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**A RE-RUN IN TURKEY;
A COUP IN THE NEAR FUTURE?**

by

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A RE-RUN IN TURKEY; A COUP IN THE NEAR FUTURE?

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The purpose of this thesis project has been to investigate the historical stability of the Turkish government and compare it to the present-day government with intent to reveal the likelihood of coup activity in the near future, as has been seen in Turkey's history. Turkey has a proven status of importance to the United States by virtue of its strategic location, democratic pursuits, cultural status and economic potential. This research delved into the country's past coup activities and related variables. Further, the country's present-day status and potential future were analyzed to reveal a hypothesis of relative stability and progress for the country of Turkey. This is significant, as there was a pending gap in research that suggested the possibility of Turkish instability, which would be counterproductive to the challenges of the United States in the region. The major contribution of this research suggests Turkey's military will continue to play a key role in the country's decision-making process and act as an overwatch to the application of decisions by policy makers. However, should the country continue on its path, there is little reason to suspect anything other than stability for the government of Turkey.

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I. INTRODUCTION

There is a gap of information in existence that acts as a hole in current sources of information that considers the present-day possibilities of coup related activity in Turkey and how that may impact U.S. interests there. The bridge from the Middle East to Europe is strategically important and valuable in world interest. There is great strength in the documenting of Turkey's history. The stability of the Government of Turkey (GOT) is imperative to the future of U.S. interests in the region. I have not found any documents currently discussing the possibility of a recurrence of coup activity in Anatolia, and this consideration is the root of my investigation.

Throughout Turkey's postwar history, the economy was marked by a series of economic booms punctuated by economic and financial crises. The economy has been buffeted by political conflicts, three military coups, and an armed minority insurrection, two regional wars that significantly diverted trade flows, significant economic policy errors, debt crises, and two-and-a-half worldwide oil price shocks. All of these events occurred while Turkey was making the transition from an agrarian to a modern industrial economy and from a heavily state-owned economy to an increasingly privatized one.¹

Turkey is a young republic of ancient lands. Modern Turkey was founded in 1923 from the Anatolian remains of the defeated Ottoman Empire by military hero Mustafa KEMAL, who was later donned with the title Ataturk, or "Father of the Turks." Under his authoritarian leadership, the country adopted wide-ranging social, legal, and political reforms. After a period of one-party rule, an experiment with multi-party politics led to the 1950 election victory of the opposition Democratic Party and the peaceful transfer of power. Since then, Turkish political parties have multiplied, but democracy has been fractured by times of instability and intermittent military coups (1960, 1971, 1980), which in each case resulted in a return of political power to civilians. In 1997, the military again engineered the transfer of power, which was called a "post-modern coup"

¹ Amy Schwartz, Ataturk's Daughters, *The Wilson Quarterly*. Volume: 19. Issue: 4, Autumn 1995, Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, 68.

of the then Islamic-oriented government. Turkey intervened militarily on Cyprus in 1974 to prevent a Greek takeover of the island and has since acted as patron state to the “Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus,” which only Turkey recognizes. A separatist insurgency begun in 1984 by the Kurdistan Workers’ Party (PKK) and has dominated the Turkish military’s attention and claimed more than 30,000 lives; but after the capture of the group’s leader in 1999, the insurgents largely withdrew from Turkey, now mainly residing in northern Iraq and southeastern Turkey². Turkey joined the UN in 1945, and in 1952 it became a member of NATO. In 1964, Turkey became an associate member of the European Community; over the past decade, it has undertaken many reforms to strengthen its democracy and economy, enabling it to begin accession membership talks with the European Union.³

The Turkish army under Kemal Mustafa’s control after World War One decided that the way ahead for what was left of the Ottoman Empire lay in Westernization, including the building of Western democracy. But the army had to intervene three times when civilian elites tried to turn the clock back and strengthen Islamic traditionalism. Now the army has come to be increasingly reluctant to save democracy by resorting to military coups.⁴ This kind of intervention is not simply a questionable means for the achievement of democracy; it also has its internal cost. As Chief-of-Staff General Evren pointed out after the last coup in September 1980, “whenever the army entered into politics it began to lose its discipline and, gradually, it was led into corruption”.⁵

There is much written with respect to the history of Turkey and its political, military, religious and economic status. My research will focus on the coups of 1960,

² OSI Agent in Charge of Detachment 522, Threat Analysis, Incirlik Air Base, Turkey. Telephone Interview, 2005

³ The World Fact Book, <https://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/print/tu.html>, (accessed November 1, 2005).

⁴ For further information regarding the general reference: “Turkey as Target: The War Finds a New Theatre, December 22, 2003. *National Review*, 20. Jon Gorrivett, “As EU Membership Beckons, Turkey’s Military Faces Difficult Choice,” *Washington Report on Middle East Affairs*. Volume: 22. Issue: 6, July–August 2003. American Educational Trust, 30. Eric Rouleau, “Turkey: Beyond Ataturk,” *Foreign Policy*, Issue: 103, Summer 1996. Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 70.

⁵ Ulf Sundhaussen, “Threats to Liberal Democracy; the Military, A Threat to Democracy?” *Australian Journal of Politics and History* 44, no. 3 (September 1998): 329, <http://www.blackwell-synergy.com/links/doi/10.1111/1467-8497.00025/abs/> (accessed November 8, 2005).

1971, 1980 and the present-day assessment. Additionally, it will provide a prediction of future related activity. Predominate literature reflects much written about the history of Turkey and the coups that took place.

Several of the reviewed documents contribute as a country study and give a solid review of the events of their time. The country study documents are essential to establishing fundamental facts regarding the control of government at the times of the various coups with less in the way of analysis. That is, the country studies will give a strong lay-out of the matters at hand as secondary sources.

When considering the comparative task of researching coups I find it necessary to take at least a cursory look into the general causes of coups. According to S.E. Finer there were some seventy-three coups in forty-six countries between 1971 and 1981.⁶ Coups are a strategy for the taking of a government. A probabilistic approach to coup analysis does not appear to apply fully to the Turkish coups as it calls for three factors to support one predictive model which includes recent independence, the presence of foreign troops and the country not having a coup before.⁷ My understanding of the coups is that although there are some factors that are consistent with the predictive model, it is not complete and should be noted that the author did not use Turkey as an example in his study. However, Turkey was very young, recently had foreign troops (Ottoman Empire) and although the 1960 coup may have been the first of the country, it can be disputed that Ataturk's leadership acquisition was coup like. Another article studied military coups d'etat in Latin America and presented on eighteen variables for 105 militaries in a 60-year span (1907–1966). By means of comparative analysis between different types of countries, a number of hypotheses about the relationship between the occurrence of military coups and socio-political context, positions in the Latin American community of nations, and political instability were analyzed.⁸ These documents along with historical records of the coups provide an array of reasons for

⁶ Edward Luttwak, *Coup d'Etat: A Practical Handbook* (Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1980, 9).

⁷ Rosemary H. T. O'Kane, "A Probabilistic Approach to the Causes of Coups d'Etat," *British Journal of Political Science*, 1981, 307.

⁸ Egil Fossum, Factors Influencing the Occurrence of Military Coups D'Etat, *Latin America, Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 4, No 3 (1967), 228.

military coups which included economic situations, size of population, and ethnic elements and most importantly, their stability.⁹ Of course Turkey was not included in the study of Latin America but the large amount of cases and the variables presented gave me a better foundation for understanding the coups I studied.

⁹ Fossum, "Factors Influencing the Occurrence of Military Coups D'Etat," 230–232.

II. STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE OF TURKEY

In understanding the relevance of the stability of Turkey, it is important to understand how important Turkey is to the U.S. This chapter will focus on the history of U.S. presence in Turkey, primarily Incirlik Air Base, and cover the strategic importance of Turkey since September 11, 2001. Turkey's geographical location offers many advantages. The very same reality is also a source of problems for the country; it is a volatile region, characterized by several actual and potential crises. For instance, two states that belong to the so-called "axis of evil" are Turkey's neighbors; any development in the surrounding regions forces Turkey to get involved in one way or another. This is the reality and if we cannot escape this reality, then what we can do is to act in a balanced manner with a long-term perspective, based on carefully-elaborated priorities, instead of being dictated by self-propaganda, conjectural calculations and short-term gains.

Incirlik Air Base is the most substantial NATO presence in Turkey.¹⁰ The U.S. Engineering Group began construction of the base — located approximately 250 miles southeast of Ankara, Turkey — in the spring of 1951. The U.S. Air Force initially planned to use the base as an emergency staging and recovery site for medium and heavy bombers. The Turkish General Staff and the U.S. Air Force signed a joint use agreement for the new base in December 1954.

On February 21, 1955, the base was officially named Adana Air Base, with the 7216th Air Base Squadron as host unit. The following years would prove the value of Incirlik's location, not only in countering the Soviet threat, but also in responding to crises in the Middle East. Project 119L, a U.S. Air Force meteorological balloon launching activity, conducted operations at Adana AB in 1955. Following balloon operations, pilots began flying U-2 reconnaissance missions as part of Operation Overflight. Renamed Incirlik Air Base on February 28, 1958, the base was the main U-2

¹⁰ History of Incirlik Air Base, Incirlik Air Base Web page.
<http://www.incirlik.af.mil/library/factsheets/factsheet.asp?id=5344> (accessed March 29, 2007).

operating location until May 1960, when Francis Gary Powers' U-2 aircraft succumbed to a volley of Soviet surface-to-air missiles over Sverdlovsk.

The Lebanon crisis exploded in the summer of 1958, prompting the U.S. president to order Tactical Air Command Composite Strike Force Bravo to deploy from the United States to Incirlik. The strike force consisted of F-100s, B-57s, RF-101s, RB-66s, F-86Ds and WB-66s. These aircraft and supporting personnel overwhelmed the facilities at Incirlik, which also supported cargo and transport aircraft deploying an Army battalion from Germany to Lebanon. Because no groundfighting involving Americans erupted, the strike force flew missions to cover troop movements, show-of-force missions over Beirut, aerial reconnaissance sorties and leaflet drops.

As part of an effort to bring units with combat history into the theater, U.S. Air Forces in Europe inactivated Incirlik's 7216th, which had become an air base group, and activated the 39th Tactical Group at Incirlik in its place on April 1, 1966. The Group assumed control of permanent support units and hosted rotational squadrons conducting training and maintaining NATO alert at Incirlik.

After the Lebanon crisis, TAC deployed F-100 fighter squadrons on 100-day rotations to Incirlik from the United States. The flying mission at Incirlik further diversified in 1970 when the Turkish Air Force agreed to allow U.S. Air Forces in Europe to use its air-to-ground range at Konya, providing a suitable training area for squadrons deployed to Incirlik. These units also conducted training at Incirlik's offshore air-to-air range. Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, except during the Cyprus Crisis, many types of aircraft including F-4s, F-15s, F-16s, F-111s and A-10s deployed to Incirlik. In mid-1975, the Turkish government announced that all U.S. bases in Turkey would close and transfer control to the Turkish military. This action was in response to an arms embargo the U.S. Congress imposed on Turkey for using U.S.-supplied equipment during the Cyprus conflict. Incirlik AB and Izmir Air Station remained open, due to their NATO missions, but all other non-NATO activities at these locations ceased.

Congress lifted the embargo in September 1978 and restored military assistance to Turkey. Normal operations resumed after the United States and Turkey signed a Defense and Economic Cooperation Agreement March 29, 1980.

After signing the DECA, USAFE initiated the Turkey catch-up plan to improve quality of life. One of the major projects was a new base housing complex.

After Iraq's 1990 invasion of neighboring Kuwait, the 7440th Composite Wing (Provisional) assumed operational control of the 39th Tactical Group. The 7440th was the air component of a joint task force which eventually controlled 140 aircraft and opened a northern front, forcing Iraq to split its defenses between the north and the south, where the main thrust of coalition attacks originated as part of Desert Storm. Following the war, Incirlik hosted Combined Task Force Provide Comfort, the effort to provide humanitarian relief to millions of Kurdish refugees in northern Iraq.

The 39th TACG was redesignated the 39th Wing on October 1, 1993, and restructured as a standard Air Force objective wing.

The U.S. State Department's Operation Quick Transit evacuated thousands of Kurds from northern Iraq late in 1996. The wing provided logistical support to this operation in Turkey, which signaled the end of the humanitarian aspect of Provide Comfort. Provide Comfort ended December 31, 1996, and Operation Northern Watch took its place on January 1, 1997. ONW enforced the U.N.-sanctioned no-fly zone north of the 36th parallel in Iraq.

The 39th Air and Space Expeditionary Wing was activated at Incirlik AB on September 15, 1997, to support and command U.S. Air Force assets deployed to Incirlik supporting ONW. Incirlik's tent city, Hodja Village, became the Air Force's largest temporary troop assembly location.

In response to the events of September 11, 2001, Operation Enduring Freedom began in October 2001. Incirlik served as a main hub of humanitarian airlift operations to Afghanistan, MC-130 special operations missions, KC-135 refueling missions and sustainment operations for deployed forces. The aerial port managed a 600 percent increase in airflow during the height of OEF. When the main bases in Afghanistan and

Uzbekistan were constructed, Incirlik's airflow supporting OEF decreased to a baseline sustainment level. With the beginning of Operation Iraqi Freedom on March 19, 2003, ONW ended. ONW flew its last patrol on March 17, 2003, and closed a successful twelve-year mission to contain the Iraqi military and inactivated May 1, 2003. The 39th ASEW was also inactivated, effective May 1, 2003.

The 39th Wing was deactivated and the 39th Air Base Group was activated, effective July 16, 2003. On August 19, 2003, the first rotation of deployed KC-135 Stratotankers and Airmen arrived at Incirlik to support Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom. On January 6, 2004, more than 300 soldiers — of what would become thousands — transited through Incirlik as the first stop back to their home post, after spending almost a year in Iraq. Incirlik was part of what was described as the largest troop movement in U.S. history. Incirlik provided soldiers with a cot, warm location, entertainment and food for a few hours outside of a hostile war zone.

March 12, 2004, the 39th Air Base Group deactivated, and the 39th Air Base Wing activated to provide the best mix of required support and, as new mission requirements emerge, to shoulder the burden and better contribute in the global war on terrorism. On June 1, 2005, Incirlik activated one of the Air Force's largest C-17 Globemaster cargo hub operations in support of OEF and OIF. Hub operations deliver much-needed supplies, such as add-on armor, tires and engines to U.S. Forces in theater, via the 385th Air Expeditionary Group.

On October 18, 2005, Incirlik served as an air-bridge for the Pakistan Earthquake Relief Effort. Seven countries participated in the NATO humanitarian operation. 100 trucks offloaded and 130 airlift missions were conducted, delivering 1,647 tons, using 996 pallets. From July 21 to 28, 2006, Incirlik helped support more than 1,700 American citizens displaced from Lebanon during the 2006 Israel-Lebanon conflict. Incirlik Airman (Air Force personnel) built a Patriot Village, while providing housing, telephone access, a 24-hour BX/Shopette, a children's play area, chaplain's assistance and medical services for people transitioning back to the U.S.

Following the September 11 attacks in the U.S., Turkey was brought into strategist view due to its location and the cultural value of potential enemies. Hüseyin Bağcı and Saban Kardas of the Middle East Technical University identified Turkey as strategically important for the purpose of its location to current and potential threats, energy and cultural significance as a bridge between the Middle East, Asia and Europe.¹¹ The importance attributed to Turkey's strategic value became more visible following the events of September 11 and, accordingly, Turkey has come under the spotlight. As a result, Turkey and Turkish foreign policy started to receive more interest, and the mood in the discussions about Turkey and Turkey's strategic importance was usually optimistic. The discourse was mainly temporal and isolated from reality, and the focus was very narrow. Therefore, it was often lost in the debate that, seen from a wider perspective, there are a number of other factors to be taken into account, which indicates that a more cautious and balanced approach may be necessary.

There are arguments that suggest Turkey has a key strategic location with a role that is necessary to U.S. interests, but each consideration has some level of shortcomings. Although, overall, I agree Turkey is a necessary and key strategic partner, it should not be seen as the "all in" for strategic locations; should instability prove likely, other regional options may be better suited. After all, September 11 and the U.S. response to it has affected other governments' development in foreign policy, to include Turkey.

The U.S. view of September 11 can be seen as a contributor to Turkey's position and was alleged growing acceptance towards the Turkish approach to the fight against terrorism in international relations. Turkey had long struggled against separatist terror and political Islam in a domestic context. Since the 1970s, Turkey has been engaged in fighting against terrorism and continues to be one of the major targets of terrorist activities, both at home and abroad. Turkey's first encounter with international terrorism was the political assassinations carried out by ASALA (Armenian Secret Army for the Liberation of Armenia) against Turkish diplomats abroad in the 1970s. During the past two decades, particularly the Kurdish issue and the terrorist activities of PKK (Kurdistan

¹¹ Fatih Furtun, "Turkey: A new Opportunity? Or a big mistake?" *Slovak Foreign Policy Affairs*, II (2004), Hüseyin Bağcı and Kardas Saban, Middle East Technical University, 24–39.

Workers' Party) involved cross-border activities and became of international concern.¹² One part of the Turkish strategy to deal with this problem was to seek international cooperation in fighting against terrorism. In this regard, successive Turkish governments worked incessantly to generate an international concern against terrorism. In particular, they worked hard to convince European countries to limit the activities of various separatist, leftist and Islamist organizations. As part of its activities, Turkey even tried, on some occasions, to bring the terror issue onto NATO's agenda.¹³

Aside from trying to raise the terror issue in several political and diplomatic areas, Turkey did not hesitate in resorting to the military instruments. This is not surprising, considering the military is a long-time participant in governmental policy in Turkey. To meet the rising challenge of separatist terror in South Eastern regions, Turkey employed a stubborn, and at times harsh, policy based on a heavy reliance of military measures in order to, first, stop the terror activities carried out by the PKK, and then root out the formation of terrorist groups and their support bases. In a similar vein, emphasis on the use or threat of force outside its borders as part of the fight against terrorism was a logical correlation of this policy — which the U.S. clearly agrees with to some extent. Numerous instances of Turkish incursions into northern Iraq are cases in point. This continues today and is a known role of the Turkish military.¹⁴ The authority vacuum emerged after the imposition of no-fly zone in the Northern Iraq which enabled PKK to use the region as a rear base to conduct terrorist attacks inside Turkish territory. Based on a complicated mixture of the notion of "hot pursuit" and an expanded interpretation of the norm of self-defense, Turkish armed forces were dispatched into Northern Iraq to either destroy PKK guerillas and training camps or prevent PKK from planning and

¹² For more information on the PKK, see the extensive analysis provided in: Nihat Ali Özcan, *PKK (Kürdistan İsci Partisi): Tarihi, İdeolojisi, ve Yöntemi (PKK: Its History, Ideology and Methodology)* (Ankara: ASAM Yayinlari, 1999); for the international dimension in PKK's emergence and operations, in particular, see 222–325; Michael Radu, "The Rise and Fall of the PKK," *Orbis*, Vol. 45, No. 1 (Winter 2001), 47–63; Kemal Kirisci and Gareth Winrow, *The Kurdish Question and Turkey* (London: Frank Cass, 1997).

¹³ Turkey mainly tried to include terror as a whole into NATO statements.

¹⁴ A U.S. Army Special Forces officer maintains liaison in Silop, Turkey, which is located at the border to Iraq, in an effort to maintain a smoother operation of activities there. However, the army officer is under strict control of Turkish officials and in no way approves or disapproves of Turkish operations there.

executing subversive attacks on Turkish soil. While some of those operations were limited in scope, some were large-scale, involving thousands of troops — at times Turkish soldiers crossing the border reached 35,000, backed by tanks, artillery and helicopters.

Syria, believed to support PKK terrorism is concerned is another case in which Turkey resorted to essentially military means. By mid-1998, the PKK came to maintain its existence almost entirely on Syrian support; Abdullah Ocalan, the PKK's leader, had been given a sanctuary by the Syrian government, and Syrian territory was a safe route for PKK militants in their journey between PKK training camps in Lebanon's Syrian-controlled Beka valley and the Turkish border. During the Turkish Syrian crisis of October 1998 Turkey used a coercive diplomacy backed up by a credible threat of force against the Syrian regime to end its support to PKK and give up providing shelter to Ocalan. In the meantime, Turkey had already strengthened its military ties with Israel to exert pressure on Syria from the south. Turkey's threat of force accompanied by military maneuvers undertaken close to the Syrian border bore productivity; faced with overwhelming power of Turkish military, the Syrian government complied to Turkish demands and asked Ocalan and the PKK to leave the country constituting the first step in a chain of events that led to the capture of Ocalan in Kenya. Following their expulsion from Syria, PKK forces relocated to northern Iraq, yet, a subsequent Turkish incursion into the region dealt a severe blow to their military capabilities, and the PKK collapsed militarily.¹⁵

Turkish activities, diplomatic or military, were hardly welcomed by its neighbors, nor by its Western partners; as a result, Turkey could not raise the necessary international support in its own fight against terrorism. These issues were a constant point of tension and disagreement in Turkish foreign policy throughout the 1990s, and Turkey came under severe international criticism. Assertive Turkish foreign policy towards the Middle East region added to the troubled relations with the Arab neighbors. It was in this context that, from time to time, Turkey's relations with its Western partners deteriorated due to

¹⁵ Svante E. Cornell, "The Kurdish Question in Turkish Politics," *Orbis*, Vol. 45, No. 1 (Winter 2001), 31–46.

the problems stemming from Turkey's struggle with terrorism, and that issue has been a major impediment to Turkey's will for a closer integration into the EU. In particular, the charge that Turkey's approach to the issue of terrorism and the way Turkey tackles this problem was a major source of human rights violations. The limitations of individual rights and liberties at home was often raised against the country at several international platforms. Turkey was always under European pressure to undertake domestic reforms to remodel the situation.¹⁶ As far as foreign policy is concerned, with its principally military-oriented security strategy, in contrast to a "civilian" European approach, Turkey's assertiveness in the region was seen as an indication that Turkey was a "security consuming" or "insecurity provider" to the European security, thus an actor to be treated with a certain reservation. (Perhaps the role of Turkey's military is too strong for the taste of the EU).¹⁷

It is obvious that Turkey was one of the main beneficiaries of the new international atmosphere. Finally, the phenomenon of terrorism and the threat of terrorist activities were formally recognized as an international concern and an international consensus on the issue seemed to be emerging. The challenge posed by terrorism to international security was considered so serious that it was enough of a justification for the North Atlantic Council to invoke NATO's Article 5, for the first time ever. From the U.N. to the OSCE, several other international and regional organizations captured the prevailing mood and adapted similar resolutions or decisions to express their willingness to respond to terror on international levels. It did not take long before the Turkish side grasped this opportunity; thus the president, the prime minister, the foreign minister and other officials representing the country gave their full and unqualified support to those international initiatives.¹⁸ This was more than an expression of international unity with

¹⁶ I have viewed this as a sort of arm twist the EU maintains on Turkey. That is, a point that will stress Turkey very strenuously and be a point by which they can claim Turkey fell short, regardless of progress. Turkey has shown they intend to try with massive reforms.

¹⁷ This critical interpretation of Turkey's place in the European Security picture is found in Dietrich Jung, *Turkey and Europe: Ongoing Hypocrisy?* (Copenhagen Peace Research Institute: Working Paper 35, September 2001), 1–21; for a counter view: Meltem Müftüleri-Bac, "Turkey's Role in the EU's Security and Foreign Policies," *Security Dialogue*, Vol. 31, No. 4 (2000), 489–502.

¹⁸ Reference an array of Turkish dailies (news) from September 12–13, 2001. Also, for a collection, see, *Newspot*, No. 29 (September–October 2001).

the U.S. and the victims of those startling attacks. Beyond that, there was a golden opportunity for Turkey. Turkish elites and intellectuals took advantage of this by reminding — in each declaration or speech — that Turkey itself had suffered from terrorism, repeatedly emphasizing that the events of September 11 proved the validity of Turkish arguments. Furthermore, they expressed their hope that Turkey’s European partners would also realize their past mistakes in criticizing Turkey, and eventually readjust their policies vice/versa Turkey in the face of the new realities out there proving Turkey’s rightfulness: President Ahmet Necdet Sezer was maintaining that those attacks should be a lesson for the European countries and he called for a change in their attitude and state of thinking about terrorism. He pointed out that terrorism was a crime committed against all humanity; he went on, saying,

That’s why we have always repeated in all international platforms that international cooperation in the fight against terrorism should be improved. The attacks on the U.S. have shown how correct Turkey is in her stance against terrorism. I guess the attitudes of European countries have begun to change too.¹⁹

Thus, in the Turkish view, the European countries misinterpreted the balance between the concepts of human rights and terrorism, a point emphasized by a senior Turkish Foreign Ministry official:

The United States was very well aware of the concerns raised by Turkey regarding terrorism. The Europeans did not understand this, and the concept of human rights was raised by our European colleagues when we made references to terrorism at international gatherings. And now, it is clearly seen that a balance between the concepts of terrorism and human rights is necessary.²⁰

In a similar sequence, Turkey paid special attention to stress that terrorism is a global issue and thus must be fought globally. This point was also repeatedly emphasized by the government officials, as well as columnists and civil society organizations.

¹⁹ *Cumhuriyet*, “Sezer: I Reckon Western Countries are Going to View Terrorism Differently from Now On,” *Turkish Daily News* (September 13, 2001).

²⁰ “Shifting of international perceptions on the agenda; a new role for Turkey,” *Turkish Daily News*, 13 September 2001; for more on initial Turkish position, see: Baki Ilkin, “Combating Terrorism and Rebuilding Afghanistan: The Turkish Perspective,” *Foreign Policy-Ankara* (Vol. 27, Nos. 3-4, 2002), 3–9.

Foreign Minister Ismail Cem, in his address at the Organization of Islamic Countries Summit was referring to the same point:

Terrorism does not have geography; it is the same terrorism, which manifests itself in several countries, in the West and in the East, in all geographies, all over the world. Therefore, terrorism is a global phenomenon that crosses borders and the fight against it requires effective international cooperation.²¹

In this sense, NATO's decision to invoke Article 5 was a welcome development for Turkey, as expressed by Ambassador Onur Öymen, Turkey's Permanent Representative to NATO:

We have always called for terrorist activities to be included within the Article 5. We have always stated that an attack does not only mean a country's intrusion to another country's territory but it also covers terrorist attacks which is an international problem. That's why NATO's invoking of Article 5 is very important for us.²²

Furthermore, some Turkish analysts did not even hesitate to announce the advent of a "global February 28."²³ While challenging the rise of political Islam, the particular conditions and characteristics of Turkey were used as a justification to limit the individual rights and democratic freedoms by the secular elites, backed by the powerful military during the "global February 28" process. It was argued that the U.S. and Western countries may embark on a similar policy, on a global scale, so as to wipe out several international networks, irrespective of whether they are moderate or radical, which were supposedly behind the terror attacks of September 11. As part of this new strategy, in particular, the U.S. would be less willing to criticize non-democratic practices in the

²¹ Ismail Cem, *Statement to the Press at the Organization of the Islamic Conference* (Doha: 10 October 2001), reprinted in *Newspot* (No. 29, September-October 2001); "Turkish top officials call for increase in international cooperation against terrorism" *Turkish Daily News*, (September 13, 2001); Similarly see: Mustafa Balbay (columnist), "Terör Sınır Tanımiyor" (Terror Recognizes no Borders), *Cumhuriyet* (September 12, 2001); Turkish Industrialists and Businessman Association (TUSIAD) also stated that the events that terror attacks exposed the dimensions of international terrorism and that there is a need for international cooperation and solidarity to fight against international terrorism, *Milliyet* September 13, 2001.

²² *Cumhuriyet*, "Ankara backs activating Article 5," *Turkish Daily News* (September 14, 2001).

²³ Rusen Cakir, "Global 28 Subat Süreci Basladi" (Global 28 Subat Process has Taken a Start) *Hurriyet*, September 15, 2001.

Islamic world for the sake of assuring their cooperation in the global war against terrorism. That could, the argument goes on, in return hint at the emergence of a new “precedent” justifying the Turkish way of dealing with terrorism — in effect, relieving Turkey of some of the external pressures it had encountered in the past.

The first observation about these arguments is that they were, to a large extent, self-propaganda. It was not possible to hear, from outside, a corresponding appreciation of the Turkish thoughts, except perhaps some American commentators.²⁴ To name one, Radu was a very vocal supporter of the Turkish position on that matter. He argues that

Europeans, at least before September 11, were playing games in the name of ‘human rights’ — particularly for terrorists, who were protected at home and even against the vital security of non-EU countries. Let us hope that once the U.S. and Turkey, to mention just two cases, are finally seen as equally victimized, the EU response will be similar... That revision also includes a new look at Turkey’s anti-PKK and anti-Islamist policy — not as anti-democratic, but as protective of the Muslim world’s only truly secular democracy.²⁵

The optimistic mood and Turkish discourse, therefore, largely remained wishful thinking.

The main problem with this argument was that Turks chose to interpret these developments in such a way that this new “precedent” justified whatever Turkey did in the past to fight against separatism and political Islam, a point very well illustrated by Ismail Cem:

For years, Turkey has kept on explaining to the international community what terrorism is, the consequences of it, the importance and the need for international cooperation in struggling against it, and have kept on making proposals at international platforms for methods of a collective struggle against terrorism. September 11 has proved how right Turkey’s sensitivity on this issue was. What everyone is trying to do collectively today is no different to that which Turkey has strived to achieve for years.²⁶

²⁴ For a similar corresponding view more extensively elaborated, see: Murat Belge, “Jeopolitik,” *Radikal*, January 22, 2002.

²⁵ Michael Radu, “The War on Terrorism is not an American War,” *Insight Turkey*, Vol. 3, No. 4, October–December 2001, 52, 54.

²⁶ “Cem: Turkish Model is Paradigm of Civilization,” Interview given to *Turkish Daily News*, January 7, 2002.

It is unlikely that the Turkish arguments will be completely accepted, by the West in general and Europeans in particular, without any reservations. If we take Turkey's welcome to NATO's activation of Article 5, one has to bear in mind the particular conditions in which NATO took that decision, and the unique position of the U.S. in shaping decisions in NATO; its value as an almost automatic precedent remains an open question. Even if you accept that Article 5 could be activated against terror attacks, what is less clear is whether it will be applicable to the threats or attacks coming from an organization established in one's own country. When the time comes for the implementation of Article 5, there might be possible divergences over identifying the concrete source of a terror threat, or how to respond to that particular threat.²⁷

Another limitation to Turkey's optimism is exerted by differing views on terrorism. Especially with respect to the Kurdish issue, the European view is that it cannot be simply confined to fighting against terrorism. Although official Turkish discourse preferred to view the Kurdish issue as originating from socioeconomic conditions of southeastern Turkey — and aggravated by the problems posed by terrorism that is largely aroused by outside support of those trying to undermine Turkey — in European eyes, it is rather very much related to political and cultural rights and democratization.²⁸ Think of the well-known analogy: one's terrorist is another's independent fighter. There is reason to expect that this will remain the case, despite Turkish initial optimism to the contrary.²⁹ Kurdish populations in Europe are acting as a strong pressure group and limiting the maneuverability of Western governments. As it is claimed rightly, the Kurdish issue has also been a European one, for it affects the Turkish

²⁷ For a very skeptical view by Sadi Erguvenc, see: Lale Sariibrahimoglu, "Turkey Should be Cautious on Article 5," *Turkish Daily News*, September 14, 2001; however Ozdag underlines that although it may not act as an automatic trigger, NATO's invocation of Article-5 might be used as a precedent, "Interview with Ümit Özdamar," *2023* (No. 6, October 15, 2002), 23.

²⁸ For more extensive differences in perceptions of the issue in Turkey and Europe, see: Cornell, *op.cit.*, 31; for an analysis approaching Kurdish issue through a human rights and democratization perspective, see: H. Ayla Kilic, "Democratization, Human Rights and Ethnic Policies in Turkey," *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs* Vol. 18, No. 1 (April 1998), 91–110.

²⁹ For a very optimistic view that, after September 11, PKK issue would no longer be considered within the context of ethnic conflict or independence movement, see: S. Rana Sezal, "Kimlik Politikaları, Terör ve Etnik Catisma Kavramlari: 11 Eylül Sonrasi Türkiye'nin Terör Sorunu," *Stratejik Analiz* (Vol. 2, No. 20, December 2001), 100.

and Kurdish migrants living in Europe, and the host countries.³⁰ Furthermore, there is a fundamental difference between the EU and Turkey in regards to the problem of terrorism. Even if you accept the reality of terrorism, the ways to tackle this problem are differently perceived. The Turkish approach is closer to the U.S. than the EU.³¹ The EU and the U.S. have been differing on many issues, including the question of how to identify the causes and sources of terrorism, as well as the means to be used in fighting against it. The EU has stressed the importance of preventive measures and prioritizing the political and economic instruments, and has questioned the effectiveness of punitive military measures. Since the Europeans were even critical of the U.S., expecting that they would welcome Turkish activities without any reservations is hardly tenable.³²

It is hard to be very optimistic and expect a major breakthrough that would bring about a substantial shift in Western responses to Turkey's approach to combating terrorism.³³ Turkey's hope that the new emerging consensus on terrorism will relieve it of European pressures on the Kurdish issue is difficult to sustain. The Europeans would resist subsuming this wider problem under the rubric of terror and maintain their demands from Turkey to continue with the necessary domestic reforms in political and cultural aspects of the issue, even after September 11. The Kurdish issue will not cease as one of the hurdles Turkey has to face in its journey towards the EU. The discussion about the list of terrorist organizations prepared by the EU, within the context of forging an international coalition against the sources of terrorism, was an example of this point, and one can expect similar differences in the future as well.

³⁰ As an example see: Gülistan Gürbey, "Die Europaesierung des Kurdenkonflikts," *Blaetter für Deutsche und Internationale Politik* (4:99), 404.

³¹ Ali L. Karaosmanoglu, "Afganistan Savasi'nin Transatlantik Iliski Boyutu" (The Transatlantic Relations of the Afghanistan War and its Consequences with Regard to Turkey) *Zaman*, 27 November 27, 2001, 10.

³² Turkey could capitalize on U.S. interpretation of terror and thus solve its own PKK problem, see: Damla Aras, "Minareyi Calan Kilifi Hazirladi: Bir Baska Acidan 11 Eylul," *Stratejik Analiz*, Vol. 2, No. 24 (April 2002), 39.

³³ Ali Nihat Özcan, a Turkish expert on terrorism, also points out that the selective response to terror in Europe would limit Turkey's utilization of the new conditions. "BM Karari ve PKK," *NTV: Arka Plan*, October 3, 2001.

A. DIPLOMATIC INITIATIVE

Turkey has started an intensive diplomatic initiative in the wake of the September 11 attacks to utilize the international environment to convince EU members to include ten Turkish organizations on its list of terrorist organizations. The inclusion of an organization on the list means that its assets will be frozen, its offices closed and its activities traced. This may not automatically translate into the extradition of its members to their country of origin, particularly if the country is not an EU member and still practices the death penalty. Despite Turkey's efforts, the EU included none of the terrorist organizations on its list, which was declared on December 27, 2001. Especially the exclusion of the armed militant groups from the first version of the list (such as the outlawed PKK and the Revolutionary People's Liberation Party-Front (DHKP-C), which is active in some European countries under different banners) drew Turkish reaction and that problem remained on the agenda for some time.³⁴ Turkish diplomacy and lobbying worked; on May 2, 2002, the two organizations were finally added to the modified EU list. This decision was seen by many as a Turkish victory.³⁵ To see if the measures are effective, one has to wait and take into consideration a couple of other factors.

First, in the meantime, the PKK announced in April 2004 that it would cease all activities and regroup under a new name, the Kurdistan Freedom and Democracy Congress (KADEK).³⁶ KADEK said it was ending its armed struggle to campaign peacefully for greater rights for Kurds in southeastern Turkey, but without disbanding its armed wing. The Turkish government has termed the name-change meaningless.³⁷ Yet, in spite of Turkey's demands, KADEK is not included on the EU list. The EU countries prefer to wait to be able to judge whether to include KADEK as well. Additionally,

³⁴ Selcuk Gültasli "The Opportunity and the Principle," *Turkish Probe* (Issue 479, March 31, 2002).

³⁵ "Türkiye Brüksel'de Zafer Kazandı" (Turkey won a victory in Brussels) *www.ntvmsnbc.com.tr* news portal, May 3, 2002.

³⁶ Mehmet Ali Birand, "PKK or KADEK," *Turkish Daily News*, April 2, 2002.

³⁷ Ali Nihat Özcan, Ö.Rengin Gün, "PKK'dan KADEK'e: Degisim mi Takkiye mi?" *Stratejik Analiz* (Vol. 2, No. 25, May 2002), 5-20.

KADEK became Kongra-Gel (KGK) in late 2003, brandishing “peaceful” intentions. The theme remains the same; therefore, they will be called PKK so as not to get lost in a name game.

Second, these EU norms need to be transformed into national legal orders, and in some of the EU member states, the national legal norms are not enough to effectively limit the activities of these terrorist organizations. This point has been utilized by the operatives of those organizations. This is especially true as far as Belgium is concerned.³⁸

Third, most of these organizations have been active in Europe for decades, and they know the ways to circumvent such legal barriers. For instance, a spokesman for the DHKP-C has claimed that these decisions will not substantially affect their activities.³⁹ What the EU member states can do is to freeze their bank accounts, but they have no money in banks. The same source further claimed that the name DHKP-C is on the EU list, but that the registered name of their organization is the DHKP and DHKC, and mentioning the fact that they have been working in the United Kingdom for many years, although the DHKP-C was outlawed there. They may have some more ways to find loopholes in legal norms as well. Turkey still has to work hard to ensure the effectiveness of this initiative.

B. MODEL FOR ISLAMIC WORLD

The second development regarding Turkey’s growing strategic importance was the increasing reference to Turkey as a model for the Islamic world. The war against the Taliban and the al-Qaeda was, in a political and intellectual sense, also a war against a militant, reactive, anti-Western, or anti-American, interpretation of Islam. The protests against American operations and support for bin-Laden in some parts of the Islamic world created fears that the developments might lead to a so-called “clash of civilizations,” or a “Christian–Muslim confrontation.” Therefore, the American administration strived to use every opportunity to prevent such a negative interpretation

³⁸ “DHKP/C and PKK on EU Terrorist List” *Turkish News*, May 3, 2002; “Belgian Judicial Officials: There is not much to do against the PKK and DHKP-C,” *Turkish Daily News*, May 6, 2002.

³⁹ “DHKP-C: The List Did Not Affect Us,” *Turkish Daily News*, May 10, 2002.

of the American role and to deliver a message that this was not a war against Islam. As concrete proof of this policy, the inclusion of certain Muslim countries into the international coalition appeared to be necessary, especially when it later came to using force in Afghanistan.⁴⁰ Within this light, Turkey emerged as a valuable asset for American policy.

Turkey offered all assistance in its capability to the international coalition from the very beginning — through allowing the use of its territory and air space for logistical support, or through its contribution to international peacekeeping force in Afghanistan. But, this was more than a practical military/strategic contribution in the long-term war against the forces of terrorism and fanaticism. The fact that Turkey is the only Muslim country with a secular system of governance, which is also a member of NATO and other European institutions, was repeatedly expressed not only by the Turkish policy makers themselves, but also by the international observers, and U.S. officials. Turkey would be a perfect role model for the Islamic world. The 21st conference of the American–Turkish Council (ATC), held in Washington in March 2002, was an important venue where those arguments were often heard. A few days before the conference, Deputy Defense Secretary Paul Wolfowitz was emphasizing that supporting moderate Muslims who dislike terrorism and extremism was a key to winning the war on terrorism. “To win that war against terrorism, we have to reach out to the hundreds of millions of Muslims who believe in tolerance and moderation... By helping them to stand up against terrorists, we help ourselves.” Therefore, the anti-terrorism campaign was not just a military fight but also “a battle for hearts and minds as well”; within this context Turkey, “can be an example for the Muslim world” of a country that reconciles Islam with liberal democracy.⁴¹ According to U.S. President George W. Bush, Turkey was a hope-provoking alternative against radicalism and religious intolerance. In his message sent to the ATC conference, he stressed that Turkey, with its Muslim beliefs and its embracing

⁴⁰ “With Turkey’s Pledge, U.S. Coalition Gets its First Muslim Troops,” *International Herald Tribune*, November 2, 2001.

⁴¹ Matt Kelley, “America Must Support Moderate Muslims to Win War on Terror. No. 2 Pentagon Official Says,” *Turkish Daily News*, March 11, 2002; also see: United States Department of Defense, “Bridging the Dangerous Gap between the West and the Muslim World,” *Remarks Prepared for Delivery by Deputy Secretary Paul Wolfowitz at the World Affairs Council*, Monterey, CA, May 3, 2002.

of the democracy ideals of Atatürk, set an example.⁴² In his address at the conference, U.S. Deputy Secretary of State Marc Grossman was also underlying that one of the few things that had not changed after September 11 was:

Turkey is once again highlighted as a model for those countries with an Islamic heritage who choose to be -and work to be- modern, secular, democratic, and true to their faith simultaneously. Those of us who have admired Turkey for this vision for years now find we are not so alone in wishing that your great endeavor succeeds.⁴³

The very fact that the terrorist activities were undertaken by an organization, justifying its actions by reference to Islam, was a serious moral challenge to which many Muslim countries had to respond.⁴⁴ There was considerable effort on the part of the statesmen and intellectuals in the Islamic world to stave off linking terror in general, and September 11 terror attacks in particular to Islam and Islamic groups. Perhaps, nowhere was this concern more visible than in Turkey, a country which, while orienting itself towards Western norms and values, at the same time maintained its ties with Islam and the Islamic world. Indeed, it was this dual thought that put enormous pressure on Turkey to call the world to draw a distinction between Islam and terror. Turkish political leaders and intellectuals, like their counterparts in other Islamic countries, took pains to emphasize that Islam was a religion of peace and a distinction between Islam and terrorism must be drawn. While the Prime Minister called equating Islam with terror unjust,⁴⁵ the Foreign Minister was saying:

Terrorism does not have a religion, geography and there can be no justification for terrorism under any circumstances. To identify terrorism with any religion is an insult to all religions. We strongly condemn those who have used the name of our holy religion to define some terrorists.

⁴² “Turkey a Model Secular Country: Bush,” *www.ntvmsnbc.com.tr* news portal, March 18, 2002; also see: “21st ATC conference held in Washington,” *Turkish Daily News*, March 19, 2002.

⁴³ U.S. Department of State, “Grossman: Change in the Value of Enduring Alliances,” *Remarks to the American Turkish Council by U.S. Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs Marc Grossman*, Washington, D.C., March 19, 2002.

⁴⁴ Anas Malik, “Selected Reflections on the Muslim World in the aftermath of 9-11,” *Alternatives: Turkish Journal of International Relations*, Vol. 1, No. 2, Summer 2002, 201–225.

⁴⁵ “Ecevit’ten Teröre Karsi Dayanisma cagrisi,” *Hürriyet*, September 12, 2001, “ABD’nin Yanındayız,” *Hürriyet*, September 13, 2001; For several Turkish intellectuals’ responses: “Linkage to Islam rejected,” *Turkish Daily News*, September 14, 2001.

Following the tragedy in the USA, Turkey conferred with some fellow members of the OIC and urged her NATO allies as well as the EU members to avoid such misuse.⁴⁶

The OIC-EU Summit, which was held in Istanbul February 12–13, 2002, was an expression of Turkey's determination to assume its responsibility through a policy of bridging the East and the West, and calling for harmony, rather than conflict between two civilizations. The Forum turned out to be a useful platform for an intensive exchange of views between representatives of international organizations, high-ranking politicians, opinion-makers, intellectuals from EU-member countries, OIC-member countries and observer countries; mutual compliments filled the air, although it remains to be seen what it will bring about in concrete political terms.⁴⁷ Organizing such a conference, and bringing together EU member states and Muslim countries around the same table, had a symbolic meaning and it was seen as the start of the new Turkish role.⁴⁸ Ismail Cem's views on the conference were reflective of this:

An example of what Turkey could do [to play a bridging role between the Islamic World and the Western Christian World] can be seen in the forthcoming meeting of the OIC and the EU. For the first time these two organizations will be coming together for a political exchange of opinions. Besides, in the aftermath of September 11 we are strongly opposed to the wrong perception of placing terrorism and Islam side by side. I had spoken with many of my Western colleagues and drew their attention to the sensitivity of wording used... In correcting such mistakes and in establishing some sort of a harmony, Turkey has a pioneering place that is provided to it by its history, culture and modern identity. We have to act in awareness of that responsibility.⁴⁹

⁴⁶ Cem critical remarks on 5 November 2001 see: http://www.ibsresearch.com/news_display.asp?upsale_id=1019&archive=&iday=05&imonth=11&iyear=2001§ion=IBSNews. (accessed 2 September 2006).

⁴⁷ Coverage of the Forum in Turkish Press see: <http://www.byegm.gov.tr/on-sayfa/oic/oic.htm>; also see the information provided on Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs' webpage: http://www.mfa.gov.tr/OIC_EU_cdrom/index.htm. (accessed August 3, 2006).

⁴⁸ Elif Ünal, "West and East Attempt to Bridge Differences in Turkey," *Turkish Probe*, No.473, February 10, 2002.

⁴⁹ Cem remarks referencing the Turkish model as a paradigm of civilization. *Turkish Daily News*, January 7, 2002.

There are at least two interrelated aspects relevant: First, Turkey's support for the coalition was instrumental in defusing the charge that the war was a Muslim-Christian confrontation. This point was very well expressed by Foreign Minister Cem:

This is the fight between democracy and terrorism and the struggle between the wise and fanatic. We believe that this fight will be won by our side. Turkey will be the biggest obstacle before those who want to divert this fact to a wrong path such as a fight between the religions.⁵⁰

Second, the Turkish model was offered as an alternative to a Taliban version of Islam. That means, Islam and modern values are compatible with each other, and it is possible to reconcile Islam within a modern, Western-style, democratic and secular system. In the words of Dale F. Eickelman,

Turkey can only offer the world an example of a nation in which Western democratic values and Islam converge in an increasingly strengthened civil society in which the state and religion are not seen as adversaries. 'Western' societies, like 'Islamic' ones, have no place for either militant secular extremism or militant religious extremism.⁵¹

Taking part in the Western-led coalition, Turkey was expected to facilitate other countries in adapting their counter-terrorist stance and cooperation with the U.S.⁵² From another perspective, it was also argued that this "geo-cultural" dimension, in addition to the geopolitical position, could constitute another asset for Turkey in its relations with the Western world, particularly as far as its quest for becoming a full member of the European Union concerns.⁵³

The argument that Turkey could be a role model for the Islamic world is also controversial in some aspects. First, Turkish ambitions in this direction are not new, and we have enough evidence to judge how they are perceived in other parts of the Islamic

⁵⁰ "Bu, Demokrasi ile Terörizmin Kavgası" *Hürriyet*, September 14, 2001.

⁵¹ Dale F. Eickelman, "Turkey between the West and the Rest," *Turkish Probe*, No. 474, February 17, 2002.

⁵² İter Turan, "Short Term Pains for Long Term Pleasures," *Private View*, Spring 2001, 10

⁵³ Orhan Gökce and Birol Akgün, *Degisen Dünya Politikasında Türkiye'nin Rolü: 11 Eylül'ün Getirdiği Fırsatlar, Riskler ve Tehditler* (Turkey's Role in the Changing World Politics: Opportunities, Risks and Threats Brought about by September 11), Paper Presented at First METU International Relations Conference, Ankara, July 3-5, 2002, 14.

world. Turks themselves are proud of being the only secular country in the Islamic world; from time to time, Turkey is offered as a role model from the outside as well. Yet, it is also equally true that Turkey's perception of itself as a model could not go beyond being an illusion, and those Western ideas promoted by Turkey have hardly penetrated into other Muslim societies. Arab countries' criticism of the secular Turkish model and other problems dominating Turkish-Arab relations are no secret. Any fundamental shift in the perceptions of other Muslim societies, which would ease the objections to adapting a Turkish-style system, cannot be observed. Considering the growing anti-American feelings, it is hard to expect that such a role for Turkey would be welcomed. The American way of dealing with terror — through primarily military means or through supporting the existing non-democratic regimes in the Islamic world — may hinder the burgeoning reformist movements in those countries and set fallbacks to the natural transformation of those societies. The result may be that radicalism in the Islamic world could be given a new impetus. In this sense, Turkey's attempts to carry the Western values into the region might even widen the existing gap between Turkey and other Islamic societies.

Second, the main problem with this argument is the question of whether it is possible at all to transform a society from the outside. As long as domestic passion for reform is lacking, the international pressures or influences to change a society's nature, structure, laws, and political, economic and social cultures — to make them conform to certain models — have limited effect. To be able to influence a society from outside, international actors must have strong linkages that would enable them to exert pressures stimulating a change in the behavior of the domestic actors. For instance, if we remember Turkish-EU relations, despite the existence of strong linkages, there is still a resistance to change coming from the Turkish establishment. Considering the lack of linkages, societal differences and geographical distances between Turkey and other Muslim societies, prospects for Turkey influencing other Muslim countries remain limited. Democratic regimes and other practices cannot be established overnight, nor can they be taken for granted. It took Turkey decades to reach its current level, and this was no doubt a painful process. That fact also dictates against transplanting Turkey's experience into other

societies that have not followed a similar path. On the other hand, even if you assume that the Islamic world wants and needs change, there is nothing to suggest that one would be imposed from Washington, with its own political agenda.

C. BENEFITS TO WESTERN INTERESTS

The war efforts in Afghanistan and terrorism brought the Central Asian, Caspian and Caucasus regions once again into the situation of interest. This is another area where Turkey's influence is supposedly growing and is therefore of interest to the U.S. Some countries in the region, which are mostly ruled by former Communist leaders in an authoritarian manner, were also under pressure from domestic opposition. Since this opposition was mixed with some elements of Islamic radicalism, particularly in the case of Central Asian states such as Uzbekistan, the regimes became active supporters of the international coalition against the Taliban and al-Qaeda. Moreover, the prospect of American involvement in the region offered those countries a good chance for balancing the Russian dominance through assuring American backing. They did not hesitate to respond to American demands and they provided the U.S. with access to their air space and military bases.⁵⁴ U.S. willingness to widen the international coalition against terrorism diminished concerns for human rights and democratization, and resulted in a situation where human rights violations and anti-democratic practices by the governments in the region might be overlooked. Once being a barrier to more proactive U.S. engagement in the region, disappearance of human rights considerations in effect facilitated the U.S. cooperation with the Central Asian countries.

Developing this relationship, Turkey's special ties with the region again appeared to be an important asset for U.S. policy. Turkey had a lot to offer: Not only did Turkey have strong political, cultural and economic connections to the region, but it had also accumulated a significant intelligence capability in the region. Moreover, the large

⁵⁴ For more information on the motivations and contributions of those countries, see: Alec Rasizade, "The New 'Great Game' in Central Asia after Afghanistan," *Alternatives: Turkish Journal of International Relations*, Vol. 1, No. 2, Summer 2002, 132–134.; for Uzbekistan, see: Nermin Güler "Özbekistan Dis Politikasında Dönüm Noktası: 11 Eylül," *Stratejik Analiz*, Vol. 2, No. 20, December 2001, 59–65; for the contribution of those countries to the U.S. operations see: Department of Defense (DoD), *International Contributions to the War Against Terrorism*, Fact Sheet: June 7, 2002.

experience Turkey accumulated in fighting terrorism would be made available in expanding the global war on terrorism to this region. After the focus of interest shifted to a possible operation against Afghanistan, and then to assuring the collaboration of the countries in Central Asia, Turkish analysts soon discovered that Turkey's "geo-strategic" importance was once again on the rise. It was thought that, thanks to its geography allowing easy access to the region, and its strong ties with the countries there, Turkey could play a pivotal role in the conduct of U.S. military operations in Afghanistan, and reshaping the politics in Central Asia:

Turkey is situated in a critical geographic position on and around which continuous and multidimensional power struggles with a potential to affect balance of power at world scale take place. The arcs that could be used by world powers in all sort of conflicts pass through Turkey. Turkish territory, airspace and seas are not only a necessary element to any force projection in the regions stretching from Europe and Asia to the Middle East, Persian Gulf, and Africa, but also make it possible to control its neighborhood. All these features made Turkey a center that must be controlled and acquired by those aspiring to be world powers. In the new process, Turkey's importance has increased in American calculations. With a consistent policy, Turkey could capitalize on this to derive some practical benefits. Turkey has acquired a new opportunity to enhance its role in Central Asia.⁵⁵

Increasing international interest in the region had further implications on the energy resources in the Caspian basin and Central Asia. Already, before the September 11 events, there had been much talk about a new "great game" in the making on the chessboard of Central Asia and Caucasus.⁵⁶ After the war in Afghanistan, there was a growing belief among many analysts that the centuries-old great game was entering a new phase.⁵⁷ According to this line of reasoning, the U.S. military operations in Afghanistan were not simply a response to the attacks of September 11. Rather,

⁵⁵ Osman Nuri Aras, "Yasanan Yeni Surecte Avrasya Enerji Kaynaklarinin Yeri ve Önemi" (The Place and Importance of Eurasian Energy Resources in the New Process," 2023, November 15, 2001, No.7, 38.

⁵⁶ M. E. Ahrari with James Beal, *The New Great Game in Muslim Central Asia*, McNair Paper 47, Washington, D.C.: National Defense University, Institute for National Strategic Studies, 1996; Zbigniew K. Brzezinski, *The Grand Chessboard : American Primacy and Its Geostrategic Imperatives* (New York, NY: Basic Books, 1997).

⁵⁷ Rasizade, *op.cit.*, 125.

The plans for the American offensive in Afghanistan were not formulated in response to September 11, but existed prior to the terrorist attacks in the USA. Therefore, it could be argued that the attacks on September 11 provided the US with the opportunity to enter Afghanistan to further extend a project that had already started months, if not years, earlier.⁵⁸

This was attributed to the special geostrategic significance of Afghanistan, because,

Afghanistan occupies a strategic position in the geopolitical landscapes in general, and the geopolitics of the oil and natural gas resources in particular. Afghanistan has been in an extremely significant location spanning South Asia, Central Asia, and the Middle East. The US administration has significant political/ military and economic reasons to try to turn Afghanistan into a base for American military operations in the region. There can be no doubting Afghanistan's strategic importance to the US.⁵⁹

Even one analyst goes as far as claiming that “the hidden stakes in the war against terrorism can be summed up in a single word: oil.”⁶⁰ This reading of post-September 11 developments in the region found large support among many Turkish analysts, and a number of studies raised the same argument, with the implication that those developments contributed to Turkey's strategic position.⁶¹

The building of alternative pipelines to transport oil and gas from the region to the world markets was the crux of the issue, because the Caspian resources are landlocked. The methods and the routes through which the oil and gas are carried to world markets have direct geopolitical effects. But it had long been on the agenda, without a definite answer. Turkey had been pressing for the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline project. The developments in the wake of September 11 turned out to strengthen Turkey's hand in this

⁵⁸ Bülent Gökay, “The Most Dangerous Game in the World: Oil, War, and U.S. Global Hegemony,” *Alternatives: Turkish Journal of International Relations*, Vol. 1, No. 2, Summer 2002, 48.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 49.

⁶⁰ Frank Viviano, *San Francisco Chronicle*, September 26, 2001, quoted by Gökay, *op.cit.*, 61.

⁶¹ For example see: Editorial, “Türkiye, Hazar, ve Afganistan Ekseninde Petro-politik” (Petro-politics at the axis of Turkey, Caspian and Afghanistan,” 2023, November 15, 2001, No. 7, 8–15; Nadir Biyikoglu, “Afganistan Gerceği ve Büyük Oyun'a Dönüş” (The Reality of Afghanistan and Return to the Great Game), 2023, November 15, 2001, No.7, 16–21; Aras, *op.cit.*

issue. The U.S. threw its weight on Turkey's side and the construction of the pipeline was scheduled to start around September 2002, and finish by the end of 2004.⁶²

Within Turkey there was a growing optimism that the cumulative effect of these developments would strengthen Turkey's position within the region and promote a Turkish zone of influence. This case has, among others, the following limitations. A proactive Turkish engagement with Central Asia and the Caucasus is not a new concept.⁶³ After they gained independence with the collapse of the Soviet Union, the newly emerged Turkic states looked toward Turkey as a model. There was also a corresponding great enthusiasm in Turkey for closer relations within the region, as well as Western support to promote the "Turkish model" that embedded secularism in a predominantly Muslim society, adapted a capitalist-market economy and a multi-party system, and prioritized Western orientation. This region (for Turkey) was to offer a new area to expand Turkish influence and boost Turkey's geo-strategic value to the West. Turkish ambitions, however, remained largely unrealized, and soon that model started to decline in the face of the political realities of the region and changes in Western perceptions over time.⁶⁴ Within Turkey, the fall of the Turkish model was mainly due to Turkey's own constraints: the lack of enough financial and economic resources to meet the expectations of these countries. Turkey confronted obstacles in trying to enhance their influence in the region. Domestic problems remained unchanged and the challenging environment when applying the Turkish model made developments difficult to sustain. Particularly, considering that Turkey is itself struggling to overcome its own economic and financial problems, the question arises as to how she will be able to engage in an active new role in the region.

Yet, the developments so far imply that Turkey's relations with the region in the new era are seen differently. Previously, Turkey was perceived as a model for the

⁶² "Bush Voices Support for Oil and Gas Pipelines Leading from Caspian to Turkey," *Turkish Daily News*, June 5, 2002.

⁶³ Graham E. Fuller, "Turkey's New Eastern Orientation," in Graham E. Fuller and Ian O. Lesser, *Turkey's New Geopolitics: From the Balkans to Western China*, Boulder, CO: Westview/RAND, 1993, 37–97.

⁶⁴ Idris Bal, *Turkey's Relations with the West and the Turkic Republics: The Rise and Fall of the 'Turkish Model'*, Aldershot: Ashgate, 2000.

economic, social and political transformation of these countries. This time, the role expected from Turkey is limited to military and strategic fields. In addition to the existing ones, Turkey has concluded several new military cooperation and education agreements with these countries. After September 11, Turkey stepped up its military assistance to Uzbekistan⁶⁵ and Kazakhstan⁶⁶ and to a lesser extent to Kyrgyzstan⁶⁷, by supplying arms and military equipments and offering military training for the modernization of the military capabilities of these nations. After those countries allowed the U.S. to use their airspace and military bases before the military campaign in Afghanistan started, Turkish Air Force Command personnel conducted site surveys for possible airfields in Tajikistan, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan to be used in air operations.⁶⁸ Similarly, post-September 11 developments and ensuing U.S. interest in the region had spillover effects in the Caucasus and provided an added impetus to the Turkish activism in the region. Besides the positive steps taken in the issue of pipeline projects and Turkey's close relations with Azerbaijan, Turkish-Georgian cooperation in the military field remarkably accelerated. Turkey had already started providing military assistance to Georgia in 1997. After the U.S. decision to establish military presence in Georgia,⁶⁹ Turkey's cooperation with Georgia became particularly important.⁷⁰

Aside from those military contributions, Turkey tried to raise a common concern for terrorism in the region through bilateral visits, as well as on multilateral platforms. On April 29-30, 2002, the presidents of Turkey, Azerbaijan and Georgia held a summit

⁶⁵ "Turkey Equips, Trains Uzbek Military," *Turkish Daily News*, March 7, 2002; "Kivrikoglu Visits Uzbekistan; Signs Deal for Military Assistance," *Turkish Daily News*, March 19, 2002.

⁶⁶ RFE/RL *Central Asian Report*, Vol. 2, No. 11, March 21, 2002.

⁶⁷ "Turkey, Kyrgyzstan Aim at Strategic Partnership," *Turkish Daily News*, February 22, 2002.

⁶⁸ DoD, *International Contributions*, 12.

⁶⁹ "U.S. Military in Georgia Will Increase Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan Pipeline Security," *Turkish Daily News*, March 7, 2002; for the effects of this new development on the region, see: Kamil Agacan, "ABD'nin Gürcistan'a Asker Göndermesi: Terörle Mücadelede Üçüncü Cephe mi, Yoksa Köprübasi mi?" *Stratejik Analiz*, Vol. 2, No. 24 (April 2002), 69-76.

⁷⁰ "Turkey Donates Vehicles, Communications Equipment to Georgian Military," *Turkish Daily News*, March 7, 2002; "Turkey Gives Military Aid to Georgia," *Turkish Daily News*, June 12, 2002; it should also be noted that the U.S. policy towards Azerbaijan has also changed. In December 2001, Section 907 of the Freedom Support Act, preventing U.S. from direct U.S. government assistance to Azerbaijan, was revoked.

meeting in the Turkish city of Trabzon. They signed an agreement to work together against terrorism, and also promised cooperation on the pipelines to bring the energy-rich region's resources to the West. The summit was completed with a joint press conference of the three leaders after the signing of the agreement of "The Struggle Against Terrorism, Organized Crime and Other Important Crimes."⁷¹ Equally, on June 4, 2002, the "Summit for Cooperation and Confidence-Building Measures in Asia," held in Kazakhstan's capital Almaty, brought together heads of state of Turkey, China, Russia, India, Pakistan, Palestine, Israel, Egypt, Iran, Mongolia, Tajikistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Afghanistan and Azerbaijan. The leaders signed a "Declaration Aimed at Eradicating Terrorism and for Supporting a Dialogue between Civilizations," as well as an accord that included regulations, principles and commitments for establishing a comprehensive security mechanism.⁷² The celebration of the tenth anniversary of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation organization (BSEC) on June 25, 2002, in Istanbul, was another occasion where terrorism was discussed on a regional scale.⁷³

D. TURKEY AS SUBCONTRACTOR IN WAR ON TERRORISM

All these imply that what is required from Turkey is for it to play a "subcontractor" role in the region, thus facilitating an American presence there within the wider context of the war on terrorism — rather than creating a genuine independent Turkish zone of influence, or promoting a Turkish model once again. Therefore, Turkey's ambitions and maneuverability are very much limited by international interests in the region. A policy based primarily on limited contributions in the military field, as long as lacking in economic dimension, would be flawed. It is bound to remain

⁷¹ "Caucasus Cooperation Agreement against Terrorism Signed," *Turkish Daily News*, May 1, 2002; an agreement was reached on holding the summit regularly in the coming years, *Disisleri Güncesi*, April 2002; But, it was criticized because it failed to include some key players of the region, notably Russia, Armenia and Iran, see: Yusuf Kanli, "A Summit with Missing Key Players," *Turkish Daily News*, May 1, 2002; for more on the impact of the summit on the region, see: Hasan Kanbolat, "Türkiye-Azerbaycan-Gürcistan Zirvesi ve Bölgedeki Ortak," *Stratejik Analiz* (Vol. 3, No. 26, June 2002), 52–57.

⁷² *Newspot*, No.33, May–June 2002; In his address at the Summit, President Sezer reemphasized Turkey's experience in fighting terrorism and the importance of international cooperation in tackling with this issue. President's Press Office, *Asya'da Isbirliği ve Güven Artirici Önlemler Konferansı Zirve Toplantısı'nda Yaptıkları Konuşma*, June 4, 2002.

⁷³ "Black Sea Economic Cooperation Tackles Energy and Terrorism," *Turkish News*, June 26, 2002.

temporary. Once the conditions have changed and the region returns to normalcy, the underlying realities may resurface and this policy may leave Turkey at a disadvantaged situation in political and economic terms.

These countries are geographically landlocked with no direct connections to open seas. They are also far from the prosperous Western markets. In the short run, they would not be able to attract significant foreign capital, except energy investments. They will probably be seen as “raw material suppliers,” rather than as “emerging markets.” In other words, they will not be Asian tigers or Central and Eastern European Countries, but new Gulf States. In the foreseeable future, for this reason, the prospects for these countries to be part of the global market economy and move towards democratic pluralistic regimes are limited somewhat. They will be approached from a strategic perspective, and it is against this background that Turkey’s pivotal role in the region can be better comprehended. As far as the optimism surrounding the launching of the construction of Baku-Ceyhan pipeline (Ceyhan is located three miles from Incirlik Air Base)⁷⁴ is concerned, it must be kept in mind that a number of other developments might diminish the benefits of the pipelines to Turkey. Particularly, the high pipeline construction costs, the possible developments that may come about concerning the alternative routes, such as Afghanistan,⁷⁵ and the tactics to be employed by other players could have adverse affects on the feasibility of the project.

A more definite reality, which speaks against Turkish ambitions in this region, is the changing shape of U.S.–Russian relations. Under Putin, Russia chose a non-confrontational type of relationship with the United States. Putin had already come a long way toward restoring Russian power and influence in the region, and cementing Moscow’s primacy, without being opposed by Washington.⁷⁶ Following September 11,

⁷⁴ Troops at Incirlik provide no support to the Ceyhan facility.

⁷⁵ “Afghanistan is on agenda again as energy route,” *Turkish Daily News*, May 24, 2002; for an analysis on the impact of the war on BTC pipeline, see: Cenk Pala, “Afganistan Savasi’nin Hazar Boru Hattı Projelerine Etkisi: ‘Kirmizi Kalem’ bu Kez Kimin Elinde?” *Stratejik Arastirmalar Dosyasi*, Vol. 3, No. 11 (2002), 17–24.

⁷⁶ F. Stephen Larrabee, “Russia and Its Neighbors: Integration or Disintegration,” in Richard L. Kugler and Ellen L. Frost, eds., *The Global Century, Globalization and National Security, Volume II*, Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press, 2001, 859–874.

Russia cooperated with the United States and did not resist U.S. military deployment in Central Asia and the Caucasus. At the same time, partly in return for its concurrence with U.S. engagement in the region, Russia also tried to utilize the international atmosphere and use the discourse of fighting against terrorism to justify its own activities in the region, thus strengthened its position.⁷⁷ Based on the developments, there are also some arguments that a U.S.–Russian rapprochement might better provide security and stability in this region; therefore the United States should also recognize Russian interests there. If events follow such a course, that will clearly create some problems for Turkey, since Turkey and Russia have been competing with each other in this area.⁷⁸ It should be noted that many analysts refer to prospects for cooperation between the countries. Throughout the 1990s, contrary to earlier expectations, both sides had prioritized the economic interests and Turkish–Russian relations developed cooperatively.⁷⁹ Equally it is argued that cooperation, rather than competition, might be the case also after September 11, and this cooperation might be extended beyond bilateral relations and include multidimensional partnerships in Eurasia.⁸⁰

As it seems so far, Turkey emerged as one of the leading actors in the fight against terrorism; hence it rigorously supported the international coalition against the Taliban and the al-Qaeda. When it became clear that the September 11 attacks had originated from Afghanistan, and a military campaign was inevitably going to take place, the government was quick in obtaining a parliamentary authorization in October 2001 to

⁷⁷ Elnur Soltan, “Bush-Putin Zirvesi: Soguk Savas’ın İkinci Bitisi,” *Stratejik Analiz* (Vol. 2, No. 20, December 2001), 5–24; However Ozdag notes that rather than a willing consent to U.S. deployment in Central Asia, Russia had to bow to U.S. pressure, see: Ümit Özdag, “Terörizm, Küresel Güvenlik ve Türkiye,” *Stratejik Analiz* (Vol. 2, No. 19, November 2001), 8.

⁷⁸ Mehmet Binay, *Ankara Köprü Rolünü Devrediyor* (Ankara is handing over its bridging role), *www.ntvmsnbc.com.tr* newsportal, October 5, 2002. Accessed April 14, 2006.

⁷⁹ Duygu Bazoglu Sezer, “Turkish-Russian Relations a Decade Later: From Adversary to Managed Competition,” *Perceptions* (Vol. 6, No. 1, March-May 2001), 79–98.

⁸⁰ Karaosmanoglu, *op.cit.*; In his New Year’s address, Foreign Minister Cem was also underlining that Turkey perceived Russia more as a partner than competitor. *Disisleri Güncesi*, January 2002; likewise, Turkey’s reaction to U.S.-Russian rapprochement was positive: “Turkey pleased with US - Russian rapprochement,” *Turkish Daily News*, May 29, 2002; even a change in Russia’s attitude towards Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline is also noted. For the evolution of Russian position, see: Sinan Ogan, “Kremlin ve Lukoil Arasında Rusya’nın Baku-Ceyhan Politikası,” *Stratejik Analiz* (Vol. 3, No. 26, June 2002), 68–76.

contribute troops to the U.S. campaign. The bill, which was met with public opposition,⁸¹ also authorized the government to allow the stationing of foreign troops on Turkish territory and permit the use of Turkish airspace and airbases.⁸² But, the Chief of Staff Kivrikoglu and other top officials expressed their hope that the scope of the conflict and Turkey's direct contribution would be limited. This showed the overall ambivalence of Turkish elite, while maintaining that Turkey cannot remain aloof to the developments in Afghanistan. Kivrikoglu, at the same time, called for a limited Turkish role leaving out active Turkish contribution to combat operations.⁸³ The Turkish government, however, decided to contribute to the campaign by sending a unit of special forces to work with U.S. troops in humanitarian operations and train Northern Alliance fighters. Turkey also hinted that it could make its experience in guerilla warfare available, and it could help carve out a coalition between various Afghan factions against the Taliban. The U.S. benefited from Turkish airspace, used Incirlik Air Base as a transport hub for the campaign, and according to some reports, was supplied intelligence by Turkey.⁸⁴ The rapid collapse of Taliban rule, however, made the possible role of Turkish soldiers in the actual combat phase unclear. Soon, a new rationale emerged. When the Taliban rule in Afghanistan came to an end, it became possible to launch international initiatives to rebuild the country, and the role of Turkey was again undeniable. Although it was not able to make a significant contribution in terms of financial and economic reconstruction aid, Turkey actively participated in the International Security and Assistance Force (ISAF), charged with assisting the newly formed interim Afghan authority and with providing order and stability in the capital, Kabul. Within the framework of the ISAF, Turkey contributed to the training of a national Afghan police and military force and provided military aid and equipment, as well as patrolling Kabul and its environs.

⁸¹ "Majority Opposes Attack on Afghans," *Turkish Daily News*, October 4, 2001.

⁸² Turkey had already provided the U.S. with overflight rights in September shortly after attacks: "Turkey opens airspace to US," *BBC News Online*, September 22, 2001.

⁸³ Turkish dailies from October 3, 2001; for different reactions, see "Asker G nderme İcin ne Demislerdi?" *www.ntvmsnbc.com.tr* newportal, November 2, 2001; this initial ambivalence and 'passivism' was, however, criticized by some analysts, see:  zdog, *Ter rizm, K resel G venlik*, 10–11.

⁸⁴ "Analysis: Turkey's Pivotal Position," *BBC News Online*, October 18, 2001.

Moreover, in June 2002, when the British mandate was over, Turkey assumed the lead-nation role and took over the command of the ISAF.⁸⁵

After these developments, it is claimed by most analysts that Turkey is going to become a more assertive power — not only in its immediate neighborhood, but also “out of area.” In Turkish reasoning, its active support for the U.S. military campaign was a logical corollary of its position on fighting international terrorism. According to Primer Minister Ecevit, it was natural that Turkey joined a war against terror because the U.S. always stood behind Turkey, and he emphasized that the war had to be fought to the end until Taliban regime was wiped out.⁸⁶ Capitalizing on U.S.-led war on terrorism was a useful instrument for Turkey to enhance its influence in Central Asia. By taking the strategic decision and taking an active part also in the military realm, Turkey sought to have a say in the future political landscape of not only Afghanistan, but also Central Asia. As regards active participation in ISAF, it was in line with its policy on peace operations, as it evolved in the post-Cold War era. Turkey has been involved in several U.N. and NATO peacekeeping missions, from Somalia to Bosnia and Kosovo. This time, through participating actively in the ISAF and commanding this multinational force, it could show its military capabilities and ability to project power abroad, and thus expand the Turkish sphere of influence.⁸⁷ Turkey sought compensation for its military support in the economic field.⁸⁸ The Turkish economy, which was already undergoing a severe crisis and was under an IMF program, was hit badly by the September 11 shock. Turkish Economy Minister Kemal Dervis, after claiming that Turkey must support the international fight against terrorism because it had suffered from similar threats, hinted

⁸⁵ For more details on the Turkish debate on ISAF, see: Saban Kardas, “Dilemmas of Peacebuilding: Reflections on Turkey’s Drive for ISAF Command,” *Features, Turkish Daily News* (April 19, 2002).

⁸⁶ “Basbakan Sayin Bülent Ecevit’in TBMM’de Yaptıkları Konuşma,” *Disisleri Güncesi*, October 10, 2001; also see: “Basbakan Sayin Bülent Ecevit’in CNN International Televizyonu’na Verdikleri Mülakat,” *Disisleri Güncesi*, October 12, 2001.

⁸⁷ “Leadership to Test Turkish Military Might,” *Turkish News*, May 3, 2002.

⁸⁸ For more details on Turkey’s motives, see: “Afganistan Politikamizi Ulusal Cikarlarimiz ve Tercihlerimiz Belirliyor,” Interview with Huseyin Bagci, 2023, No.7, November 2001, 22–27; Mehmet Seyfettin Erol, “Firsatlar ve Zorluklar Ikileminde Türkiye-Afganistan Iliskilerinde Yeni Dönem,” *Stratejik Analiz*, Vol.2, No.23, March 2002, 77–85; Alan Makovsky, “Turkey’s Unfinished Role in the War on Terrorism,” *Insight Turkey*, Vol. 4, No. 1, January–March 2002, 44–45; Hugh Pope, “Turkey’s Role in Afghanistan Presents Opportunity,” *Wall Street Journal*, June 6, 2002, A16.

that there may be a price. According to him, “Turkey’s strategic importance for the European Union and NATO is increasing and within this strategic framework Western allies should consider the cost that Turkey will have to bear.”⁸⁹ A related reasoning was used by Ecevit for justifying assistance to the U.S.⁹⁰ That meant the delay of loan payments, and, when necessary, the provision of new IMF loans, as well as direct U.S. assistance.⁹¹

At the same time, similar to the general arguments regarding Turkey’s being an example to the Muslim world, mentioned earlier, it was also claimed that Turkey could become a model for Afghanistan. That a war against Afghanistan offered the possibility to replace the fundamentalist Taliban regime, to which Turkey had been consistently opposed, was an important reason behind Turkey’s support for American war. Prime Minister Ecevit was one of the vehement supporters of this view. During his correspondence with President Bush, he underlined that a military operation on Afghanistan should include the toppling Taliban regime.⁹² He went on, stating that the model to be introduced had to be one similar to Turkey’s secular democratic model for peace, stability and tranquility in Afghanistan. The discussions sometimes ran into an emotional mood. The deep historical ties between the two countries have been continuously repeated to underline the “necessity” of Turkey’s support for Afghan people: Afghanistan was the first country to recognize the new Turkish Republic; Turkey helped Afghanistan in its modernization efforts; Atatürk (the founding father of the modern Turkish Republic) put special emphasis on Afghanistan, and so on.⁹³ Some proponents of a proactive Turkish foreign policy went as far as maintaining that:

⁸⁹ “Turkey rattled by conflict fears,” *BBC News Online: Business*, September 17, 2001.

⁹⁰ “Turkey Promises Troops for Afghan Campaign,” *Insight Turkey*, Vol. 3, No. 4, October–December 2001, 180.

⁹¹ “US Delegation Suggests Rethink of Turkey’s \$5 Billion Military Debt,” *Turkish News*, October 2, 2001.

⁹² Fikret Bila, “Ecevit’ten Bush’a: ‘Taliban devrilmeli,’” *Milliyet*, September 26, 2001.

⁹³ Prime Minister’s address at party group, *Hürriyet*, November 9, 2001 also for the coverage of Foreign Minister Cem’s visit to Kabul on December 17, 2001, in which he made extensive references to historical ties as facilitating factor of cooperation, see Turkish dailies from December 18, 2001.

The first country to recognize Kemal Atatürk's revolution and adopt the Turkish model was Afghanistan in 1921. Under the right political formula, which Turkey will undoubtedly contribute, Afghanistan could be the first model in the post-Cold War period to rehabilitate itself through the methods and means provided in the historic Turkish national experiment.⁹⁴

Foreign Minister Cem, though acknowledging the universal validity of Turkish model, called for caution in that the Turkish model “is not one that could be forced upon from the outside. What kind of a model they want, what kind of a model they need, and to what kind of a model they are ready is something to be decided upon by the Afghan people themselves.”⁹⁵

The aforementioned is of course from an American perspective; Turkey's support and participation in the coalition was useful to rebut allegations that the U.S. was engaged in a war against Islam. Therefore, similar to Turkish arguments, there were extensive references to Turkey's constituting a model for Afghanistan as well.⁹⁶ Besides its military contributions, as stated, Turkey had important linkages in the country and the region that could facilitate the U.S. presence there. As for a peacekeeping phase, Turkey has a large standing army with accumulated experience in special operations and peacekeeping — as such, it could spare its troops for such a mission.

Prospects for heightened expectations regarding the region are difficult to substantiate. First, Turkey's interest to Afghanistan is similar to the sudden discovery of Central Asia and Caucasus after the collapse of the Soviet Union. Therefore, because of the lack of any previous strategic perspective towards the country and the region, except for the Atatü era, raising the expectations conjecturally is highly problematic. Second, as was discussed earlier, Turkey's potential for becoming a model for the Muslim world is highly limited. In the case of Afghanistan, this is further limited by the particular characteristics of this war-torn country: The people of the country are illiterate and very

⁹⁴ Paul M. Wihbey and Sule Kilicarslan, “A Turkish Strategic Window of Opportunity,” *Insight Turkey* (October–December 2001, Volume 3, Number 4), 21.

⁹⁵ “Cem interview: Turkish Daily News, 7 January 2002, information describing Turkey as a model paradigm of civilization. (accessed 21 September 2006)

⁹⁶ “Powell: Atatürk Afganistan Konusunda Hakliydi,” *Hürriyet*, December 6, 2001.

closed-off from the world; the society is very much fragmented and economically collapsed. Considering that even in relatively more developed Muslim countries Western liberal values are not welcomed by the people, one may wonder how Turkey would be able to carry these values to Afghanistan.

Considering military contributions and assuming the ISAF command, surely they will give an important drive for Turkey's role in the region, and international standing. But, if they are not backed by other economic and political incentives in the medium and long-term, their practical benefits could be severely limited. Chiefly, if we judge based on the past experience about Turkey's earlier expectations regarding Central Asia, geographical distance and lack of enough means could further limit transforming this engagement into political influence. The effect of geographical distance and the global reach of the U.S., therefore, should be carefully evaluated. As the empirical evidence about Central Asia suggests, although Turkey sees itself as a bridge to open up these countries to the West, the West was in fact able to establish direct contacts with these countries. Likewise, in a military sense, particularly during the preparation and conduct of the Operation Enduring Freedom, the U.S. was able to get the support of other regional powers, notably Pakistan, and as such minimized the role of Turkey in the overall operation.⁹⁷ The dynamism of U.S. foreign policy in the new era and whether Turkey can keep pace with it — how many such other engagements Turkey can sustain — should be taken into consideration in evaluating the impact of Afghanistan engagement on Turkish foreign policy. In this line, any shift of international interest away from the Central Asian region, especially if one considers the U.S. intentions to expand the war on terrorism, could also result in a situation where the novelty of the “strategic importance of the region” might wear off. In such a situation, this out-of-area role might lose the wider political context in which it takes place and turn out to be another sporadic short-term engagement.

Another area of activity in Turkish foreign policy was observed in Turkish–European Union relations. The basic Turkish argument could be summarized as follows: Because the events of September 11 have proven Turkey’s value, not only to the Americans but also to the Europeans, Turkey could now “anticipate a warmer West.”⁹⁸ Turkey tried to utilize this opportunity so as to cement its relations with both the U.S. and Europe by emphasizing its role as a significant pro-Western power in such a critical juncture. There was a strong Turkish belief that in the new era opened up by September 11 events, because the concern for fighting international terrorism was going to be the major *leitmotiv*, the international system would be increasingly dominated by security-oriented considerations. That would, the argument goes, inevitably enhance the role of powerful security actors such as the U.S. and NATO — at the expense of less powerful ones, such as EU members and CFSP. By this way, the urgency of Turkey’s relations with CFSP/ESDP was expected to diminish.⁹⁹ Besides the hope that Turkey’s renewed importance would boost Turkish–European relations, there was therefore an additional movement in the Turks’ viewpoint: In the context of the growing American–Turkish strategic partnership, the Turks felt confident that the U.S. would not leave Ankara alone and would press the EU to satisfy Turkish demands. Therefore, the EU should appreciate the Turkish position in some of the problems dominating Turkish–European relations for some time.

The Turkish expectations that the EU and European countries would be more receptive to Turkey’s position on fighting against terrorism have already been elaborated. Other issues that were supposedly going to be solved in a manner favorable to Turkey’s

⁹⁷ There were speculations that in the planning and conduct of military campaign in Afghanistan U.S. central command could be situated in Turkey, yet they turned out to be unsubstantiated exaggerations of Turkey’s role. Based on this prospect, some analysts even had gone as far as arguing that moving the central command to Turkey could revitalize Turkey’s strategic importance and could create a counter-balance against the growing influence of the EU/Germany in Eastern Mediterranean in view of the accession of Cyprus into the EU. “Prof. Dr. Osman Metin Öztürk’le Söylesi,” *2023* (No. 6, October 2001), 18–19.

⁹⁸ “Bozkir (Vice Secretary-General for European Union Affairs): ‘Turkey Can Anticipate a Warmer West,’” *Turkish News*, October 3, 2001.

⁹⁹ For an assessment of the effects of the war in Afghanistan on CFSP/ESDP, see: Saban Kardas, “Afganistan Operasyonu’nun AGSP’ye Olan Yansimalari,” November 25, 2001, http://www.liberal-dt.org.tr/guncel/Kardas/sk_afganistan.htm.

interests included the Cyprus issue; the deadlock in the ESDP (European Security and Defense Policy); and Turkey's troubled EU membership process. There were indeed some initial positive steps in all those areas, and a sense of optimism was inserted.¹⁰⁰ There appeared a chance to overcome the tiff over the ESDP-NATO relations and over what place Turkey would have in the development of the ESDP. In the runup to the Laeken Summit in December 2001, a consensus called *Ankara Document* was reached between Turkey, the United Kingdom and the U.S. Moreover, after a long pause, the dialogue between the leaders of the two communities on Cyprus was resumed. Both achievements were viewed as successes by the Turkish politicians,¹⁰¹ and the U.S. was said to have given stimulus to those developments.¹⁰²

I would suggest that there are some fundamental challenges to Turkey's arguments, which would limit a sudden breakthrough in Turkish-EU relations. The main weakness of the Turkish discourse could be identified as follows. The initial rhetoric seemed to have perceived the West as a monolithic bloc. Although this seemed to be true at the immediate aftermath of the September 11 terror attacks and all European powers expressed that they were united with the U.S. against the dangers of terrorism, after the novelty of the slogans of solidarity with the U.S. faded away, the underlying divergences in the transatlantic relations over a wide range of issues resurfaced. This was exacerbated by another feature of the approach taken by Turkey, which was to rely on U.S. pressure in its dealings with the EU. Those developments slowly put Turkey in an awkward position because EU-U.S. relations were increasingly characterized by disagreements over several issues, and, transatlantic relations were more occupied with how to find a solution to those problems than with Turkey, in fact the urgency of Turkey's problems in

¹⁰⁰ "Rays of Light: For the First time in a Year, Turks are Seeing Some Flickers of Hope," *Economist*, December 15, 2001, Vol. 361, No. 8252.

¹⁰¹ "No Concessions on ESDI and Cyprus: Ecevit," www.ntvmsnbc.com.tr newportal, December 7, 2001.

¹⁰² Colin Powell's visit to Ankara was the indicator of U.S. support: "Powell to push for Cyprus settlement," *Turkish Daily News*, December 3, 2001; Jim Kapsis, "Beyond geopolitics for Cyprus," *The Washington Times*, December 5, 2001, for a Turkish view, see: Cengiz Candar, "11 Eylül Jeopolitigi ve Kibris'ta Son Tango," www.haberturk.com newportal, December 6, 2001.

the eyes of the U.S. was far away from meeting the Turks' expectations.¹⁰³ Even if one assumes that the U.S. would be inclined to support Turkey, it would approach Turkish-EU relations from a strategic perspective, and that may not be compatible with the actual realities of Turkey-EU relations and the expectations of the EU from Turkey. This reasoning applies largely to democratization and human rights priorities of the EU vis-à-vis Turkey, — the famous analogy of “democratic and stable Turkey versus stable and democratic Turkey.” That could in turn lead to the next problem. Perhaps, this ‘tactic’ of using the relations with the U.S. as a leverage vis-à-vis the EU is likely to cultivate a mood of distrust between Turkey and the EU, as well as a friction between the EU and the U.S. Instead of creating a healthy dialogue with the EU, Turkey’s use of its strategic ties with the United States and the U.S. lobbying as a stick against the EU was increasingly perceived as “a kind of low-intensity threat” against Brussels. In the long run, Ankara therefore hinders the creation of a strong channel of trust with the EU, and thus isolates itself. Against such a picture, it was no surprise that soon Turkish elite started to question Turkey’s membership process into the EU. This was paralleled by another debate on whether Turkey should make a choice between the EU membership and strategic partnership with the US.

Turkish political elite’s perception of the country as an actor indispensable to the West, particularly in political and strategic realm, is a cause for further problems. It’s true that Turkey’s role in the European security realm is very vital, but a security-dominated discourse that lies at the basis of Turkish perceptions of the relations with Europe has an impact not only on the way Turkey values itself, but also on the actual course of the developments. At times, this leads to strong attitudes towards the EU and asking for concessions or a different treatment in a way to further hamper the integration process. Importantly, capitalizing on the strategic importance diverts the attention away from real problems and reduces the urgency for introducing and implementing economic, political, and cultural reforms demanded by the European integration process. The more Turkey is focused on its indispensability to the West, the less the country will be willing to

¹⁰³ “EU-US Summit Starts Today: Turkey’s EU Membership is not on the Agenda,” *Turkish Daily News*, May 3, 2002.

undertake the necessary transformation in its journey towards EU membership. The EU representatives were quick in making their positions clear against Turkey's attempts to capitalize on strategic importance and de-emphasize membership criteria. EU Commissioner responsible for enlargement, Gunter Verheugen, maintained that Turkey should meet the hard criteria to be a member of the EU, otherwise, the "Whole Europe Integration Project" will lose its credibility. He went on saying that "(w)e will soften the conditions of Turkey's membership. In return, Turkey will give us the guarantee of strategic aid. We cannot make such a bargain."¹⁰⁴ There were even initial expectations that, similar to Turkey's entry into NATO following its contribution of troops to Korean War, Turkey's participation into military campaign in Afghanistan could pay the way for Turkey's membership into EU. This warning is quite telling.

Last, remembering that the underlying merit of the problems, which have so-far dominated Turkish–EU relations, is unlikely to disappear all of a sudden; even after September 11, we are further called to be cautious. The continuation of the Greek veto on the Ankara Document which, from Turkey's side, resolved the tension over ESDP, and Turkey's futile attempts to force the EU to set a deadline for the start of membership negotiations, are some of the examples. Therefore, a fundamental shift in the EU's policy towards Turkey, just for the sake of Turkey's enhanced strategic importance, is hard to expect. Rather, the determination to carry out the transformation on the domestic scene, and the speed with which Turkey delivers those changes in this process, would continue to remain the single most important determining factor of Turkey's relations with the EU.

E. TURKISH–AMERICAN RELATIONS

Turkish–American relations are important and must be addressed. In the American point of view, Turkey came to be seen as a critical country whose support and cooperation was essential. First, there was a strong belief in the U.S. that supporting a moderate Muslim country opposed to terrorism and extremism was the key to winning the war on terrorism. The Turkish model, which embeds Islam within a secular system, appeared to be the best candidate to fit this role. Turkey's geographical location and

¹⁰⁴ "Türkiye'yi Kaybederiz," *Milliyet*, October 22, 2001.

experience in fighting terrorism made its cooperation essential to the international coalition against terrorism. Furthermore, Turkey was more than willing to contribute to the U.S. agenda in Afghanistan by providing troops to the peacekeeping force. As a result, Turkish–American relations, characterized by up-and-downs throughout the 1990s, started to receive renewed interest. As noted above, on several occasions, many American statesmen liked to call Turkey “a steadfast partner in the war on terrorism.”¹⁰⁵ The changed mood was observed not only in the declarations of American politicians, but also in the titles of articles written on the issue, which were at times heavily emotional. Here is an example: “Turkey and the US: A partnership rediscovered.”¹⁰⁶

In Turkey’s eyes, the restoration of strategic relations with the U.S. implied several potential advantages. Consequently the Turks expected more rigorous U.S. assistance in a number of areas: U.S. support in the campaign against PKK terrorism; the promise of enlarged exports to American markets; the removal of obstacles to military transfers to Turkey; U.S. backing of Turkish command of Afghan peacekeepers and Baku-Ceyhan pipeline project; American support for further IMF loans; and American support for Turkey’s other foreign policy issues, such as Cyprus, the ESDP and EU membership. Another repeated theme in the Turkish arguments was that, contrary to the Europeans, the U.S. had always been more supportive and sensitive to Turkey’s demands in most of those contentious issues, thus it was a partner to be relied on. As a result, after September 11, Turkish–American relations, characterized as a “strategic partnership” by President Clinton in 1999, have been further deepened.¹⁰⁷ Prime

¹⁰⁵ U.S. Department of State, “Grossman: Change in the Value of Enduring Alliances”; “Turkey Called the ‘shining crown jewel’ amid instability: US Team Hails Turkey for its Important Role,” *Turkish Daily News*, October 2, 2001; U.S. Ambassador to Turkey was also underlining that the U.S. could have no better ally than Turkey in the war on terrorism, see: Robert W. Pearson, “The United States and Turkey: A Model of Sustained Engagement,” *The Fletcher Forum of World Affairs*, Winter-Spring 2002, 53–62; Annie Pforzheimer, “The United States and Turkey: A Post-September 11 Model of Sustained Engagement,” *Polis Bilimleri Dergisi*, Vol. 4, No.1-2, January–June 2002, 1–8.

¹⁰⁶ Steven A. Cook, “US-Turkey relations and the war on terrorism,” *Insight Turkey*, Vol. 3, No. 4, October–December 2001, 37–48.

¹⁰⁷ “Ismail Cem’s New Year’s address,” *Disisleri Güncesi*, January 2002.

Minister Ecevit's visit to Washington, January 14–19, 2002, was a climax that provided an important occasion to cement the strategic partnership.¹⁰⁸

Certainly, in principle, it is hard to ignore that American–Turkish relations converge to a large extent. It was this convergence of interests and shared strategic vision that constituted the basis of some common policies towards a number of issues and regions, such as Balkans, and Caucasus. Nevertheless, one should not underestimate some limitations, which force us to take a more cautious stance. To start with, growing references to Turkey's renewed strategic importance in the wake of September 11 attacks inevitably reproduce the basic nature of Turkish–American relations, which were heavily security-dominated. Because there are mutual security-related concerns in several issues and regions, this is of course understandable. However, as in the past, this situation leaves Turkey very much dependent on the shifting American strategic priorities. Because it remains the passive receiver of the external conditions in this partnership, Turkey is deprived of the ability to form the shape and direction of this partnership according its own agenda and priorities.

After September 11, there were in fact serious attempts to diversify the relationship and give it a more solid standing. But, given that the U.S. foreign policy is itself going to be largely driven by a “security first” discourse, and some underlying problems are still there, one has to wait to judge whether a major step towards diversification could be realized. The most attractive attempt towards diversification was the proposal to increase trade volume between Turkey and the United States. The idea of increasing economic ties with the U.S. is in fact not new, and has been on the agenda since the Gulf War. To compensate Turkey's losses in the war, there was a discussion about how the U.S. could help Turkey. Then president of the country, Turgut Ozal, was also raising a similar argument by saying: “we don't want direct financial aid, what we need is more trade with the U.S. The United States should abolish textile quotas and

¹⁰⁸ “Ecevit's Washington Visit Highlights Turkey's Increased Value,” *Turkish Daily News*, January 15, 2002; “Turkish-US Relations,” *Newspot*, No.31, January–February 2002; *Disisleri Güncesi*, January 2002.

other barriers to trade.” Yet once the war was over, Turkey’s demands were forgotten and Turkey was left alone to deal with its economic problems.

Following Prime Minister Ecevit’s visit to Washington in mid-January of 2002, the strengthening of Turkish–American trade relations and adding an economic dimension to the strategic partnership came once more on the agenda.¹⁰⁹ At a press conference in Washington, Ecevit said the outcome of his contacts deserved the highest marks: “adding economic partnership to political and military alliance with the United States is an event that deserves 10 marks.”¹¹⁰ A Turkish–American Economic Partnership Commission was established to handle all economic and trade related issues between Turkey and the U.S.¹¹¹ It had its first meeting in Ankara in February.¹¹² The conclusions of these meetings were far from meeting Turkish expectations. Moreover, the plan to establish Qualified Industrial Zones (QIZ) was also criticized due to the fact that, instead of establishing a direct relationship between the U.S. and Turkey, the American side preferred a quick-fix solution and tried to incorporate Turkey into the existing QIZ between Israel and the U.S.¹¹³ This small example is indicative of the fact that the Bush administration was not ready to take the painful step to go to Congress — in order to seek legislation to establish closer economic relations with Turkey — because of the opposition in Congress. Therefore, in assessing Turkish–American relations, one has to bear in mind the fact that U.S. policies can shift easily because of different factors affecting U.S. policy making, such as lobbying, Congress and internal American debates on how to conduct U.S. foreign policy. At the moment, there are many supporters of Turkey in the Bush administration but this cannot be taken for granted forever, and there

¹⁰⁹ “The Target is More Trade with America: Ecevit,” *www.ntvmsnbc.com.tr* newsportal, January 14, 2002.

¹¹⁰ Elif Ünal, “PM Ecevit Earns High Marks with U.S. Visit,” *Turkish Probe*, January 20, 2002, No.470.

¹¹¹ “U.S. Ready to Discuss Turkish Trade,” *Associated Press*, January 17, 2002.

¹¹² “Turkish-US Commission Meets over Heavy Agenda,” *Turkish Daily News*, February 27, 2002.

¹¹³ “Türkiye, ABD-İsrail anlaşmasına katılacak,” *www.ntvmsnbc.com.tr* newsportal, February 27, 2002; “Hopes Dim after First Round of Turkey-US Economic Partnership Commission,” *Turkish Probe*, No.475, 3 March 2002; The Chairman of Turkish-US Business Council, Akin Öngör, was critical of the conclusions of the meeting: “ABD Türkiye’yi İhmal Ederse Uyuyamaz,” *Hürriyet*, March 17, 2002; “US leaves out several sectors from Turkish QIZs,” *Turkish Daily News*, June 27, 2002.

is still strong opposition within Congress against Turkey.¹¹⁴ The expectation of full, unqualified U.S. support for all the issues mentioned above is therefore overly optimistic, and the developments so far prove this observation.

Despite the convergence of priorities at strategic levels having concurrent interests on broad issues and regions, divergence might be the case at the practical level. In addressing certain tangible issues, the approaches to be taken might not be always mutually agreeable. Even when both countries' positions overlap on a certain case, that should not lead to overlooking the fundamental characteristic of this relationship, which stems from the relative positions of the partners towards each other: The concerns of Turkey and the U.S. are guided by entirely different sets of foreign policy priorities, a global hegemon versus regional power. Therefore, the possibility that there could be diverging, even conflicting, interests and priorities on certain issues is always there. Over-activism observed in the U.S. foreign policy in the new era is likely to further amplify this problem.

Though the issue of terrorism might be a common concern to both Europe and America, when it comes to dealing with it, there might appear some diverging opinions. A similar reasoning does in fact apply to Turkish–American relations. Turks repeatedly liked to argue that the U.S. war against terrorism is a policy parallel to that of Turkey. As Turkish Ambassador to the U.S. Osman Faruk Logoglu underlined: “we are at the forefront of the war, as a friend, as an ally, and in reciprocation for the United States’ understanding of our own fight against terrorism.”¹¹⁵ In reality, soon it became clear that some fundamental differences exist, as well as diverging interests. The controversy over a possible military operation against Iraq is the case in point, which is also illustrative of the perils Turkey’s geo-strategic importance may at times cause.

Turkey’s geographical location was its main asset but, at the same time, it also produced Turkey’s greatest headache: Iraq. In an effort to root out the sources of

¹¹⁴ Inan: Armenian Lobby has no Chance against Turkey,” *Turkish Daily News*, May 8, 2002; compare: “Obstacle From the Greek Lobby to Helicopter Purchase,” *Turkish Daily News*, June 12, 2002.

¹¹⁵ “Turkish Ambassador to US Speaks at Fletcher,” March 14, 2002, <http://www.tacsne.org/Past%20Activities/Fletcherhaber.htm>. (last accessed April 5, 2007)

international terrorism, the U.S. shifted its focus to the so-called rogue states. President Bush took this one step further by declaring Iraq, Iran and North Korea as the *axis of evil*. Even before this speech, extending the military operations against Iraq was on the U.S. agenda. Following developments such as the supposed Iraq-al-Qaeda links, the anthrax cases and the dispute over U.N. arms inspections in the country, Iraq was made the next potential target for the U.S. fight against terrorism. This inevitably brought Turkey to the fore anew, due to its strategic value in a future war against Iraq.

Turkey strongly opposed to a possible extension of war against Iraq. Before September 11, the Turkish government had been trying to normalize relations with Iraq — despite U.S. opposition — in order to compensate for the economic losses resulting from the UN-imposed embargo on Iraq. The U.S. determination to intervene in Iraq was an unwelcome development to Turkey. The real problem lies in a fear that the operations against Iraq and the turmoil created by post-Saddam political developments might have serious repercussions for Turkish security. Turkey worried that the war against Iraq might end up with the breakup of Iraq and the establishment of a Kurdish state in the northern part of Iraq. Such a possibility would, from the Turkish perspective, encourage Kurdish separatist elements within Turkey. Therefore, Turkey's main priority is that an operation against Iraq should have been avoided to the extent possible; and now, since the operation did commence, Iraq should remain one nation. It has been hard for Turkey to stay outside of Iraq — actually impossible. Now, this is most difficult, as a split nation may be the only answer for the U.S. — and a terrible idea for Turkey.

It was persuasively argued by some Turkish analysts that managing divergence and reaching a common position on the Iraqi issue could be the “test case” for a Turkish–American partnership. In a critical account of the optimism following Ecevit's Washington visit, Cengiz Candar puts it blatantly:

Turkey's protection by America on 'political and economic platforms' depends to a large extent on Turkey's ability to act in tune with America on the issue of Iraq. I mean, as Turkey, you would oppose an American operation in Iraq; but at the same time you would become a 'strategic partner' with the U.S., and you would rely on U.S. 'economic assistance'

to Turkey unreservedly. That won't happen. Cannot happen... Saddam is the 'gist' of the calculations on Turkish–American relations and 'strategic partnership'.¹¹⁶

It is therefore noted that the deepening of strategic partnership and the generous support Turkey receives from the U.S. administration, ironically, intensifies Turkey's dependence on the U.S. with the effect that the burden of being a "strategic ally" limits the room of maneuver for Turkey.¹¹⁷ Given the obvious divergence of positions towards Iraq, that situation only adds to the complexity of Turkey's uncomfortable partnership with the U.S.

One should also bear in mind that Turkey's willingness to engage in active policies on several fronts simultaneously is likely to confront it with the problem of having the necessary capabilities and setting the priorities. The wish to enhance the relations with Europe, while at the same time moving towards a deepened "strategic partnership" with the U.S. and engaging in a proactive policy in Eurasia, would be increasingly difficult to reconcile.

It is important to address the impact of post-September 11 developments on Turkey's domestic economic problems as this form of chaos has shown to affect the stability of the country. Since early 2001, a severe economic crisis has been hitting the Turkish economy. The crisis devastated the industrial sector, lowered living standards, raised unemployment and jeopardized Turkey's international financial solvency.¹¹⁸ Dealing with the crisis, Turkey received a significant amount of IMF credits, which in total amounted to more than \$30 billion. American support was crucial for Turkey getting this IMF aid. Because Turkey emerged as a critical ally and the "best model" for the Islamic countries in the new era, from American perspective, Turkey had to be supported economically. The U.S. could not only assure Turkey's cooperation but also send a strong message that it would never leave a U.S. ally and Muslim country alone when it is in need. The remarks, by U.S. Congressman Robert Wexler, are quite telling:

¹¹⁶ Cengiz Candar, "'Stratejik' değil 'aday ortak' ...," *Yeni Safak*, January 22, 2002.

¹¹⁷ Kemal Balci, "US Ties Turkish Government's Hands," *Turkish Probe*, January 20, 2002, No.470.

¹¹⁸ "Kriz, OECD liginde küme düşürdü" *www.ntvmsnbc.com.tr* newsportal, May 19, 2002; Bülent Aliriza, "Turkey and the Global Storm," *Insight Turkey*, Vol. 3, No. 4, October–December 2001, 25.

“An economic collapse in Turkey would be disastrous for America... America has got to treat the economy of Turkey as if is the economy of New Jersey.”¹¹⁹

Although the Turkish side repeatedly claims that the IMF credits were provided to Turkey without any political concessions, there is a perception, both at home and abroad, that, without the war in Afghanistan and the Turkish support in the campaign against terrorism, the IMF would have never given such a huge amount of money to Turkey. Even according to some analogies, Turkey could have had a catastrophe similar to what happened in Argentina.¹²⁰ As quoted above, Turkish Economy Minister Dervis, who took over the Turkish economy in March 2001, and Prime Minister Ecevit made strong linkages between Turkey’s support for the international fight against terrorism and economic assistance to Turkey.¹²¹ Representatives of Turkish private sector were more than willing to argue on strategic grounds. According to the Turkish-US Business Council Chairman Akin Öngör, if the Americans do ignore Turkey and fail to support it economically, they would not be able to go to bed in safety.¹²²

Whatever the detailed motives behind the IMF decisions might be, the fact is that with IMF help Turkey was able to control the economy in the short term and avert a catastrophe. Yet, in the long term, this situation may have some negative consequences. As long as the economic and political system remains decayed and structural problems cannot be remedied, the injection of foreign capital into the economy is bound to have a short-term effect. There is growing speculation by financial analysts that Turkey’s total debts, which now exceed its gross national product, may create serious problems in the servicing and repayment of the growing debts.¹²³

¹¹⁹ “Congressman Wexler: US Must Throw all Support behind Turkey,” *Turkish Daily News*, February 21, 2002.

¹²⁰ Here are two contributions to *Turkish Policy Quarterly*, Vol.1, No.1, Spring 2002: Cem Akyürek, “Argentina’s Experience: Any Lessons for Turkey?”; Ümit Kumcuoglu, “Turkey vs. Argentina: A Comparative Analysis with a Long Term Perspective”; also see: Murat Ücer, “When You Cry for Argentina, Should You Cry for Turkey too?” *Private View*, Summer 2001, No.1, 56–59.

¹²¹ Although Dervis’ negotiations with IMF at the end of September 2001 did not bear fruits, by mid-November the IMF announced the release of further US\$11 billion loans. In the meantime, Dervis visited Vice President Cheney and brought his case directly to him. It seems, the U.S. influence paid off. See, Aliriza, *op.cit.*, 33.

¹²² “ABD Türkiye’yi İhmal Ederse Uyuyamaz,” *Hürriyet*, March 17, 2002.

¹²³ Aliriza, *op.cit.*, 33.

While assessing the performance of an economy and the issue of foreign assistance, perhaps what is more important than receiving direct aid is the amount of foreign investments flowing into a country. In this regard, Turkey does not have a promising picture. According to a recent report conducted by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development between 1998 and 2000, Turkey ranked 122nd among 137 countries in terms of foreign capital inflow.¹²⁴ The reasons behind why foreign investors did not prefer Turkey mainly included macroeconomic instability, widespread corruption and the complex nature of the transactions that needed to be fulfilled. Later Turkey decided to take steps towards reforming its foreign investment rules, as part of its IMF-backed reform process.¹²⁵ Another study revealed the other side of the coin: The amount of Turkish capital which is invested abroad, especially in Switzerland and Luxembourg, is estimated to be \$70 billion. Most of this money left Turkey after the economic crises for the purpose of securing the money abroad, since domestic investors lost their reliance on the Turkish economy.¹²⁶

The real paradox of Turkey lies with a new crisis in the region; Turks think that the country has become strategically important. Yet, in political and economical terms, it is considered to be a “risky” place to invest, because its economic system is not stable and possible conflicts in the region pose threats to the country. If everybody is convinced that an operation against Iraq is inevitable, and if the deputy prime minister of the country maintains that an operation would destabilize the whole region, then one wonders how international and domestic investors could be convinced that it is reasonable to invest in Turkey. The belief that “they cannot ignore us! They have to help us economically and financially, because we are strategically important” is not a good one. First, this mood would hinder domestic determination and the ability to solve the country’s problems on its own. Additionally, this would result in taking the economic reforms not so seriously and, in turn, diminish the self-discipline and self-control necessary for economic

¹²⁴ “Yabancı Hala Inat Ediyor,” *Radikal*, April 29, 2002.

¹²⁵ “Turkey Overhauling Foreign Investment Procedures,” *Turkish Probe*, No.487, May 26, 2002.

¹²⁶ “Türkiye’nin 70 Milyar Dolari Disarda,” *www.haberturk.com* newsportal, November 15, 2001.

transformation. Therefore, how Turkey will be able to solve the vicious cycle of economic crises remains an open question.

Those economic problems, in turn, limit the country's ability to act independently in its foreign policy, as was observed in discussions about a possible operation against Iraq. On a TV show on American Fox News Channel, to the severe annoyance of many Turks, even one American analyst, former Clinton adviser Dick Morris, was claiming that "Turkey has to support us; because the owner of Turkey is the IMF, and the IMF has already paid Turkey for this service."¹²⁷ This "dependency" applies to other cases as well. Many American analysts did not hesitate to make references to American support for further IMF aid to Turkey in arguing for the relevancy of the "dependent alliance" between Turkey and the U.S. Daniel Nelson, for instance, argues that

Turkey needs American and the U.S. needs Turkey. Aside from a Republican administration in Washington, Turkey hears only criticism of human rights record, and sees ongoing exclusion from Europe. Without Washington, US\$ 10 billion in further IMF loans would have been impossible, and the image of an Argentina catastrophe would loom. Without Washington, Athens' place in the EU would mean intensified pressures to back away from the Turkish Republic on Cyprus. America has been a better friend than any alternative.¹²⁸

Conversely, there is a fundamental contradiction in the interaction between economics and strategic importance in the new era. The increasing strategic importance and the requirements of the new activism stemming from it, in fact, do not coincide with the Turkish economy's needs and priorities. Whereas Turkey is undergoing a severe economic crisis and experiencing shortage of capital, the new engagements — as part of the Turkish contribution to the international fight against terrorism, which are no doubt costly — do require a solid economic backing. For example, although Turkey was more than willing to contribute actively and assume the command of ISAF in Afghanistan, the financial burden of this operation delayed the negotiations.¹²⁹ For a long time, Ankara's

¹²⁷ "ABD'li yorumcu: IMF Türkiye'yi satın aldı," *www.ntvmsnbc.com.tr* newsportal, April 2, 2002.

¹²⁸ Daniel N. Nelson, "The Dependent Alliance," *Insight Turkey*, Vol.4, No.1 January–March 2002, 62.

¹²⁹ "Turkey Wants Assurances before Taking ISAF Command," *Turkish Daily News*, February 27, 2002.

worries for the financial repercussions of Turkish contributions and the funding issue could not be met by the U.S. and U.K. Turkey's repeated demands for Western funding of the ISAF fell on deaf ears for a long time. It was reported that Washington was reluctant to provide extra financial support for Ankara on ISAF because billions of dollars in IMF loans had already been provided to Turkey to help its recovery from the financial crisis. There were even some speculations that Turkey could give up its quest for ISAF leadership, based on financial and other considerations. However, after prolonged discussions, at the end, it was only American assurances that Turkey was able to accept to lead the force.¹³⁰ Similarly, because Turkey is keen on power projection beyond its borders in order to sustain her military engagements abroad, there is a willingness to spend further on military procurement in the aftermath of September 11. For instance, one of the biggest Turkish defense projects came to a realization stage, and Turkey successfully concluded the negotiations for the purchase of four AWACS early-warning aircraft from Boeing. The financial cost of that project to Turkey is expected to be around US\$1.1 billion.¹³¹

The interplay between economics and Turkey's strategic importance is also problematic in other aspects. Turkey's over-emphasis on its geo-strategic position and its strategic value to the West, and the determination to transform this into tangible economic benefits, could work at the time of crises. Keep in mind that such a policy could also turn out to be self-defeating in the long run. One cannot take the geo-strategic value for granted; rather it may change over time, depending on the case under consideration. If Turkey is serious in solving its economic problems, it has to focus on structural remedies rather than conjectural external developments. Using its politico-military contributions to Western security, so as to gain leverage in the economic realm, may diminish the trust between itself and its allies; in the longer run that may affect the relations or partnerships adversely.

¹³⁰ "Türkiye'nin ISAF Faturasını ABD Ödeyecek," *Hürriyet*, 18 March 2002; "Turkey to Take over Afghan Mission," *Associated Press*, April 29, 2002; however, the U.S. aid was also delayed due to Congressional approval, "Turkish Troops in Afghanistan, US Aid is Delayed," *Turkish Daily News*, June 12, 2002.

¹³¹ "AWACS Negotiations Complete," *Turkish Daily News*, 5 June 2002.

The dominant view is that the post-September 11 events have contributed to Turkey's strategic importance, thus have helped reshape Turkey's relations with the U.S. and Europe, as well as with the countries in its neighborhood — making it an important country to keep our (U.S.) eyes on regarding stability. As expressed by Foreign Minister Cem, “the unfortunate events of September 11, 2001, and ensuing developments have confirmed and consolidated some fundamental preferences of the Turkish foreign policy. Besides, they have boosted Turkey's strategic importance.”¹³²

What is required in the current circumstance is for Turkey to seize the strategic initiative, with bold political leadership that articulates Turkey's national security aspirations within the new regional context. A window of opportunity exists for Turks, with Western support and encouragement, to emerge from their bunker mentality and assert themselves in shaping a positive historical trend outside their borders... Turkey is ready... What remains is for the West, and specifically the United States, to help Turkey mobilize its potential.¹³³

Although, overall, it is true that Turkey's international standing has been visibly enhanced through the years since the coups, there is a need for a more cautious approach in assessing the post-September 11 developments on Turkish foreign policy. I would suggest that the best way to discuss the Turkish role is to analyze it in the context of regional power. Turks have ambitious and, at times, over-exaggerated expectations about their country's international position, but, in reality, Turkey is mainly acting as a pivotal power. This can be best observed in the discussions regarding the Turkish role in Afghanistan, and Turkey's relations with Central Asia and the Caucuses. For example, on the one hand, Turkey is trying to lead the ISAF, but on the other hand, it is asking the U.S. to pay its financial expenses and provide Turkey with the necessary transport, intelligence and logistic facilities. This is exactly the dilemma the country is facing as a pivotal state. This necessarily brings us to the issue of the mismatch between the capabilities and foreign policy vision. One has to admit that, as things stand, the gap between Turkey's capabilities and its expectations is difficult to bridge in the short run. Turkey's ability to act as an independent actor initiating its own projects is severely

¹³² “Cem: Turkish Model is Paradigm of Civilization.”

¹³³ Wihbey and Kilicarslan, *op.cit.*, .22–23.

limited by, or depends on, the degree to which it will be successful in balancing its own priorities with external factors. Turkey could act in cooperation with other global and regional powers, and mobilize its support in the areas of converging interests. Turkey can both advance its own interests and contribute to the agenda of its partners if they hold themselves together internally. The stability involves relaying a feeling of comfort to allies in dealing with internal chaos, such as coups. The responses to those questions are of vital importance for the successful resolution of not only foreign policy but also domestic problems the country is facing.

Turkey's geographical location offers many advantages. Yet, the very same reality is also a source of problems for the country. Whether one likes it or not, we are living in this volatile region, characterized by several actual and potential crises. For instance, two states that belong to the so-called "axis of evil" are Turkey's neighbors; any development in the surrounding regions forces Turkey to get involved in one way or another. This is the reality in which we are living. The stability of a country in this environment is key in ensuring the stability of our own government.

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III. 1960 COUP

The 1960 coup was an attempt to form a new middle class, promoting the interests of the entire society as the country worked toward a more complex multi-party secular system.¹³⁴ There can be an array of problems associated to the abnormal power wielded by the military in the progressive democracy of Turkey.¹³⁵ The coup, under the direction of the Chief of General Staff Cemal Gursel, seized the principal government buildings and communications centers and arrested the president and most of the representatives in the Grand National Assembly, as well as a large number of other officials. They were all charged with abrogating the constitution and instituting a dictatorship.¹³⁶ It (the coup) took place after the first elections in the multi-party political system in 1950; the Democratic Party (DP) known for its pledge to traditional and rural values won a huge victory.¹³⁷ The previous party was a single-party system of the Republican People's Party (CHP) which pushed hardships on the people of Turkey through harsh taxes and rationing. Additionally, they made attempts to fulfill Ataturk's ideals and embarked on a process of transferring the functions of the religious communities and leaders to civilian organizations. The DP gained the people's sympathy

¹³⁴ Asli Daldal, "The new middle class as a progressive urban coalition; the 1960 coup d'etat in Turkey," [electronic newsgroup] Vol 5, Number 3 (Autumn 2004) [accessed October 25, 2005]; available from [www.metapress.com/\(yb3powy2vtkodnzvxafdkk45\)](http://www.metapress.com/(yb3powy2vtkodnzvxafdkk45)).

¹³⁵ Tanel Demirel, "Soldiers and Civilians: The dilemma of Turkish Democracy," in *Middle Eastern Studies*, [online journal] (vol 40, Iss 1; pg. 127, January 2004 [accessed October 25, 2005]); available from <http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb?did=811939021&sid=5&Fmt=2&clientId=11969&RQT=309&VName=PQD>.

¹³⁶ Library of Congress, Country Studies, Turkey [database online (Multiple Politics, 1946-60) [accessed October 25, 2005]; available from World Wide Web @ [http://lcweb2.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?frd/cstdy:@field\(DOCID+tr0025\)](http://lcweb2.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?frd/cstdy:@field(DOCID+tr0025)) . (accessed October 27, 2005).

¹³⁷ Svante E. Cornell, "The Military in Turkish Politics," in Duner, B. (ed), *Turkey: the Road Ahead?* Stockholm, The Swedish Institute of International Affairs, 2002, 24.

by easing restrictions regarding Islam, which had been laid on by Atatürk¹³⁸ and pursued ever since, while its economic policies and huge agriculture subventions caused crisis throughout the country. As the DP government became less popular, they used more authoritarian measures to rule. Leading up to the 1960 coup was a background of the late 1950's where agriculture was a root of their struggle. From 1932 to 1945, the government set up state economic enterprises (SEEs) in key industries, such as the textile, paper, ceramic, glass, chemical, and iron and steel industries.¹³⁹ Turkey's agricultural commodities and raw materials, resources (in the form of import licenses and credit) were removed from agriculture and pushed to industry, which alienated the agricultural capitalists. Foreign trade could not sustain the economy and foreign investors were not in a hurry to rush in. The government went to deficit financing, which pushed inflation up. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) stepped in, in the summer of 1958, to oversee debt rescheduling operations in hopes of stabilizing, which included devaluation¹⁴⁰ and recession. The DP that ruled was losing support of the people and, in an effort to compensate for the erosion of support; they tried to increase repression,¹⁴¹ which resulted in further unrest within the country.

In my summary, the military coup in Turkey, 1960, was a coup d'état staged by a group of radical officers in their mid-forties and in the ranks of colonel and below of the

¹³⁸ According to Wikipedia, Atatürk himself was Muslim. In the book *Kemalizm, Laiklik ve Demokrasi (Kemalism, Laicism and Democracy)*, Ahmet Taner Kışlalı quotes from a speech of Atatürk that may reveal some of the reasoning behind his support of the separation of Religion and state: "Religion is an important institution. A nation without religion cannot survive. Yet it is also very important to note that religion is a link between Allah and the individual believer. The brokerage of the pious cannot be permitted. Those who use religion for their own benefit are detestable. We are against such a situation and will not allow it. Those who use religion in such a manner have fooled our people; it is against just such people that we have fought and will continue to fight. Know that whatever conforms to reason, logic, and the advantages and needs of our people conforms equally to Islam. If our religion did not conform to reason and logic, it would not be the perfect religion, the final religion." (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Atat%C3%BCrk> accessed on November 28, 2005).

¹³⁹ Eric Rouleau, Turkey: Beyond Atatürk. Foreign Policy. Issue: 103. Summer 1996. Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 70.

¹⁴⁰ Initially, a levy on foreign exchange transactions was imposed. The official devaluation did not come until August 1960, with the new exchange rate set at the old one plus the level according to Yalpat, Altan, Turkey's Economy under the Generals, MERIP Reports, No. 122, Turkey Under Military Rule, March-April 1984, 17.

¹⁴¹ Altan Yalpat, Turkey's Economy under the Generals, MERIP Reports, No. 122, Turkey Under Military Rule March-April 1984, 17.

Turkish Armed Forces against the 19th government of the Democratic Party on May 27, 1960. The post-coup head of the military unit was General Cemal Gürsel, by invitation upon completion of the military take-over. The military junta returned the power to civilians seventeen months later, in October 1961, by General Gursel who resisted against military rule and desired a return of control to the civilians. President Celal Bayar, Prime Minister Adnan Menderes and some members of the cabinet were arrested and put on trial before a civilian-military tribunal on the island Yassıada in the Sea of Marmara. The politicians were charged for high treason, misuse of public funds to abrogation of the constitution. Apparently, the officers who staged the coup against a democratically elected government did not think that they themselves had abrogated the constitution but followed their duties within their military code. Tribunals ended with the execution of Prime Minister Adnan Menderes, Minister for Foreign Affairs Fatin Rüştü Zorlu and Minister of Finance Hasan Polatkan on the island İmralı on September 16, 1961.

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IV. 1971 COUP

The year of 1971 would show the willingness of Turkish armed forces to control their own country once again. Turkey had demonstrated serious domestic problems in 1970.¹⁴² Worker strikes, student demonstrations, parliamentary stalemate over reform measures and urban guerrilla terrorism caused the instability that resulted in the armed forces intervention in March 1971, at which time they placed in power a nonpartisan coalition government in order to put an end to what they deemed “anarchy, fratricide and social and economic unrest.” The following month, at the direction of the armed forces, a state of emergency was declared and martial law was instituted in eleven of Turkey’s sixty-seven provinces.¹⁴³

After the 1960 coup up to the 1971 coup (between 1960 and 1970), exports grew at an annual rate of 5.9 percent, imports increased at an annual rate of 6.7 percent. The need for external financing was apparent. Some 70 percent of export monies came from agriculture as the stability of economics dropped once again. The IMF came to the rescue for a second time with a “stabilization package” that included 65 percent devaluation and further liberalization measures similar to the 1958 scenario.¹⁴⁴ Politically, an increase in labor awareness, militancy, and the fight amongst the ranks of the upper class promoted the ability of the military to issue the “coup by memorandum” of March 12, 1971. Export incentives and favorable conditions in the world market (with the help of the IMF) gave Turkey the increase in its sales abroad with a 124 percent improvement between 1970 and 1973, compared with 117 percent increase from 1958–1969. Although the inflation rate was 18 percent over the 1970–1973 period, workers’ remittances — which were not existent in 1958 before the previous coup — went up from around \$250,000 in 1970 to \$1.2 million in 1973, allowing for accumulation of foreign

¹⁴² Roger P. Nye, “Civil-Military Confrontation in Turkey: The 1973 Presidential Election,” in Middle East Studies, vol 8 (1977) [accessed October 25, 2005].

¹⁴³ Ibid.

¹⁴⁴ Yalpat, Turkey’s Economy under the Generals, 17–18.

exchange reserves of \$2 billion by the end of 1973.¹⁴⁵ After the 1971 coup, the general elections of 1973 brought Bulent Ecevit to power as prime minister with the religious National Salvation Party (NSP), which stood strongly for Islamic¹⁴⁶ beliefs and their place within the government. The 1974 invasion of Cyprus put additional economic stress on Turkey's economy with a U.S. arms embargo hanging over the country, which resulted in massive short-term borrowing in the petrodollar market. The military put into action a new constitution that was more liberal and democratic than the existing 1923 Constitution. The military wanted to remove all laws contrary to Kemalist principles. It seemed the Turkish society was not ready for such a great development. After 1960, it was clear that the rise of the left led to a reaction from the right, which led to the need for martial law. This was a time when instability reached a climax affecting even U.S. service members when four of them were kidnapped.¹⁴⁷ It's important to point out that this coup was different from the others in that it would become known as the "Coups by Memorandum" when President of the Republic Suleyman Demirel received a memorandum from the Chief of General Staff (CGS) Tagmac, criticizing the government for politics that had pushed the country to fratricide, anarchy and social and economic perils that were destroying the people's hope for civilized society.¹⁴⁸ This advanced technique of coup stood by as the government resigned and, rather than taking direct control over the process of the government, the military supervised the establishment of a new government and the passing of reforms as law and order came to be.

The Demirel government was forced to resign after the commanders of the armed forces delivered an ultimatum to the president. Demanding a new government, Turkey's military leaders asserted the urgent need for a "strong and capable government" that could redress the "anarchical situation" that amounted to chaos in the streets throughout

¹⁴⁵ In 1970, commercial and agrarian capital made one last stand against industrial capital from within the ranks of Demirel's Justice Party. The ensuing split created a shaky parliamentary balance which would be reproduced in the form of divided right wing representation throughout the 1970s according to Yalpat, Altan, Turkey's Economy under the Generals, MERIP Reports, No. 122, Turkey Under Military Rule March–April 1984, 18.

¹⁴⁶ Thomas P. Carroll, "Turkey Shuts Down the Islamists...again." *Middle East Intelligence Bulletin* 3, no. 7 (July 2001), http://www.meib.org/articles/0107_me1.htm (accessed November 28, 2005).

¹⁴⁷ Svante E. Cornell, "The Military in Turkish Politics," 25.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid.

the country. A refusal to accept this demand, they warned, would result in the armed forces taking over the administration of the country.

The military high command decision to impose its will on the government followed three years of political violence and growing economic problems. As early as 1968, demonstrations had become so disorderly that Demirel warned “enemies of the state” that the government would not “allow the destroyers of the order to strangle democracy in the streets”. In the following three years, both left-wing and right-wing violence stopped all politics and progress.

The use of the armed forces to support an unpopular government was resisted by senior commanders. In July 1970, the air force commander General Muhsin Batur sent a memorandum to President Sunay advocating a program of socio-economic reforms and warning of the consequences if the government was unable to maintain public order. In late November 1970, Batur submitted a second memorandum that called for greater powers for the National Security Council and the convening of a constituent assembly. One month later, chief of the General Staff, General Memduh Tagmac, used his New Year’s address to issue a strong warning to “all who may try to destroy the national integrity of the republican regime and Atatürk’s reforms.” “The armed forces,” he stated, “whose mission is to protect the country against any danger from without or within, will smash any action directed against the country.” Tagmac added that the drift to civil war could still be stopped “by the responsible constitutional bodies.”

The government either ignored or for some reason did not respond to the warnings and seemed unable or unwilling to restore order. The first three months of 1971 were characterized by a series of murders, bombings of government buildings, and reports of a planned leftist insurrection. However, most say that the trigger for the military’s ultimatum appears to have been the kidnapping of four American servicemen on March 4 and the violent clashes between students and police. On March 12, Tagmac and the three service commanders handed a memorandum to the president, which declared that:

Parliament and the Government, through their sustained policies, views and actions, have driven our country into anarchy, fratricidal strife, and social and economic unrest; made the public lose all hope of reaching a level of contemporary civilization, a goal set by Atatürk; failed to realize the reforms stipulated by the [1961] Constitution; and placed the future of the Turkish republic in grave danger.

It concluded by asserting that a “strong and credible government” was needed to “neutralize the current anarchical situation” and restore the state. After Demirel’s resignation, the president publicly thanked the High Command, declaring that it had acted responsibly and he urged all Turks to support the new government.

Instead of imposing direct rule in 1971, the military leaders saw their role as one of guiding the Turkish democratic process. Formed after consultations with the leaders of the major political parties, the new coalition cabinet governed with the support (and sufferance) of the armed forces. Suppressing violence, it implemented a sweeping set of socio-economic reforms similar to those urged by General Batur in his November 1970 memorandum. Further, it introduced legislation to restrict those forces on both the left and right wings of the political spectrum that had advocated policies opposed to the spirit of Kemalism.

V. 1980 COUP

The coup that occurred on September 12, 1980, and events afterwards, marked significant developments in Turkey. There was little in the way of decisive government in the 1970s leading up to the 1980 coup. To the right, an alliance developed between the Justice Party (JP) (said to be “centrist”) and the Nationalist Action Party (NAP). The Republican Peoples Party (NPP) wanted to replace those of the JP and NAP with their supporters through the government offices.¹⁴⁹ During this political struggle, extreme militarists participated in waves of violence. The combination of factors, which included economic failures, civil unrest and threats to the values of secular nationalism, were the evident factors that led to the 1980 coup.¹⁵⁰ The economic and political scene did not improve in Turkey after the “Coup by Memorandum,” but became worse with an increase in polarization of politics. The Left and Right violence brought the country to near civil war just before the 1980 coup.¹⁵¹

The 1980 coup appears to be unique in that it seems to have gone further than the other coups. That is, all political parties were outlawed and all political leaders were physically prevented from returning to politics until a 1987 referendum allowed them back into the political game. The coup brought yet another constitution in 1982 and restricted the liberties of the 1960 Constitution. The military remained in power for three years before turning the reigns over to the civilians. The new constitution improved the status of the National Security Council (NSC) by broadening the definition of national security¹⁵² and by pointing out that the NSC’s recommendations were to be given

¹⁴⁹ Heper, Metin, “Recent Instability in Turkish Politics: Endo of a Monocentrist Polity?,” *International Journal of Turkish Studies*, 1 (Winter 1979), 113.

¹⁵⁰ Frank Tachau, and Metin Heper, *The State, Politics, and the Military in Turkey*, *Comparative Politics*, Vol. 16, No. 1 (October 1983), 25.

¹⁵¹ Nathalie Tocci, “21st Century Kemalism: Redefining Turkey-EU Relations in the Post-Helsinki Era” Working Papers No 170, Brussels, Center for European Policy Studies, 2001 <http://www.ceps.be>. (accessed October 19, 2006)

¹⁵² National security questions comprise all issues related to the “preservation of the existence and independence of the State, the integrity and indivisibility of the country and the peace and security of society” www.mfa.gov.tr. (accessed October 21, 2006)

“priority consideration” by the Council of Ministers. It seems to me that the government has written into their life, the power of the military.¹⁵³

More immediate to the coup was the legislative incapacity of the Turkish parliament. Between January and August, the legislative process was derailed by an increasingly bitter dispute between Demirel’s ruling conservative Justice party (AP) and the more left-wing Republican People’s party (CHP) led by Bülent Ecevit. Concern grew about the radical demands by both the Islamic fundamentalist National Salvation party led by Necmettin Erbakan and the extreme right-wing National Action party (MHP) of former General Alparslan Türkeş. The perception that political squabbling was taking precedence over the national interest was reflected in parliament’s inability, after more than 100 ballots, to elect a new president of the Republic.

The armed forces were also affected by these developments. Martial law, imposed in December 1978 in thirteen of Turkey’s sixty-seven provinces (nowadays eighty-one), was extended a year later to nineteen provinces; by September 1980 it was in effect in twenty. While targets for extremist violence were generally police officials, judges, and prominent politicians, in the six months prior to the coup, members of the armed forces also became subject to a number of attacks. By early September 1980, it was estimated that approximately 25 percent of the 475,000-man army was involved in maintaining civil order — a role not welcomed by the High Command. Moreover, as journalist Mehmet Ali Birand notes, it would have been impossible to expect them “to remain immune to the divisions and stirrings which had rent asunder the fabric of civil society.” By early 1980, senior officers were becoming increasingly alarmed that the country’s political polarization had begun to “seep into” the armed forces. Younger officers and NCOs were especially vulnerable to the right and left wing ideological exchanges.

¹⁵³ According to an article in the September/October 2004 edition of *Foreign Affairs*, David L. Phillips wrote, Turkey’s Dreams of Accession which provided the following: The military’s role as the watchdog of civilian governments is embedded in Turkey’s institutions. The constitution, for example, requires the cabinet to give “priority consideration to the decisions” of the National Security Council (NSC), an advisory body of top military and cabinet members, which the NSC deems “necessary for the preservation of the State.” Although the NSC is chaired by the country’s president and is nominally subordinate to the civilian government, the 1982 constitution requires that half of its members be army officers. In fact, it is the ultimate arbiter of power. Officers of the Turkish General Staff (TGS) have even more influence than political leaders when it comes to setting and advancing national goals.

According to Birand, many of the new NCOs were former student political activists who had enlisted to escape death threats. Once in uniform, they proceeded to propagandize their views within the ranks and among the junior officers.

While the coup was a response to a number of issues, as early as 1975, many officers had become convinced of the un-workability of the existing Constitution. It was not until December 1979, however, that Turkey's senior military leaders began to organize themselves to take political action. They decided to adopt a similar approach to that employed in 1970. On December 27, 1979, the High Command sent a letter to the president urging the country's leaders to "seek solutions and take measures jointly within an Atatürkist national perspective and within the current parliamentary democratic regime." On January 1, 1980, a letter from General Evren was released to the public urging the formation of a broadly-based coalition government and parliament's speedy passage of anti-terrorist measures. A week later, Evren published a list of over sixty political demands that the armed forces felt were necessary — demands that Demirel accepted but was subsequently unable to legislate because of the continuing internal political resistance. Throughout the ensuing nine months, a sense of crisis took hold of Turkey's political system, although the trigger for the coup appears to have been the fear of left-wing and Islamic extremism.

Negotiations between Ecevit and Erbakan raised the fear of an anti-Western, pro-Moslem government. On September 6, Erbakan attended a public rally of Islamic fundamentalists at which he called for the restoration of the Shariah. The next day, Ecevit gave a speech to a trade union gathering in which he urged the members to take violent action if they felt injustice existed. The government seemed powerless to respond to these provocations. On September 7, Evren and the four service commanders decided that they would overthrow the civilian government. The Turkish military perceived their role as custodians of national legitimacy, restoring public order while preparing the country for a transition to a functioning democratic system. With little resistance, the armed forces took administrative control of the state through a five-member National Security Council (NSC) and appointed a civilian cabinet. Martial law was extended to all sixty-seven of Turkey's provinces. In an effort to clean-up Turkish politics, the military also ensured

that those they regarded as accessories to the problems leading to the coup were no longer able to influence events: a 1981 decree by the NSC prohibited persons such as Demirel and Ecevit from participation in politics. The transition to civilian rule began when a new Constitution was accepted by a public referendum in 1982. The end of military rule came on November 6, 1983, when a general election yielded a victory for the Motherland party, with Turgut Özal becoming prime minister.

VI. 1997 NEAR COUP

Although I do not intend to write specifically in depth with respect to an occurrence in 1997 in Sincan (a suburb of the capital city of Ankara), it is important to mention the occurrence where the local Islamist Welfare Party (RP) mayor pronounced his support of the “shariah.”¹⁵⁴ The military became impatient and concerned with the level of Islamization of the state. They advised the government that Islamic fundamentalism had grown to be a greater threat to the republic than the Kurdistan Workers’ Party (PKK).¹⁵⁵ The military sent armored cars and tanks to Sincan as a sign that the military was not going to allow such behavior. The military did not take further steps to physically take the government but did provide the government a document on February 28, 1997, demanding changes in government policy and the extension of compulsory secular education from five to eight years with intent to lessen the activity that was seen as propagated by the religious schools.¹⁵⁶

¹⁵⁴ The shariah is traditional Islamic law also known as Allah’s Law According to <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sharia>. (accessed 12 October 2006).

¹⁵⁵ Cornell, “The Military in Turkish Politics.”

¹⁵⁶ Ibid.

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VII. TODAY

The modernity of Turkey has thrived since the 1980 coup.¹⁵⁷ Scholars who held the pluralist view believed the armed forces remained unchanged in Turkish politics, that is, the officers intervened in each coup to find the most suitable political formula to enhance the progress of democracy in Turkey. The aftermath of the coup brought about interesting information that suggested a strong response to the countries near civil war. Estimates of deaths from political violence grew.¹⁵⁸ Some fifteen new political parties developed after the 1980 coup.¹⁵⁹ As the U.S. prepared for war in Iraq, the role of the Turkish military had diminished since 1980 but remained a key arm in Turkish politics and one that no analyst can afford to ignore.¹⁶⁰ Ataturk wanted to institutionalize a form of the sovereign state in Turkey some eighty-three years ago,¹⁶¹ and the regime of the 1980s worked to revive that very institution. Even today, it remains to be seen what groups or people will run the new institutions of the state and what rules will govern their behavior. Thus far, it appears to me that the military will retain some share in the guardianship of the state.

Under a constitutional amendment approved by parliament on October 12, 2006, the next general elections will be held on November 4, 2007. Campaigning will begin on July 20. The same schedule will be repeated every five years, barring the need for early elections. In addition, parliament voted to lower the minimum age requirement for new members from 30 to 25.¹⁶² The elections will play a strong role in where Turkey will go

¹⁵⁷ Birol Ali Yesilada, "Problems of Political Development in the Third Turkish Republic," in *Polity*, (Vol. 21, No 2 Winter, 1988, 345-372 [accessed 25 October 2005]).

¹⁵⁸ C. H. Dodd, "The Crisis of Turkish Democracy (2nd ed.)," *Journal of Third World Studies*, Vol 8:1, 353.

¹⁵⁹ Turkish dailies. Selected issues during May 1983-June 1986.

¹⁶⁰ Jon Gorravett, "Monitoring the Military Might," in *Middle East*, [online journal] (October 2003, Iss 338, 18 [accessed October 25, 2005]); available from World Wide Web: <http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb?did=502257471&sid=5&Fmt=2&clientId=11969&RQT=309&V Name=PQD>.

¹⁶¹ M. Heper, 1981 "Ataturk and Civil Bureaucracy," in J. M. Landau, (ed) "Ataturk and the Modernization of Turkey." Westview Press, Colorado.

¹⁶² Turkish Daily News, Turkey, October 13, 2006, reported by Reuters, *Turkish Daily News*.

and how the military will respond to their leadership. It is too early to say who will run, but the current Prime Minister Recep Erdogan hopes for changes in the laws, which would allow him to act as president. Further, his desire is to shift power of the position to place Turkey in a more similar role of government to that of the United States, giving the power to decide the countries' future with that position.

The country remains 98 percent Muslim and 2 percent other, yet there is no predominate desire to go to an Islamic state of rule. The government considered that retaining control of and utilizing religion provided an opportunity to mobilize the masses while reducing the potential influence of Islamic radicals.

Today, the president is Ahmet Sezer, and the head of the government is Prime Minister Recep Erdogan (member of the Justice and Development Party or AKP). Turkey's economy is a complex mix of modern industry and commerce, along with a traditional agriculture sector that in 2004 still accounted for more than 35 percent of the employment.¹⁶³ Economic and judicial reforms and prospective European Union (EU) membership are expected to boost Turkey. A major political and economic issue over the next decade is whether Turkey will become a member of the EU.

Religion is an area that is of great importance when considering Turkey today. Religion is so important because it impacts so many other areas of the countries' interaction with other countries. I view the countries' military position, international trade and its accession to the EU as the top three most critical facts associated with its progress and subsequent stability. The second two of the three may be seen as one in the same, and the first is directly linked with religion as Turkey stands as the only Muslim country in NATO. So, the point here is that religion is of great consideration when

¹⁶³ Central Intelligence Agency World Fact book Web site
<http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/tu.html>. (accessed 1 October 2006)

considering the stability of the country. According to Ingmar Karlsson¹⁶⁴ the birthrate among Muslim immigrants in Europe is three times higher than that of the non-Muslim European population. He advises that if this trend continues, the Muslim population will be doubled by 2015, while Europe's non-Muslim population will decrease by 3.5 percent. Some estimates indicate that in 30 years the number of Muslims in Europe could be as high as 65 million. According to Karlsson's analysis, the trend towards a multi-racial and multi-confessional Europe is unstoppable; therefore, Islam must be recognized and regarded as a "domestic" European religion.

Karlsson said that Turkey's membership in the European Union would demonstrate the falsity of the argument that Islam and democracy cannot mix, also helping to bring about favorable changes in the Islamic world's attitude towards Europe. Karlsson said,

There is nothing which intrinsically prevents a Muslim from being as good a Swede as a member of the Pentecostal Brethren or an adherent of the Jewish faith, nor is there anything that prevents mosques from becoming as natural a feature of Swedish cities as churches have always been in Istanbul, Aleppo, Damascus, Mosul or Cairo.

For EU membership, religion is not among the criteria; therefore, refusing Turkey's admission on religious grounds would send a dangerous signal, especially after September 11, 2001, Karlsson noted, adding that Turkey's rejection by the EU would have a radicalizing effect both in the Muslim world and in Turkey itself:

A 'no' to Turkey on religious and cultural grounds would be disastrous for Europe since it would send an immediate and strong message to the fastest growing segments of Europe's population that they will always be considered unwelcome and second-class citizens, even if they choose a secular way of life.

¹⁶⁴ Ingmar Karlsson has been the consul general of Sweden in Istanbul since September 2001. Previously, he served as ambassador in Prague and Bratislava. He is a Doctor of Divinity honoris causa at Lund University and a Doctor of Philosophy at the University of Växjö. He also studied business administration, political science and the history of ideas and learning at the University of Gothenburg in Sweden. He has authored more than 10 books, the latest is titled "Europe and the Turk." Some of his books, including *Islam and Europe — confrontation or coexistence?* (1994), *The Stepchildren of Europe — minorities without a mother-nation* (2003), *Faith, terror and tolerance — essays on religion and politics* (2004), and *A Europe of the regions* (2006), have been translated into Turkish among other languages.

Sending such a message could, before we know it, lead to the emergence of a ghetto Islam in Europe instead of a modern tolerant European Islam. Radical mullahs all over Europe are already doing their best to exploit Muslim immigrants' psychological, cultural and material problems for their own purposes, and this message would only make their work easier. A Turkish membership in the European Union will facilitate a necessary integration process and thus counteract a development fraught with momentous consequences for Europe.

According to Karlsson, the Justice and Development Party (AK Party) has emerged as a result of the transformation of Turkish Islamism; it came to power following free elections, and Turkey is now undergoing a historic reform process that is mainly motivated by the prospect of EU membership.

The Turkish military has stood by as the entire penal code was rewritten in 2004. The government presented the new Penal Code as a less restrictive and democratic piece of legislation. It was passed by Parliament in September 2004 as a result of pressure from the European Union. This pressure appears to have resulted in insufficient consultation with members of civil society, such as human rights groups and the press, and may have contributed to the continuing problems in the law.

The Commission of the European Communities provided a report regarding Turkey's progress in potential accession to the EU.¹⁶⁵ Amnesty International is also concerned about aspects of the Penal Code that are related to areas other than freedom of expression. For example, Article 122 of the draft of the new Penal Code, which forbids discrimination on the basis of "language, race, color, gender, political thought, philosophical belief, religion, denomination and other reasons," was amended at the last moment so that "sexual orientation" was removed from the draft. Amnesty International is concerned that discrimination on the basis of sexuality was therefore not criminalized in the new law.

In addition, Amnesty International is concerned that the statute of limitations (the time limit) still applies in trials in which individuals are accused of torture. While the new

¹⁶⁵ Commission of the European Communities, Commission Staff Working Document, Turkey 2006 Progress Report, Brussels, November 8, 2006, 4-72.

law has extended this time limit, trials against alleged torturers are frequently deliberately delayed and therefore dropped through this provision, contributing towards a climate of impunity. Given the frequency with which this happens and the status of torture as a peremptory norm of general international law, Amnesty International considers that there should be no statute of limitations for the crime of torture.

The revised code, signed into law by President Ahmet Necdet Sezer, significantly liberalizes the country's criminal justice system by increasing penalties against human rights abuses and torture. It also improves the rights of women and children.

However, the paragraphs concerning the media continue to attract strong criticism both inside and outside the country. Newspapers and press organizations say that the revised law remains vague enough to allow for arbitrary court decisions, and this in turn may threaten freedom of expression. At the same time, they argue that the code is too restrictive on the protection of privacy, which may stifle investigative journalism.

In May, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) submitted a list of recommendations to the Turkish authorities, urging them to amend the country's new penal code to bring it into line with internationally accepted standards on free expression. The OSCE has called on Ankara to use the opportunity to create a law that would "serve as a model for modern democracies.

Turkey seems to be doing all it can to please the EU, while the EU appears to be pushing Turkey as hard as it can. It is my opinion that Turkey is not wanted within the EU overall but, like a relationship where neither participant wants to declare it impossible to get along, they each want a good reason to get what they want. In my view, the EU does not want Turkey, but they would rather not allow them based on a good reason — which is one that shows them as modern and progressing — with Turkey not ready for the "big show." On the other hand, Turkey wants all that goes with being in the EU but they hold dear some vital marks of their history and society. For example a huge hurdle

that exists is Turkey's Article 301 rule of law.¹⁶⁶ Amnesty International is extremely concerned at the frequent use of Article 301 of the Turkish Penal Code (TPC) to prosecute human rights defenders, journalists and other members of civil society peacefully expressing their dissenting opinion. Article 301, on the denigration of Turkishness, the Republic, and the foundation and institutions of the State, was introduced with the legislative reforms of June 1, 2005, and replaced Article 159 of the old penal code. Amnesty International repeatedly opposed the use of Article 159 to prosecute non-violent critical opinion and called on the Turkish authorities to abolish the article. The organization is now concerned that the wide and vague terms of Article 301 mean that it too can be applied arbitrarily to criminalize a huge range of critical opinions. The final qualification of the article suggests that expressions amounting to "criticism" rather than "public denigration" are not punishable. Amnesty International considers that the attempt to draw a distinction between criticism and denigration is highly problematic. The lack of legal certainty of the crime will lead to arbitrary interpretation by prosecutors and judges. Even the Turkish Minister of Justice himself, Cemil Cicek, has reportedly stated that "the whole issue comes down to how the laws are interpreted." Amnesty International believes that Article 301 poses a direct threat to freedom of expression, as enshrined in Article 19 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and in Article 10 of the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (ECHR). Turkey is a State Party to both conventions and therefore the Turkish government has a legal obligation to uphold this freedom. Nevertheless, Amnesty International receives a steady flow of cases opened against individuals under Article 301 for expressing a wide variety of opinions.

The organization hopes that the international attention focused on cases involving this article as prosecutive authority will bring light to others accused. With regard to

¹⁶⁶ Turkish Federal Law (Article 301) which states it is a crime if any of the following exist: *1. Public denigration of Turkishness, the Republic or the Grand National Assembly of Turkey shall be punishable by imprisonment of between six months and three years. 2. Public denigration of the Government of the Republic of Turkey, the judicial institutions of the State, the military or security structures shall be punishable by imprisonment of between six months and two years. 3. In cases where denigration of Turkishness is committed by a Turkish citizen in another country the punishment shall be increased by one third. 4. Expressions of thought intended to criticize shall not constitute a crime.*

these concerns, Amnesty International notes the jurisprudence of the European Court of Human Rights, which states that the limits of acceptable criticism are broader as regards politicians than private individuals (*Lingens v Austria*, 1986); are wider with regard to government (*Castells v Spain*, 1992); and that the authorities of a democratic state must accept criticism even if provocative or insulting (*Ozgur Gundem v Turkey*, 2000). In addition, the law has to be accessible and formulated with precision sufficient for the citizen to regulate their conduct (*Sunday Times v the United Kingdom*, 1998). Furthermore, Amnesty International notes Recommendation 1589 (2003)¹ of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, which urges states to “abolish legislation that makes journalistic freedom of expression subject to criminal prosecution”; “to stop immediately all forms of legal and economic harassment of dissenting media” and “to incorporate the case-law of the European Court of Human Rights in the field of freedom of expression into their domestic legislation and ensure the relevant training of judges.” This is an excellent example of what the Turkish government holds dear in power and must release in order to be a member of “the club” (EU).

The possibility of a coup today would call on an array of factors and I will touch on my final opinion — with respect to the possibility of a coup in the near future — in the next chapter. However, when conducting this research, I carried out a series of interviews with Turks and learned a bit about the human element from the ground citizen level. I spoke with six Turks¹⁶⁷ with respect to their knowledge of past coups and the possibility of a future coup. Five of six interviewed maintained direct knowledge of the 1997 near coup and described the time as one of serious instability. They expressed feelings of insecurity; one who attended college in Ankara at the time described it as a time of rebellion where he participated in taking up violence against the political parties that expressed pro-Islamic tendencies. Although they were in various locations within Turkey, they all opined Turkey has not been in a state of instability since then. They collectively see Turkey as a stronger country and one capable of standing up against other

¹⁶⁷ Interviews conducted were in person and telephonic. Participants chose not to be named and two used an interpreter as my Turkish was not of high enough quality to go beyond greetings and small talk (or they spoke no English). Interviewees included two Turkish Instructors working for the Department of Defense, a Turkish Merchant living in Adana, Turkey, and a Turkish Interpreter working for the Department of Defense in Turkey and two others who wished not to provide detailed identification.

dominant countries. Two of the six interviewed used the Turkish Parliament decision against the U.S. moving against Iraq from Turkey as a clear sign that Turkey stood strong. They added that the majority of people supported the U.S. movements, but their Parliament had the best interest of the people in mind. I was unsure if this reflected a notion that they opined the government knew what was best for them as a people or that they individually agreed with the decision. Nevertheless, there was a pervasive opinion that during the 1997 event, there was a strong feeling that the country or the area around Ankara was instable and somewhat chaotic, more so than times since then.

Three of the six recalled the 1980 coup activity directly and the others heard stories from elders. The three with recollection gave information relating complete chaos and feelings of threat day to day. Clearly there are feelings from those interviewed that the military that intervened did so as heroes, and no one expressed any negativity towards the actions by the military. Further, they were proud to point out that they had distant relatives that induced casualties against Turks who resisted the coup. The descriptions and altered state of day-to-day life described suggested warfare in progress. Although not all of them had knowledge of direct involvement, they expressed a time in Turkey that sounded similar to civil war or prolonged unrest, to say the least.

Only two had direct knowledge of the 1971 coup activity. They described it as war-like where the heroic military stepped in to save the people in the name of Ataturk. Others interviewed heard stories from their family members and were shown pictures of the empty streets and newspaper clippings describing restrictions. There were regular radio announcements that provided prohibitions and statements of loyalty to the government and Ataturks reforms. Those with direct knowledge expressed fear that the government might fall and had families torn apart by varied political opinions. They all maintained their pleasure with respect to their military's ability to step up and save the country.

None of those interviewed had direct knowledge of the coup that took place in 1960, but each had heard varied degrees of stories from their family members. They described it as the worst, with respect to security, and two claimed attempts by family members to flee the country; one was successful and returned after the coup, the other

was detained and returned by Turkish military members. Although most Turks do not have independent recollections of the event, it's clear they maintain some level of understanding with respect to the event through education and family distribution.

I asked each of the interviewees if they thought another coup was imminent or possible. They all responded that it was possible, but not likely, in their opinion. In varying ways, each of them expanded on that view. The youngest interviewee advised that the right of the military to take control exists, yet it is not likely to happen because Turkey has advanced to such an extreme that it is no longer necessary. The eldest two opined it is not likely in the near future but always possible as time changes and, should the situation dictate, a takeover may be appropriate. When asked what would require a takeover, answers were general, suggesting it would be appropriate should the government take a turn that would threaten their freedom or future existence. Overall, it seemed to me the interviewees respected their history and appreciated their military while hoping for the best and seeing their country progress. They think it is possible but not likely that a future coup may be necessary.

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VIII. CONCLUSION AND FUTURE

In concluding the historical view of Turkish coups and how I perceive the state of affairs today, I see fit to compare and contrast the events leading up to previous military coups in Turkey with current possibilities and the future.¹⁶⁸ During Ottoman times, the normal way of ousting a Sultan was for the Janissaries to empty their cooking pot onto the floor of the Court of the Janissaries as a sign of rebellion at the Topkapi Palace in Istanbul, which told the Sultan he would no longer have their support. The practice of tossing out leaders by the military has continued and is seen in Turkish history. Since 1960 there have been three coups and one near coup. Currently, there is much happening in Turkey but there is little talk of coup activity. I would suggest some of the same anxieties of the past are currently present, but I would not conclude they amount to the likelihood of a coup. The intent of this closing is to examine whether, in view of the conditions before earlier coups, one could be likely soon.

The prediction of a coup is not likely, and I could reveal no checklist of sorts that would allow me to follow and make a reasonable prediction of coup activity. However, I find it necessary to consider — particularly when considering Turkey, a land of great importance to U.S. interest strategically. Ultimately, I would opine that any type of chaos would be cause for coup activity in Turkey because the groundwork has been laid for the populace to accept it, at least considering historical precedence. More specifically though, I would say that there are two angles of matters that influence the chaos trigger. The first main issue is secularism. Secularism is fixed in the Turkish constitution, and one of the roles of the Turkish Military is to guard the Turkish constitution, which has secularism as its hinge on the front door to the country that Ataturk built. Any threat to secularism is likely to produce a hard reaction from the Army. The near coup in 1997 is a good example of this attitude, as the memorandum explained certain measures needed to take place to bock fundamentalism. In recent years, much debate has occurred

¹⁶⁸ Alexander Rooke, *Coups of Turkey Essay*, 1997, Bilkent University of English Language, 1–3.

regarding headscarves and whether they should be worn in government offices (currently illegal). Many would point to threats to secularism as major areas sparking the 1960 and 1980 coups.

The DP government that held power for ten years, from 1950, had relaxed a large number of the measures controlling religion (instituted by Ataturk) in order to make his country more secular or non-Islamic. This was not the only factor, but a factor nonetheless, which motivated the coup creators of 1960. A few days before the 1980 coup, at a meeting of the parent of the WP in Konya, party members had refused to stand during the Turkish national anthem, preferring to show Islamic flags. This event has often been described as the “final straw” for the generals of the time.

A second less obvious angle is the issue of populism versus paternalism. The two parties in power are openly populist, getting their power support from the lower classes in the big cities and the citizens of rural Turkey. This is a consistent role in previous coups; populism leads to social chaos and political deadlock. It can be said that the Turkish population is insufficiently educated to be part of the process of governing. Instead, the unselfish, all-knowing ruling class should take the population to the land of modernity, as it did in the beginning years of the Republic. I think this is far from accurate, as Turkey has progressed greatly and maintains a highly educated public with advanced citizens grounded in politics and connected to the world. There are certainly rural parts of Turkey that are behind the times, but the same lack of education exists in many parts of the world to include the U.S. I would suggest the military leaders know and recognize this and have doubts as to whether higher society, or even those on the lower end, would support the military if they saw fit to “save the populace from themselves” again.

The coming elections will help lay the foundation for big moves in Turkey’s future. The long life of a seven-year term allows Turkish leaders to do much damage or much help. Political deadlock is something Turkey cannot afford this election. The Turkish military is like other militaries in that they want to get things done and don’t care for others who argue and never get anything accomplished. Turkey’s military will continue to help the country progress by encouraging the government to proceed in the best interest for the country. Due to the over-liberal 1961 Constitution, argument and

inaction preceded the 1971 coup. This constitution gave a system of proportional representation that allowed the formation of small political parties that broke into even smaller ones and made for a weaker larger government. The 1980 coup came after a seven-month fight over who should succeed the retiring president, Admiral Fahri Koruturk. This meant that no meaningful legislation was moved. As Turkey fell on hard times, politicians continued to argue and carry on into more chaos. As the leaders of the military watched from the sideline, they had to jump in, with or without a coach telling them to.

Today's situation is much better than those surround the coups. While there are many problems (inflation, EU concerns, resource protection/control etc.) waiting to be solved or being worked, the parliamentary situation can help the future of Turkey. The political future of Turkey is unknown until the coming elections. The generals might worry about political instability but it is nowhere close to the instability that existed before the previous coups. In each of the coups, the anarchy in parliament was reflected by true chaos on the streets of cities all over Turkey as leftists and rightists killed each other. All of the chaos made the decisions of military leaders easy; they had to intervene to literally save the people of Turkey. Up to 1997, there was occasional political violence in Western Turkey where there was nothing significant to rally up the military leaders. After the Cold War, the threat of Russia instigating instability in the east of Turkey to hurt NATO went away.

There continues to be a problem with PKK and other groups, but they are being managed and decreasing each year. Although progress hasn't gone as fast as Turkey would like, the U.S. has walked a tightrope in helping to fight terrorism, while not doing as much as many think they (U.S.) can to stop PKK.

It may be that the overall lack of chaos is the clearest reason for doubting the probability of a coup around the corner. Although I would say the 1960 coup was political (a result of differing views from the military and the party in power), the coups of 1971 and 1980 were definitely strategic moves to secure the country and protect the existence of the country and her people. The 1997 near coup was military leaders firing a warning shot that instability would not be tolerated. After the 1960 coup, the NSC was

founded so that the military leaders could give their message, in a very formal way, to the people and the civilian government. That opportunity didn't exist in 1960, and time provided a forum of chaos that showed it was needed in Turkey.

After researching the coups of Turkey, one critical factor contributed to the military's interest to intervene. Instability (true chaos) alone stands as the reason by which leaders of the military chose to intervene — whether it is instability regarding the economy, domestic terrorism or the slightest view of a shift away from secularism. The instability interpreted by the leaders of the military resulted in their stepping up to alter the course of the country when chaos existed.

I opine a coup in the near future would only distance the military from the people of Turkey. The population of Turkey is very proud of their military. Perhaps the coups have given foundation for the love of the military, as they have acted as saviors and not just a tool of their government to apply force. The Turkish military wants to carry on the tenants of Ataturk, and a military takeover might damage Turkey's claim to belong to the Western family of nations and, in particular, its hopes for ever joining the EU. Turkey is a solid and continually developing government that is nowhere close to the instability necessary to provide enough chaos for coup activity.

Our country will continue to work with the Turks and neighbors to improve the region. Turkey will continue to be a location of debate for U.S. assets as the Turks are a proud people who do not care to be pushed around but prefer to feel respected and honored members at the table of modernity and progress. They will not likely remove the power from the military to over watch the government. It's perhaps cultural and accepted if not expected but as country progresses, the lack of chaos calls for a lack of coup activity. I doubt a re-run anytime soon in the future of the modern Turks.

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