern Outsiders*, London, Palgrave.

[8] Kirişci, K. (2001b), "The Future of Turkish Policy in the Middle East," in B. Rubin and K. Kirişci (eds.), *Turkey in World Politics. An Emerging Regional Power*, Boulder, Lynne Reiner, pp. 93-114, p. 101.

[9] Bali Aykan, M. (1993), "The Palestinian Question in Turkish Foreign Policy from the 1950s to the 1990s," *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Vol. 25, No. 1, pp. 91-110.

[10] Öktem, K. (2009), "Turkey and Israel: ends and beginnings", *Open Democracy*, December 10, 2009, available at: www.opendemocracy.net (accessed December 2009).

[11] In 2002, Turkish Prime Minister Bülent Ecevit described Israel's attack on Jenin as "genocide." Most notoriously, at the Davos World Economic Forum in January 2009, Prime Minister Tayyip Erdoğan vehemently criticized his co-panelist Israeli President Shimon Peres for Israel's war crimes committed during Operation Cast Lead in Gaza.

[12] In response to Turkey's cancellation of an invitation to Israel to participate in the joint military exercise "Anatolian Eagle" and an episode of a Turkish TV series (*Ayrılık*) showing Israeli forces targeting Palestinian children, Israeli Foreign Minister Avigdor Lieberman declared that not even an "enemy country" would dare act this way. Relations foundered further in January 2010 when Deputy Foreign Minister Danny Ayalon publicly humiliated the Turkish Ambassador in Tel Aviv.

relations will be bad, let alone that the manifold ties between Turkey and Israel will be broken.[13] But, with the magic of Oslo gone and Turkey's relationship with Syria and the Arab world no longer marked by tension, it does mean that the Turkish-Israeli relationship is unlikely to have the military-strategic flavor of the 1990s.

In the 21st century, another U.S.-driven development was to shape Turkey's role in the Middle East most dramatically: the 2003 war in Iraq. Simply put, whereas the first Gulf war reconfirmed Turkey's strategic value to the West but also induced Turkish assertiveness in the Middle East, the second war created a vacuum in the region that Turkey readily filled, at times in line with U.S. policy, at times not. The 1990-91 war created far more problems than originally anticipated by Ankara. In turn, there was no Turkish appetite for war in the 21st century. Hence, in the run-up to the 2003 U.S. invasion of Iraq, Turkey not only opposed the war, but actually felt compelled to engage its neighbors to prevent it and deter neoconservative ambitions to redraw the Middle East. It is in this context that Turkey promoted the Conference of Iraq's Neighbors in January 2003[14] and thereafter fostered regional integration between itself, Iraq, Iran, and Syria.

More specifically, the 2003 U.S.-led war transformed the Kurdish issue and concerns over Iraq's territorial integrity into a cause for unity between Iraq's neighbors. The war definitively overturned Syria's and Iran's position on the PKK, [15] transforming the Kurdish question into an area of convergent interests between Turkey, Iran, and Syria. In the 2000s, Turkey and Iran cooperated in the security realm.[16] In the case of Syria, with bilateral ties improving steadily after the 1998 Adana Agreement to the point that Turkish President Ahmet Necdet Sezer attended Syrian President Hafez al-Assad's funeral in 2000, joint concerns over Iraq's territorial integrity alongside Turkey's defiance of U.S. efforts to isolate Syria in 2003-2005[17] fostered closer bilateral relations. These culminated in the establishment of a Strategic Cooperation Council in October 2009.[18] Turkish-

[13] International Crisis Group (2010), "Turkey's Crisis over Israel and Iran", *Europe Report*, No. 208, 8 September, Brussels and Istanbul, p. 16.

[14] Including Turkey, Egypt, Iran, Jordan, Syria, and Saudi Arabia.

[15] Following the war, Kurdish riots erupted in northeast Syria in April 2004 and Syrian Kurds have increasingly called for more rights. Iran instead became subject to attacks by the PKK's sister organization PJAK. While agnostic (or supportive) to the sectarianization of Iraq, Iran, like Turkey and Syria, is against an independent Iraqi Kurdistan.

[16] Larrabee, S. (2007), "Turkey Rediscovers the Middle East", *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 86, No. 4, pp. 103-114, p. 113.

[17] Syria appreciated Turkey's opening at a time when Damascus was facing increasing isolation from the United States through the December 2003 Syria Accountability Act, followed by broader American and European accusations of Syria's involvement in the assassination of former Lebanese Prime Minister Refik Hariri in February 2005.

[18] The Strategic Cooperation Council covers culture, economics, energy, transport, tourism, education, science, customs, defense, water, and the environment. It is presided over by the two heads of state and government and includes regular ministerial meetings.

Iraqi cooperation also picked up, albeit later. U.S.-Iraqi-Turkish cooperation in the fight against the PKK after 2007, alongside the U.S. military withdrawal from Iraq in a context of ongoing instability in the country ushered in a burgeoning relationship between Turkey and Iraq and, in particular, the Kurdish Regional Government (KRG).[19] With Turkey's growing acknowledgement that its Kurdish problem cannot be solved through the military alone, the KRG has become an indispensable element in Turkey's Kurdish policy. Since 2007-2008, Turkey has come to accept Iraqi Kurdish autonomy, established official ties with the KRG, and deepened its social, political, and economic influence in Iraq. The creation of an High-Level Strategic Cooperation Council in 2009 between Turkey and Iraq epitomizes how far these two former rivals have come in recent years.

The 2003 war in Iraq not only opened the way for Turkey's improved relations with its Middle Eastern neighbors. It also generated the collapse of the United States' reputation and a dramatic reduction in the time and attention the country devoted to peacemaking, creating a mediation vacuum in the region. Turkey stepped in. The most important case was Turkey's mediation between Israel and Syria, which began at Track II level in January 2004 and culminated in four rounds of shuttle diplomacy in 2008. The climax came at a dinner between the Turkish prime minister and his Israeli counterpart on December 23, 2008, in which direct talks appeared to be in the offing. Five days later, Israel launched Operation Cast Lead on Gaza and the process broke down.[20]

Turkey also mediated between Israel and Hamas. In view of Turkey's open political channels to Hamas (and in particular its political bureau in Damascus), Ankara offered to mediate on two occasions. The first was in the aftermath of Hamas' capture of Israeli soldier Gilad Shalit in June 2006; the second was in the midst of Operation Cast Lead in December 2008-January 2009. On both occasions, Turkey failed to reach a deal. Yet its presence in mediation was due precisely to the absence of the United States (and the EU) as a result of their official boycott of (and thus lack of leverage on) Hamas.

Thus, while the 1990-2001 Gulf War triggered renewed emphasis on Turkish-American strategic cooperation, it also paved the way for Turkish assertiveness in the Middle East. By contrast, the 2003 war in Iraq unleashed different dynamics, which have included Turkey's attempts to foster regional integration with its southern neighbors and its ventures into the choppy waters of mediation, at times, but not always, in sync with the United States. Indeed, whereas the United States has continued to focus on negotiations between Israel and the Palestinian Authority (under both the Bush

[19] Barkey, H. J. (2010), *Turkey's New Engagement in Iraq*, Special Report, No. 237, Washington, United States Institute for Peace.

[20] For further details see Kirisci, K., Tocci, N., and Walker, J. (2010), "A Neighborhood Rediscovered: Turkey's transatlantic value in the Middle East", Brussels Forum Paper Series, available at: http://www.gmfus.org/galleries/ct_publication_attachments/TransatlanticAcademyKirsiciTocciWalkerBFPaperTurkeyNeighborhood.pdf;jsessionid=a4SdniMgQUI7AeYyEL (accessed 30 March 2010).

and Obama administrations), mediation of critical conflict hubs — Israel-Hamas and Israel-Syria-Lebanon — remains a field left fallow.

American Soft Power and the Impact on Turkish Foreign Policy

Beyond the hard power manifestations in two Gulf wars, the United States has also had an impact on Turkish foreign policy through its exercise of soft power. Riding the wave of liberal optimism in the early post-Cold War period, the Clinton administration engaged in democracy promotion policies. At the time, the principal targets of these policies were the countries in the former Soviet space. While initially shunning Clinton's "nation-building" policies, following the September 11, 2001, attacks, President George W. Bush put democracy promotion back on the agenda. Far from being framed in the liberal discourse of the 1990s, democracy promotion became part of security policies in the post 9/11 world. At the declaratory level, the Bush administration forcefully committed itself to the promotion of democracy in the Muslim world as an antidote to violence and extremism. More specifically, in view of the 2003 war in Iraq (and the absence of alleged WMDs), democracy promotion became a legitimizing vehicle for U.S. policies in Iraq and what became labeled as the "Broader Middle East," stretching from Pakistan to Morocco.

Within this policy construction, Turkey occupied a special place, as a shining model of a Muslim, secular and (imperfectly) democratic republic. As Bush put it in Istanbul, "Turkey as a strong, secular democracy, a majority Muslim society, and a close ally of free nations… stands as a model to others."[21] Particularly in his first term, Bush engaged Turkey in a set of initiatives, including the Broader Middle East and North Africa Initiative, NATO's Istanbul Cooperative Initiative, and the G8 Partnership for Progress and Common Future with the Region of the Broader Middle East and North Africa, in which Turkey supported the Democracy Assistance Dialogue.[22] Although articulated with greater caution, the "Turkey as a model" mantra continues to permeate American debates on Turkey under the Obama administration. Hence, for example, in March 2009, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton argued that "Turkey is a democracy with a secular constitution, and is a model showing that Islam can indeed live together with secularism and democracy."[23]

Not all actors in Turkey were comfortable with their country's designated role as a model. The Justice and Development Party (AKP) government played along to Washington's tune, arguing, in the words of Prime Minister Erdoğan, that "the Turkish experience does have a substance which can serve as a

[21] Bush, G. W. (2003) Office of the Press Secretary, The White House, "President Bush Discusses Freedom in Iraq and Middle East," *Remarks by the President at the 20th Anniversary of the National Endowment for Democracy*, National Endowment for Democracy, Washington, November 6, www.ned.org/events/anniversary/20thAniv-Bush.html (accessed March 2010).

[22] Akçapar, B., Akgün, M., Altunışık, M., Kadıoğlu, A. (2004), *The debate on democratization in the Broader Middle East and North Africa*, Istanbul, TESEV.

[23] "Interview by Mehmet Al Birand with Secretary of State Hillary Clinton," *BBC Monitoring Europe*, 8 March 2009.

source of inspiration for other Muslim societies."[24] But the secularist sectors in Turkey instead viewed it as a deliberate undermining of Turkey's secular character and as a demeaning association with the "backward" Muslim world.[25]

Nevertheless, the discourse on Turkey as a "model" or, more modestly, as a "source of inspiration" for the Broader Middle East, did sink in within Turkey and beyond.[26] As discussed by Kirişci in this series, this has led to democracy promotion-like activities by Turkish officials and civil society actors.[27] Turkey's improving relations with its southern neighbors have already spilled into the field of governance, whereby countries such as Iraq and Syria have explored the possible application of Turkey's regulations in the banking and educational sectors in their countries. Turkey's liberal visa regime has attracted tens of thousands of foreign students to Turkey. The Turkish media is voraciously watched throughout the Middle East.[28] The Turkish development agency, TIKA, includes projects on "good governance," "transparency," and "rule of law."[29] At the political level, high-ranking Turkish personalities have given passionate and well-received speeches on democracy in the Muslim world.[30]

[24] Erdoğan, T. (2004), "Conservative Democracy and the Globalization of Freedom," *Speech at the American Enterprise Institute*, January 29.

[25] Taşpınar, Ö. (2007), "The Old Turks Revolt," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 86, No. 6, November/December, pp. 114-130, p. 119.

[26] Altunışık, M. (2005), "The Turkish Model and Democratization in the Middle East," *Arab Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 27, No. 1-2, pp. 45-63.

[27] Kirişci, K. (2010), "A New Perspective on Democracy Assistance: Lessons Learned from the Turkish Experience," paper presented at the Panel on "Turkish Soft Power," *ISA Convention 2010*, New Orleans, February 18.

[28] Al Sharif, Y. and Saha, S. (2009), "Turkey's European Membership: The Arab perspective, Notes from the Arab Media," *Reflections of EU-Turkey Relations in the Muslim World*, Istanbul, Open Society Foundation.

[29] Kirişci, K. (2010), *op. cit.*

[30] *Ivi.*

2 Exploring European Reactions to American and Turkish Foreign Policies in the Neighborhood

Through its exercise of both hard and soft power, the United States has shaped developments in the southern Mediterranean and the Middle East and has been an important determinant of Turkish foreign policy in the region. Naturally, it would be mistaken to view the United States as the sole, or even the primary, determinant of Turkish foreign policy. The latter is principally shaped by developments within Turkey itself, some of which are influenced by the United States, some not. Nonetheless, the United States represents an important force influencing the overall regional structure in which Turkey operates. The upshot of this transformation in Turkish foreign policy is an increased readiness both to engage the Mediterranean region and to diverge from the United States when the latter's policies are perceived as countering Turkish interests. How have Europeans responded to these developments in Turkish foreign policy and in Turkey's southern neighborhood? What are the implications for Turkey's place in the EU?

American Hard Power, Turkish Foreign Policy, and European Reactions

The wars in the Gulf, most poignantly the 2003 war in Iraq, were largely perceived in Europe as a trigger for destabilization on Europe's borders. Those member states' executives that approved of and participated in the 2003 war (e.g., Tony Blair's U.K. and José Maria Aznar's Spain) initially accepted and reproduced the narrative that war was the only recipe to eliminate a threat (i.e., WMDs) and kick-start democracy in Iraq and the broader region. Yet most EU governments either accepted the war in deference to the United States or adamantly rejected it as an unwarranted destabilization of the Middle East with dangerous spill-over effects on Europe. The latter view was shared by the vast majority of the European public, which mobilized massively against the war in street demonstrations in the winter of 2002-2003. Following the outbreak of the war, the kidnappings of Western civilians, the sectarianization of Iraq, the years-long insurgency, and ongoing violence and political instability were all perceived as destabilizing Europe's southeastern frontiers.

The realization that Turkey's EU membership would bring that instability to the EU's southeastern border had two principal implications for EU-Turkey relations. First, the destabilization of Iraq influenced the debate on the EU's borders. The European debate on borders was sparked by the eastern enlargement, the queuing up of a host of aspirant countries further east, and the ensuing debate over the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP). In the final stages of the eastern enlargement, former Commission President Romano Prodi called for the definition of the EU's external borders so as to avoid "water(ing) down the European political project."[31] He was echoed by German Chancellor Angela Merkel in 2006 who declared that "an entity that does not have borders cannot act coherently and with adequate structures. We

[31] Prodi, R. (2002), *A Wider Europe. A Proximity Policy as the key to stability*, Speech given at the Sixth ECSA World Conference on peace, stability, and security, Brussels, December 5, available at: http://ec.europa.eu/comm/external_relations/news/prodi/sp02_619.htm (accessed June 2003).

must… set out these borders."[32] Above all, French President Nicolas Sarzoky has repeatedly argued in favor of the definition of Europe's "final" frontiers.[33] In this context, instability in Iraq interlocked with the border debate in the EU to Turkey's net disadvantage. Some argued that there is nothing fundamentally destabilizing in having the EU's frontiers extend to the Middle East and that precisely because of instability in that region, Turkey's membership is all the more important.[34] To many others, however, instability in Iraq validated the claim that the EU's borders should lie along the Meriç/Maritsa River between Greece and Turkey and not along the Habur crossing between Turkey and Iraq. The war in Iraq persuaded many in Europe that Turkey, with its mighty army, should act as a friendly *cordon sanitaire* for the Union.[35]

Hence, as Barkey put it, "it is therefore ironic that after arguing for decades that Turkey is a European country, the United States through its Iraq invasion has in one bold stroke managed to push Turkey back into the Middle East in the eyes of many Europeans."[36]

Second, Turkey's reactions to the war in Iraq and its aftermath have also affected European perceptions of Turkey's EU membership prospects. As discussed above, the 2003 war in Iraq opened the way for Turkey's increasing cooperation with its southern neighbors. Turkey's improving relationship with the KRG in Northern Iraq has been openly appreciated by the European Commission.[37] Turkey's cooperation with its southern neighbors reflects both the EU's own vision embodied in the ENP and the norms of a "Europeanized" Turkish foreign policy.[38] The same can be said of Turkey's newfound propensity to engage in mediation. In the midst of Operation Cast Lead in Gaza, French

[32] Merkel, A. (2006), *European Policy Statement by Federal Chancellor Angela Merkel in the German Bundestag*, May 11, available at: http://www.bundesregierung.de/en/-,10001.1003386/regierungserklaerung/European-Policy-Statement-by-F.htm (accessed October 2009).

[33] Sarkozy, N. (2007), "Je veux que l'Europe change," *Union pour un Mouvement Populaire*, February 21, Strasbourg, available at: http://www.u-m-p.org/site/index.php/s_informer/discours/je_veux_que_l_europe_change (accessed October 2009).

[34] Independent Commission on Turkey (2009), *Turkey in the EU: Breaking the Vicious Circle*, Second Report, Open Society Institute and British Council, Istanbul, September 2009, p. 26.

[35] Barkey, H. J. and Le Gloannec, A. (2005), "The Strategic Implications of Turkey's Integration in the European Union," in E. Brimmer and S. Fröhlich (eds.), *The Strategic Implications of European Union Enlargement*, Washington, Centre for Transatlantic Relations, pp. 127-150, p. 138.

[36] Barkey, H. J. (2008), "The effect of U.S. policy in the Middle East on EU-Turkey relations," in N. Tocci (ed.), *Talking Turkey in Europe: Towards a Differentiated Communication Strategy*, Rome, IAI Quaderni, p. 199, available at: http://www.iai.it/sections/pubblicazioni/iai_quaderni/Indici/quaderno_E_13.htm (accessed September 2009).

[37] Commission of the EC (2009), *Turkey 2009 Progress Report*, Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament, Enlargement Strategy and Main Challenges 2009–2010, Brussels, COM(2009) 533, p. 30, available at: http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/candidate-countries/turkey/key-documents/index_en.htm (accessed November 2009).

[38] Özcan, M. (2008), *Harmonizing Foreign Policy: Turkey, the European Union and the Middle East*, Aldershot, Ashgate.

President Nicolas Sarkozy, a notable opponent of Turkey's EU bid, expressly invited Turkey's involvement.[39] Following the end of the Israeli offensive in January 2009, Turkey's efforts were openly praised by France and the EU.[40] Even on the Iranian nuclear dossier — on which Turkey, the EU (and the U.S.) have not always seen eye to eye — U.K. Prime Minister David Cameron deemed Turkey the "European country with the greatest chance of persuading Iran."[41] At EU level, Turkey's mediation efforts have been appreciated by the Council of Ministers and the European Commission. In recognition of Turkey's enhanced foreign policy in the Middle East and beyond, at an informal meeting in September 2010, EU Foreign Ministers proposed to their Turkish counterpart to establish an EU-Turkey "strategic dialogue" on foreign policy matters.

However, the widespread European appreciation of Turkey's foreign policy activism has not generated a clear-cut increase in support for Turkey's EU membership. Those supportive of Turkey's foreign policy in the Middle East have questioned whether Turkey would be willing to comply with common EU foreign policy positions.[42] Will an increasingly active and independent Turkey, as elaborated at length in Altunışık and Kirişci's papers, be willing to sit on a par with small member states such as Finland or Portugal? Will it reverse foreign policies that contravene the EU consensus but are in Turkey's national interest, as well as in the general interest of the region, such as Turkey's visa liberalization policy? Others have argued instead that the successes in Turkish foreign policy reconfirm the logic of keeping Turkey outside the EU. Put bluntly, Muslim countries may be more inclined to listen to Ankara than to Brussels in view of the cultural, historical, and religious bonds tying Turkey to the Middle East, proving that Turkey can be more useful as an ally than as a member of the EU.[43] Furthermore, the accession process may represent an unwieldy straight-jacket to effective EU-Turkey cooperation in the foreign policy realm. In other words, an independent and perhaps even non-aligned Turkey in the Middle East, mediating between the West (and Western-backed states like Israel) and others, may represent a significant value-added to the EU (and the United States), but sits at odds with the implications and obligations of EU member Turkey.

Others have been more outspokenly critical of Turkey's opening to its south. The "Who lost Turkey?" debate raging in the United States has caught on in several European quarters, which have watched with consternation the deterioration of Turkish-Israeli ties, Ankara's warmth towards Iran, and its rejection of UNSC sanctions on Iran in June 2010. Whether openly articulated or silently

[39] "Turkish PM speaks to Sarkozy on the phone," *Time Turk English*, January 7, 2009.

[40] "Turkey key to convincing Hamas on Gaza cease-fire," *Turkey NY.com*, January 20, 2009.

[41] International Crisis Group (2010), *Turkey's Crisis over Israel and Iran*, Europe Report, No. 208, September 8, Brussels and Istanbul, p.14.

[42] Kramer, H. (2010), *AKP's "new" foreign policy between vision and pragmatism*, Working paper, June 1, 2010, Berlin, SWP.

[43] Conversation with French diplomat, Washington, March 2010.

suspected, the belief is that the Europe may be "losing" Turkey and Turkey's EU vocation, as Turkey becomes increasingly "Islamic" and abandons the Kemalist tenet of "Westernization."[44] What is true, however, is that in an ironic twist, the growing concern of "losing" Turkey has induced some European leaders to redirect their attention to Turkey's ailing accession process. The concern of "losing Turkey" has not been openly discussed in official EU meetings, but it is sufficiently in the air to trigger a renewed sense of urgency in debates on Turkey within the EU Council.[45] Nevertheless, to date, this sense of urgency has not crystallized into an EU resolve to spur Turkey's moribund accession process.

American Soft Power, Turkish Foreign Policy, and European Reactions

Particularly in the post 9/11 context, American policy-makers, analysts, journalists, and intellectuals described Turkey as a "model" for the Muslim world in so far as it represents an example of a Muslim country with a functioning (albeit imperfect) democratic system. The articulation of Turkey as a model and the U.S. (and Turkish) policies that this has given rise to are formulated within a broader discursive framework that dawned with the end of the Cold War and consolidated after the attacks of 9/11: the designation of Islam(ism) as a threat to Western values and interests, and the associated notion of an ineluctable "clash of civilizations."

It would be grossly simplistic to view the articulation of this mental framework as originating exclusively in the United States. Civilizational notions are prominent not only there, but also in the EU, Turkey, and the Middle East. Yet in view of its status in the international system, its leadership of the "West," and its conceptualization of the "War on Terror," the United States occupies a special place at the heart of this civilizational discourse and its transformation into a successful political myth with monumental ramifications on international relations.[46]

This civilizational discourse has given rise to a wide variety of actions, including coercive efforts at regime change, hyper-securitized homeland security policies, and human rights abuses in Guantanamo Bay and Abu Ghraib. It has also given rise to "softer" initiatives, including revamped democracy promotion policies in the Muslim world, aimed at eradicating the "root causes" of terrorism. It is in this latter set of policies that the notion of "Turkey as a model" fits. Yet underpinning both hard and soft policies is the same premise: the notion of the "West" confronting "Islam" within the prism of the "clash of civilizations." Both the West and Islam are conceptualized as being engaged in a perennial struggle: unidimensional agents defined exclusively by religion. Turkey belongs to the camp of the "other." But as an ally with the added value of being

[44] Interviews with a French scholar and a French journalist, Paris, March 2010. Interview with a Spanish diplomat, Washington, March 2010. Conversation with a British diplomat, Washington, March 2010.

[45] Conversation with a German diplomat, Berlin, June 2010, and a Commission official, Brussels, June 2010.

[46] Challand, B. and Bottici, C. (2010), *The Myth of the Clash of Civilizations*, London, Routledge.

a democracy, it can usefully assist the Christian West in pursuing its democratization policies within the paradigm of the clash of civilizations.

Europe has not simply reacted to but has also participated in the articulation of this civilizational prism of viewing the world. The argument of Turkey being a model for the Muslim world and a recipe for countering the presumed clash of civilizations did find some receptive ears in the EU. Two former European commissioners put it eloquently. In 2004, External Relations Commissioner Chris Patten argued in favor of Turkey's EU membership on the grounds that "we cannot help but be conscious of the symbolism, at this time, of reaching out a hand to a country whose population is overwhelmingly Muslim."[47] He continued,"we can't say you can't come in, no Muslims allowed, ours is a Christian club."[48] Patten was echoed by Enlargement Commissioner Olli Rehn. "The accession of Turkey could pave the way for lasting peace between Europe and Islam."[49] The same point was made by then British Prime Minister Tony Blair when arguing that the opening of Turkey's accession negotiations "show[ed] that those who believe that there is a clash of civilizations between Christians and Muslims are wrong."[50] More recently, German Christian Democrat Ruprecht Polenz, chairman of the Bundestag's Committee on Foreign Affairs, argued, "the message is that Europe does not want a clash of cultures because we are able to incorporate countries like Turkey."[51]

On the whole, however, the American overemphasis on Turkey's Muslim nature had a boomerang effect on the Union. Arguing that Turkey ought to enter the EU because it is Muslim backfired with those on the conservative center-right and the xenophobic right, who espouse a religion-driven view of Europe, as well as with those on the liberal centre and the left, who highlight the EU's secular nature.[52] In the case of the right, emphasizing Turkey's identity as "Muslim" underscored the Union's identity as "Christian." Turkey belonged to the "other" and had no place in the EU's civilizational project. For those on the left who stress the secular nature of the EU's identity, pinpointing Turkey's "Muslim" nature is also problematic. As argued by Moisi, "When Europeans look at Islam today, they are

[47] "Patten tries to soothe West-Islam links - EU Commissioner's Plea," *Financial Times*, May 25, 2004.

[48] "EU turns up heat on Turkey as decision loom," *The International Herald Tribune*, September 18, 2004.

[49] Rehn, O. (2006), *Turkey's Accession Process to the EU*, Lecture at Helsinki University, Helsinki, November 27, available at: http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=SPEECH/06/747&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en (accessed October 2009).

[50] Quoted in the *Sunday Express*, December 19, 2004, p. 19.

[51] "Turkey's entry into EU will present model against clash of cultures," *Today's Zaman*, July 5, 2010.

[52] Casanova, J. (2006),"The Long, Difficult, and Tortuous Journey of Turkey into Europe and the Dilemmas of European Civilization," *Constellations*, Vol. 13, No. 2, pp. 234-247; Hurd-Shakman, E. (2006), "Negotiating Europe: the politics of religion and the prospects for Turkish accession," *Review of International Studies*, Vol. 32, pp. 401-418.

reminded of their own zealotry and wars of religion in the 16th and 17th centuries."[53]

Overall, the appropriation of the civilizational discourse in Europe has had the most potent and negative impact on Turkey's prospects for EU accession. According to this discourse, Turkey should be rejected because its borders lie within the Muslim Middle East, because its cultural-religious distinctiveness would disrupt the EU's institutional cohesion, because its Muslim character means that it is incapable of fulfilling EU criteria. Muslim Turkey could and should thus be an inspirational model for the Muslim East. By definition, however, it is incapable of meeting the EU's "standards of civilization."[54] Turkey is viewed as "*bon pour l'Orient*," but not for the EU. Or as put by French President Nicolas Sarkozy, "Turkey is a great civilization; but it's not a European one."[55]

[53] Moisi, D. (2007), "The Clash of Emotions," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 86, No. 1, Jan/Feb, pp. 1-5

[54] Jung, D. (2008), "Danish Stakeholders in the EU-Turkey Debate," in N. Tocci (ed.), *Talking Turkey in Europe: towards a differentiated communication strategy*, *op. cit.*

[55] "Interview with Sarkozy," *International Herald Tribune*, January 31, 2007.

3 Repercussions of American Foreign Policy on EU-Turkey Relations

Turkey's recent activism in the Middle East has multiple causes. The United States features amongst them. Expressions of American hard and soft power in the Middle East, epitomized by two Gulf wars and democracy promotion policies, respectively, contributed to creating a vacuum in the region that Turkey has willingly filled. These developments have had important implications on EU-Turkey relations. The destabilization of Iraq has interlocked with the European debate on the EU's borders to Turkey's disadvantage. Turkey's increasingly active role in the Middle East, including its steadily improving ties with its southern neighbors and its mediation efforts, while praised by many, have fed the notion of Turkey as a useful Middle Eastern ally rather than a fellow member of the EU: Turkey as a "privileged outsider" rather than a "natural insider" in Europe. Even more starkly, the conceptualization of Turkey as a model for the Muslim world and the broader discursive framework of the "clash of civilizations" in which it is embedded have represented a critical impediment to Turkey's EU membership.

What does this entail? When the Obama administration came to power in 2009, significant effort was exerted to rehabilitate Turkish-American relations, which had been severely damaged by the 2003 Iraq war and its aftermath. To be fair, the rehabilitation had already begun during the last years of the Bush presidency, when in 2007, Turkey and the United States stepped up efforts to confront the PKK. Building on this, the Obama administration set out to elevate its relationship with Turkey to that of a "model partnership." Alongside Turkey itself, the Turkish-American relationship was also heralded as a "model." Hence President Obama's acclaimed speech at the Turkish Grand National Assembly in April 2009, the concerted U.S. efforts at brokering a Turkish-Armenian rapprochement, and Turkish-American cooperation in Iraq and Afghanistan. In fall of 2009 and throughout 2010, however, the house of cards came tumbling down. Only two years into President Obama's mandate, U.S.-Turkey relations, which appeared to have touched rock-bottom in 2003, are under severe strain again as a result of Turkey's policies towards Israel, and Iran in particular. Despite the continuing imperative to collaborate with Turkey on Iraq and Afghanistan, many, including senior members of the administration, have written off the Turkish government as a reliable partner. Within the broader strategic community in Washington, cries of Turkey's "drift," "loss," or "slide" to the East and away from the West have poisoned debate.

Many in the United States have also observed the deepening standstill in Turkish-EU relations. Indeed, Turkey's EU accession process is in profound crisis. To date, Turkey has opened a mere 13 out of 35 chapters in its negotiations, and has provisionally closed only one. All in all, no less than 18 out of 35 chapters are in the deep-freeze and only three chapters can be opened in the months ahead. To all extents and purposes, by mid-2011, Turkey's accession negotiations will have ground to a complete halt.

This situation has engendered two types of reactions across the Atlantic. Pessimists, ranging from agnostic realists to ideological neoconservatives, have abandoned hope for Turkey's accession process. Be this because of their conviction that the EU will never accept Turkey into its fold or that Turkey will inexorably drift toward the East, some have started viewing Turkish-American (and

Turkish-European) relations through the prism of a functional ad hoc partnership in which cooperation can take place only when the parties' interests happen to coincide. Many others, instead, believe that precisely because of the strain in Turkish-American relations, the EU anchor is all the more important today. Turkey's EU membership would enable the EU to face the strategic challenges in its neighborhood and beyond, adding weight and assets to the broader Western alliance. The synergies would be reciprocal, given that through its EU membership, Turkey would be "anchored" to the West, ensuring its progressive democratization and development in line with the values and interests of the United States and the "West." Viewed from an American angle, the logic and consistency of this argument are watertight suggesting that, as long as a remote possibility remains, the United States will continue to support Turkey's EU membership. Without the EU, Turkey is far more likely not to turn "Islamist," but rather to freelance in what is becoming an increasingly confusing "post-Western" multipolar world. In other words, the U.S. logic underpinning its support for Turkey's EU membership remains the same. In the 1990s, the EU anchor was viewed as imperative to spur Turkey's democratization. Today, it is to consolidate Turkey's democratic transformation as well as to materialize the strategic synergies between Turkey, the EU, and the United States.

4 Policy Recommendations

The arguments developed in this paper suggest that in order for the United States to positively spur along Turkey's accession process, it should nuance its arguments and factor in the repercussions they may have in Europe. Europeans are inclined to shy away from a "strategic" view of the world, of Europe and of EU enlargement. This is especially so at times in which Europeans are enmeshed in deep economic crisis. They can and should be reminded of the strategic implications of Turkey's EU membership by their American counterparts. Strategic arguments may not be decisive, but they nonetheless represent an important component of EU-Turkey relations. But Americans must also recognize that overemphasizing geo-strategy in EU-Turkey ties can be a double-edged sword. Turkey's opponents in Europe argue that many, if not more, of Turkey's strategic assets can be reaped by developing a strategic cooperation with non-EU member Turkey. Outside the EU, Turkey would maximize its foreign policy autonomy and could partner with the EU and the United States in pursuing common international endeavors. American supporters of Turkey's EU membership must thus not simply argue that Turkey's EU membership would entail important strategic benefits. They must also argue convincingly that such strategic benefits can only be reaped with Turkey fully within the EU. Outside the EU, Turkey will be increasingly induced to "go it alone" in terms of both its domestic development and foreign policy, hollowing out the strategic assets embedded in any EU-Turkish cooperation.

Likewise, the most negative impact the United States has had on the evolution of the EU-Turkey relationship could well be the recasting of the relationship into a civilizational mold, in all its shapes and forms. This includes American praise of Turkey as a "model" for the Muslim world. It also includes American critiques of Turkey and the EU, whereby Turkey's perceived "loss" to the East is attributed not least to the EU's cold shoulder to Turkey.[56] To his credit, President Obama has articulated a far more nuanced identity case for Turkey in Europe, one that does not rest on black-and-white civilizational categories, but that highlights the multiple layers of the European identity of which Turkey is part. Today, this discourse may have few supporters in Europe, but it is only by developing and broadening this type of argument that American state and non-state actors alike can contribute to a more constructive identity debate on Turkey and/in the EU.

Related to this, while it is true that some Americans have wrung their hands over the "loss" of Turkey to the East, it is equally true that the United States has also developed an alternative discourse regarding Turkey and its foreign policy. A strand of debate in Washington focuses on Turkey as an independent actor in its region, viewing it as the welcome product of its democratization, even if this entails parting ways, on some occasions, with the United States.[57] American perceptions of Turkey neither bear the baggage of centuries of Ottoman-Christian confrontation nor are they poisoned by the entrenched vices of European Orientalism, exacerbated further in the 21st century by the secu-

[56] "U.S. concerned at Turkey shift: Gates," *Reuters*, June 9, 2010.

[57] Lesser, I. O. (2007), *Beyond Suspicion: Rethinking U.S.-Turkish Relations*, Washington, Woodrow Wilson Center for Scholars.

ritization of culture and identity. In view of this, Americans may contribute to reshaping European views of Turkey as an actor in its neighborhood, which is concomitantly more European, more democratic, more conservative, and more Islam-friendly. In its interactions with Europeans as well as through its relationship with Turkey, the United States can help reconcile the notion of Turkey's Europeanness with its trans-regional nature, thus driving at the heart of and contributing to the EU's debate over its own identity.

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