



TURKEY-USA PARTNERSHIP
AT THE DAWN OF A NEW CENTURY

Task Force Report
2011

┌

┐

└

┘

GIFGRF

Co-Chairs

Fusun Türkmen, Yavuz Canevi

Project Director

Gözde Küçük

Global Relations Forum (GRF) is an independent, non-profit membership association committed to being a platform for engaging, informing and stimulating its members and all interested individuals in all matters related to international affairs and global issues.

GRF was founded with the enthusiastic support of 40 accomplished Turkish men and women who have assumed prominent roles in international fora and have received international recognition for their efforts throughout their careers. The founding members include former secretaries of state, university presidents, members of the armed forces, central bank governors, ECHR judge and retired ambassadors as well as leading business leaders, scholars, artists, and journalists. It was officially registered on May 11, 2009 and its first General Assembly was held on November 9, 2009.

GRF intends to advance a culture that rewards the fertile tension between passion for intellectual diversity and dedication to innovative and objective synthesis. It nurtures uninhibited curiosity, analytic inquiry, rational debate and constructive demeanor as the elemental constituents in all its endeavours. It contributes to the shared understanding of and aspiration for humanity's path to peace, prosperity and progress as an accessible, inclusive and fair process for all.

GRF does this in a variety of ways: by sponsoring task forces and policy reports; by convening meetings with prominent global leaders; by organizing roundtables with experts; and by fostering cooperation with global counterparts. GRF also sees its website, www.gif.org.tr, as a vibrant forum towards achieving its goal.

Copyright © 2011

The financial rights to and the right to publish, adapt, disseminate and reproduce this report shall not be reproduced, disseminated or printed either in part, in its entirety or in condensed form, whether by photocopy, facsimile, electronic mail or any other means. Permission to publish extracts exceeding a reasonable and legal acquisitions of permission to publish, the source must be cited.

ISBN: 978-605-62546-1-1

Publisher Certificate No: 22780

Design & Print: Ekspres Ofset Matbaacılık Printing Certificate No. 23085
Atalar Cd. Hünkar Sk. No.5/A Gültepe - Istanbul
Tel: +90 212 324 18 90 pbx Fax: +90 212 325 17 92
www.gurform.com.tr info@gurform.com.tr

GLOBAL RELATIONS FORUM
Yapı Kredi Plaza D Blok Levent 34330 Istanbul - TURKEY
T: +90 212 339 71 51 F: +90 212 339 61 04
www.gif.org.tr

Task Force Members

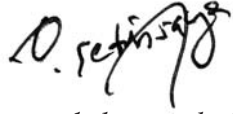
H. Edip Bařer



Hanzade Doęan Boyner



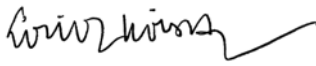
Gökbhan etinsaya



Memduh Karakulluku



Sönmez Köksal



Füsun Türkmen



Ařlı Bařgöz



Yavuz Canevi



Umran S. İnan



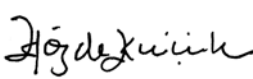
Sami Koben



Özdem Sanberk



Gözde Küçük



The members participated in the Task Force in their individual, not institutional, capacities. Thus, the views and opinions expressed in this Task Force report do not necessarily represent the views of their institutions.

┌

┐

└

┘

Table of Contents

President's Note	ix
Acknowledgments	xiii
TASK FORCE REPORT	
Executive Summary	5
Global Context	11
<i>Political and Strategic Environment</i>	11
<i>Current Challenges</i>	12
Substance of the Turkish-American Relationship	17
<i>Nature and History</i>	17
<i>Current Issues</i>	29
<i>Points of Convergence</i>	29
<i>Points of Divergence</i>	35
Mutual Perceptions	47
<i>Anti-Americanism in Turkey</i>	47
<i>Washington Dialectics: Criticism and Support</i>	51
Recommendations	57
<i>Recommendations for Turkey</i>	58
<i>Recommendations for the United States</i>	62
<i>Recommendations for both Parties</i>	64
Task Force Contributors	69
Task Force Members	71

┌

┌

└

└

President's Note

GRF Task Forces were conceived with the intent to identify enduring trends and risks in global affairs and to chart an informed route for Turkish policy in the midst of incessant change. The Forum convened its first Task Force on Turkey-US bilateral relations with the conviction that this key alliance increasingly occupies center stage in the current and potential transformations in the world.

The events unfolding in the Middle East signal that an effective and layered US-Turkey partnership is critical in advancing the policy objectives of both parties in confronting the dynamics of the region and the globe. Effective collaboration demands a clear-eyed understanding of mutual priorities and a convergent conceptualization of the challenges. In the absence of that synchronization, transient crises, political exigencies and ordinary miscalculations will, from time to time, test the resilience of the relationship. The turbulent dynamics of the globe, particularly the region, continuously raise the stakes for such volatility in the relation.

I consider the Task Force effort as an important contribution to that synchronization process. The members engaged in long, historically informed deliberations to delineate enduring trends and mutual priorities in the Turkey-USA partnership.

At an abstract level, there is a systemic “near-certainty” motivating the relation: Turkey and the US are both important nodes in an intensely networked global order. Their respective networks of interaction and influence are overlapping in some respects, but separate in others. The US network has a much broader global reach with strong economic, security and political links. Turkey

has a more regional, albeit expanding reach with very strong social, historic, cultural and increasingly political, economic dimensions. The utility and the durability of the respective American and Turkish networks of influence constitute a “near-certainty” which will underpin the bilateral relation for decades to come.

However, the complementarities between the global breadth of the US network and regional depth of the Turkish influence cannot be taken for granted. Harmony or at least absence of dissonance will demand skillful orchestration on both sides.

Two concrete policy areas are promising domains to develop the tools and habits of that orchestration effort: Global energy security and the evolution towards a more peaceful and prosperous Middle East. The parties have convergent long-term interests in these two policy areas and their fundamental purposes are sufficiently aligned to deepen the mechanisms of bilateral cooperation. The deliberate and persistent investment in those mechanisms can pave the way for mobilizing potential complementarities between the two countries’ networks in addressing a range of challenges that go beyond these two policy domains.

GRF Task Force on Turkey-US Relations brought together a group of distinguished members diverse in their professional backgrounds, experience and opinion, but exceptionally uniform in their respect for informed debate, search for common ground and dedication to the effort. GRF is grateful to all members of the Task Force for their commitment, their invaluable insights, their unmatched courtesy and patience throughout what proved to be a long, demanding process.

The Task Force Co-Chairs, Dr. Türkmen and Mr. Canevi have been tremendously generous with their time. Dr. Türkmen has taken the lead in drafting a nuanced and balanced text that combined substance with consensus. We are indebted to our Co-Chairs for their unwavering commitment and resilience.

Ambassadors Sanberk and Köksal have guided the project from the outset to the final editing process. Their wisdom and unimposing guidance have been critical at every stage of the Task Force process. It has been a great personal privilege and an invaluable experience to work with such remarkable individuals.

Finally, I would like to thank Ms. Gözde Küçük for her exceptional dedication, diligence and persistence throughout the process. Her command of the substantive policy positions, ease with linguistic subtleties and uncompromising devotion to perfection have been key assets in shaping the report.

GRF has been very fortunate to work with such an exceptional group of individuals. The work you hold in your hand is a testimony to their dedication.

I hope this report proves to be one of many attempts both in Turkey and the US to think hard and long on how the two sides can effectively mobilize and harmonize their networks of influence to work towards common purpose.

Memduh Karakullukçu
GRF Vice-Chair & President

┌

┐

└

┘

Acknowledgments

The crisis triggered by the 2003 Iraq War in Turkey-USA relations has revealed the necessity of a thorough reflection on the nature, dynamics, and particular needs of this relationship. To be able to undertake such a task, the Global Relations Forum has gathered experts whose experience in the fields of academia, diplomacy, military, media, law and business have contributed to a multi-perspective analysis of the subject matter. As Co-chairs of the Turkey-USA Task Force, we would like to express our sincere gratitude to each and every member of the group for the insight and expertise brought to this collective project. It was an honor and a privilege to work with them.

In addition to our members, distinguished experts from outside have graciously accepted to share with us their evaluation of Turkey-USA relations. We are grateful to Prof. Lenore Martin from Emmanuel College and Harvard University, Dr. Bülent Alırıza from the CSIS, Prof. Stephen Walt from the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard, Rear Admiral (re.) Mustafa Özbey, Ambassador and Deputy Under Secretary Selim Yenel from the Turkish MFA, former U.S. Consul General in Istanbul Dr. Sharon Wiener, and columnist Sedat Ergin for having enriched our vision through their enlightening interventions.

It would have been impossible to bring this effort into fruition without the dedication of our Task Force Project Director, Ms. Gözde Küçük. Her good-spirited approach and invaluable support facilitated our work and helped us overcome many moments of perplexity. We hereby extend to her our warmest thanks.

We remain particularly indebted to GRF President Memduh Karakullukçu for having been the driving force behind this project. His leadership has been crucial in initiating and completing the report, while all along he knew how to challenge or encourage us whenever necessary.

Last but not least, we would like to convey our sincere thanks to the GRF staff, in particular to Ms. Maxine Imer, Administrative Coordinator of the Forum. She has organized all our meetings in the best possible manner and enlightened our work premises with a special touch of hospitality and graciousness. Ms. Nigar Ađaođulları and Mr. Yücel Yeşer were the “unknown soldiers” of the Task Force. We gratefully appreciate their support and patience during long meeting hours.

As far as we are concerned, chairing the Turkey-USA Task Force has been a highly enriching and challenging experience, not only in terms of intellectual analysis, but also as an exercise in the art of reaching consensus.

Füsun Türkmen, Yavuz Canevi
Task Force Co-Chairs

┌

┌

Task Force Report

└

└

┌

┐

└

┘

The final editing of this report was made in early September, 2011. Thus, any event that occurred after that date is not incorporated into the text. Fully aware of the impossibility of catching up with the rapid regional and global developments, we can only wish that our analyses and recommendations will remain valid as basic guidelines for students of Turkish-American relations in the months and years ahead.

Executive Summary

The Task Force report in hand has been written to assess the trajectory of the Turkey-USA alliance and to propose a path of partnership in light of the increasing interdependence of the foreign policies of the two countries in a highly volatile region at a time of exceptional uncertainty.

That the global political landscape has gone through profound changes in the last 20 years, first with the end of the Cold War, and then the 9/11 terror attacks and the ensuing U.S. wars, is clear to all. The accompanying level of technological developments, rise of new powers, and the great challenges of our era such as ending global terror, stabilizing fragile and failed states, preventing nuclear proliferation, ensuring environmental sustainability, improving global health and promoting economic development have only added to the pace and complexity of the transformation. While this picture alone was enough to bring about many unknowns in international relations, the currently unfolding events in the Arab world with potentially groundbreaking consequences have greatly increased the unpredictability of world affairs. It is in such a time of uncertainty that Turkey and the U.S. are trying to update and upgrade the nature of their 65 year old alliance.

Fully aware of the global responsibilities for daunting global problems and having realized the limits of unilateralism as well as the problems with faith in military force alone, the Obama Administration has introduced the concept of *smart power* which "...requires reaching out to both friends and adversaries, bolstering old alliances and forging new ones."¹ In applying smart power,

1. U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Public Affairs, Fact Sheet, "American Smart Power: Diplomacy and Development are the Vanguard", May 4, 2009.

the U.S. will inevitably face challenges, such as engaging in successful public diplomacy and managing the contradiction between the urgency of the problems and the long-term nature of the solutions they require. The latter challenge is particularly apparent in combating terrorism, establishing a dialogue with the Islamic world, freeing the world from nuclear weapons, finding a solution to the Israeli-Palestinian problem, stabilizing Iraq and Afghanistan, managing the broader impact of the Arab Spring, and, on top of it, dealing with a financial crisis that limits the funds available to address this intimidating agenda. These are currently America's – and the world's - most pressing issues, which cannot be adequately addressed without regionally engaged and globally committed allies. This is where the Turkey-USA alliance comes in.

Turkey has adapted itself quickly to the post-Cold War realities which propelled it towards more intensive political, diplomatic and commercial engagements around the world in general and in the Middle East and the Balkans in particular. As a result, Turkey gained higher visibility and recognition among its neighbors as an agent of stability with a position of relative economic prosperity. This higher profile naturally brought along new responsibilities and challenges: building and mobilizing the requisite economic and institutional capacity; becoming an “honest broker” in a notoriously difficult region; and bolstering its moral standing through improving its own record of rights and liberties. Needless to say, such a demanding agenda cannot be pursued without solid alliances with globally able partners of comparable values.

The mutual need for committed and able allies in furthering respective objectives lays the ground for the Turkey-USA relationship in the coming decades. Given the complexity of the issues, a lot remains to be done regarding the substance and style of the alliance between the two countries.

The fundamental problem that has marked the history of the Turkish-American relationship has been its predominantly security-oriented nature rather than a broader and more solid basis that should include a multi-level dialogue involving non-state actors, strong emphasis on shared universal values as well as an economic

and socio-cultural dimension. This, in return, has rendered the relationship highly fragile and overly dependent on circumstantial strategic security interests. In addition, the lack of effective and institutionalized crisis management mechanisms has made the relationship even more vulnerable to being taken hostage by crises.

The history of the bilateral relationship reveals four main phases: The “honeymoon” period which lasted from the introduction of the Truman Doctrine in 1947 to the crisis triggered by the Johnson letter in 1964 on the issue of a potential Turkish intervention in Cyprus; the years of tension from 1964 to 1980; the new rapprochement, starting in 1980 and lasting until the U.S. invasion of Iraq in 2003; and the current period of uncertainty since then. This most recent phase started when the relationship was seriously strained following the parliamentary resolution of March 1st 2003 unfavorable to U.S. war plans in Iraq and the subsequent Suleymaniya incident in July 2003. The ensuing period has been characterized by attempts to rehabilitate the relationship, most visibly demonstrated by a “Strategic Partnership” document under the Bush Administration in 2006, and the first presidential bilateral overseas visit of President Obama to Turkey in 2009.

It is clear to all that Turkey and the U.S. can no longer afford to let their relationship be determined by crises and volatility. Given the common values and aspirations the two countries share, and the immense benefits that well coordinated efforts in many areas, especially in the Middle East, would have for all stakeholders, it is not only natural, but also necessary that they work together to better institutionalize and advance their alliance.

Currently, the national priorities of both countries in the Middle East are to a large extent overlapping: Regional stability and cooperation, energy security, a unified and stable Iraq, democratization in the region, preventing nuclear proliferation and elimination of terrorism. The two countries, however, differ in their approach to some of Israel’s regional policies and Iran’s nuclear ambitions. Leveraging the long list of converging priorities and managing the diverging approaches would require well-thought-out and carefully applied policy initiatives.

Given the interdependence of the relationship, it is first vital that the parties increase their own capacity in positively influencing international affairs, while at the same time jointly invest in efforts towards addressing shared goals and concerns.

In order to adapt its foreign policy to the current regional requirements and maximize its contribution to the Turkish-American relationship, it is of utmost importance that the U.S. skillfully re-activates and manages the Middle East peace process. As far as diplomatic style is concerned, fine-tuning the outdated carrot-and-stick methods of the Cold War era would also help a great deal in improving America's badly frayed image in the recent years, thereby boosting its public diplomacy efforts.

As for Turkey, it is obvious that working on its democratization process that is currently unfolding with mixed results, being a reliable and unemotional regional actor and delivering on ambitious political initiatives taken in the region (e.g. normalizing the relations with Armenia) would increase its own capacity in positively influencing international affairs.

When it comes to what the two countries need to achieve together, both the content and the structure of the cooperation matter. Although the shared agenda is very broad, ensuring peace and prosperity in a changing Middle East and energy security are two critical areas of long-term common interest.

The current transformation of the Middle East is likely to present an opportunity to initiate and support processes that can expedite political, economic and social progress and development in the countries of the region. This historic opportunity calls for coordinated planning and action between Turkey and the USA.

Global energy security is the other key domain of substantive cooperation. Surrounded by the world's largest fossil fuel resources, Turkey can and intends to position itself as a critical and constructive actor in global energy security. Needless to say, this is also a matter of paramount importance for the USA. Therefore, jointly crafting and implementing strategies to ensure reliable energy flows through and from the region will serve their shared strategic objectives.

Executive Summary

The structure of the relationship requires as much attention as its content. A better understanding of each other's political systems and public sensitivities is an essential element, which would preempt policy mishaps that have previously triggered the above-mentioned crises. In case such efforts fail, institutional crisis management capabilities should be in place to manage the process and to minimize the harm. In addition to these efforts and mechanisms, investing in public diplomacy instruments would further facilitate the process of taking the relationship to a higher ground.

The intent to reach that higher ground is evident in the mutual efforts carried out by the leadership on both sides. It is essential that this intent bear fruit sooner rather than later, so that Turkey and the United States can together become the champions of peace, prosperity and stability in a delicate region at a critical time. There are ample and historical opportunities for Turkey and the U.S. to jointly contribute to regional and global stability. We hope that the two countries will rise to the occasion.

┌

┐

└

┘

Global Context

Political and Strategic Environment

In the last twenty years, the pendulum of international politics has swung twice, bringing about a profound transformation of the global system.

The first has marked the end of the Cold War, lifting, on the one hand, the ideological monopoly over international relations but unleashing, on the other, new dynamics that led to the eruption of long-contained ethnic and regional conflicts. The liberation of the system has also triggered an unprecedented wave of globalization that could not be controlled or monitored, carrying both positive and negative aspects as the spread of liberal democracy was paralleled by a growing economic inequality in many parts of the world. At the same time, the reign of absolute state sovereignty entered into a fierce competition with the transnational nature of the new system since the information technology and the rise of non-governmental actors increasingly blurred national borders and the world became “one big village” in the words of Jacques Delors, the former head of the EU Commission.

The United States stood practically alone at the top of this new system, unrivalled in the political, military, economic, technological and cultural realms. But it also faced the new challenges of the era through an increasing number of micro-conflicts, violent reactions caused by the consequences of globalization generally identified with “American imperialism”, the rise of medium-range powers sometimes assertively – if not aggressively – pursuing foreign policy objectives including the quest for nuclear power, the

proliferation of failed states leading to regional instability and encouraging the spread of terrorist movements, as well as rapidly spreading pandemics such as HIV/AIDS across the world.

Although of a considerable dimension each, none of them could defy the primacy of the United States in a fundamental way until the second big change which came with the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. Unprecedented in their scope, the nature of their target and the shockwaves they have sent throughout the world, these attacks had a direct effect on U.S. domestic and foreign policy and consequently, the entire international system. As the terrorism/security equation became the top priority, the U.S. found itself at war with a mercurial enemy, identified as “Islamic terror”. The wars in Afghanistan and Iraq have demonstrated the profound faith of America in the efficacy of force, considered central to win the war on terror, to control the proliferation of WMD, and ultimately, to promote democracy.²

However, Washington had to realize the limits of this unilateralist assumption: The allies did not bandwagon with it despite the global nature of the threat, the enemy was as elusive as ever, and anti-Americanism has been on the rise across the globe. Against this background, the election of Barack H. Obama to the Presidency of the United States reflected the self-correcting nature of American politics and the will to reverse this course by swinging the pendulum of foreign policy to the opposite direction. The ideal was a passage from unilateralism to multilateralism, from prejudice to dialogue and, ultimately, from war to peace. But the new administration is certainly aware after more than two years in office that this is not going to be an easy task.

Current Challenges

What the world faces today is a mixture of mega-crises, be it, financial, political or environmental. Notwithstanding our rejection of the “clash of civilizations” thesis, the war against obscure

2. Jon Western, “American Security, the Use of Force, and the Limits of the Bush Doctrine”, in David P. Forsythe et.al. (eds.), *American Foreign Policy in a Globalized World*, (New York: Routledge, 2006), p. 106.

forces of fundamentalism is going on. Mass uprisings against oppressive regimes have recently been spreading across a growing number of countries. Triggered by the crisis in the U.S. real estate market and aggravated by the debt crises in the euro area, an economic tsunami is still threatening many shores throughout the globe. Despite the end of polarity in world politics, the remnants of block politics emerge from time to time in international relations.

Therefore, what is needed today is a functioning global governance system. This should be a continuing process through which conflicting or diverse interests may be accommodated and cooperative problem-solving action may be taken by states as well as other actors. Multilateralism has thus become paramount. It should be underlined, however, that the classical context of inter-governmental organizations seems no longer sufficient in dealing with current challenges as there is an obvious shortage of adapted rules and mechanisms within these post-World War II institutions as compared to the scope and complexity of the issues marking the 21st century. Consequently, the new multilateralism will also have to involve flexible structures like the G-20, or smaller groups of individual governments willing – and capable – of undertaking collective effort with a view to resolve a specific international problem (i.e. six-party talks with North Korea).³

Within this context, conscious that the U.S. has the global responsibility for global problems, the Obama administration has declared: “Military force may sometimes be necessary to protect our people and our interests. But diplomacy and development will be equally important in creating conditions for a peaceful, stable and prosperous world. That is the essence of smart power—using all the tools at our disposal. Smart power requires reaching out to both friends and adversaries, bolstering old alliances and forging new ones. Even if we disagree with some governments,

3. The idea of a new type of multilateralism as developed by Richard N. Haass, President of the Council of Foreign Relations, in his address entitled “The Evolving World Order” delivered at Koç University, Istanbul, on April 1, 2010.

America shares a bond of common humanity with the people of every nation, and we will work to invest in that common humanity”.⁴ Against the background of the basic contradiction between *Realpolitik* and *Moralpolitik* that has so far determined U.S. foreign policy, smart power stands as a first-time conceptual attempt to combine realities with values. Consequently, the current struggles not only implicate just military undertakings but larger, political ones based on vision, fairness, and values like the promotion of human rights and dignity for all, as well as economic and social development at home and abroad. The scope of the venture requires the involvement of non-state actors along with states and America’s traditional “non state-centric” philosophy is likely to facilitate the process.

Within current circumstances, the biggest challenge for the U.S. administration seems to be the contradiction between the urgency of the problems, and the long-term nature of the solutions they require. This is valid in combating terrorism, establishing a dialogue with the Islamic world, making the world free of nuclear weapons, finding a solution to the Israeli-Palestinian problem, getting out of the Afghan-Pakistani quagmire, stabilizing Iraq, handling the Arab Spring and, on top of it, dealing with a financial crisis that will affect their management. These are America’s – and the world’s – most pressing issues right now, and none of them is solvable in the short term, which means that a one-term presidency may be insufficient for tackling them all. But on the other hand, time in itself is not enough unless necessary policies are applied. The central question, therefore, remains how the United States will exercise the international leadership currently required by the enormous global constraints and long-term trends that actually determine world affairs. In that sense, the way U.S. foreign policy is conducted – both at bilateral and multilateral levels – appears to be crucial, along with the response of other international actors sharing the responsibility of global governance.

4. U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Public Affairs, Fact Sheet, “American Smart Power: Diplomacy and Development are the Vanguard”, May 4, 2009.

At this point, the challenge seems considerable since mutual perceptions are as important as issues themselves. In other words, the combination of factors that impact U.S. foreign policy-such as American cultural values, and the dynamics of the foreign policy process- remain difficult to analyze for third parties who often reduce it to simple and therefore psychologically and/or ideologically satisfying explanations. Certain types of anti-Americanism constitute a case in point. On the other hand, the idiosyncrasies of the American political system – such as the influence of lobbies on foreign policy decisions – and the priorities of the moment – what used to be communism and the Soviet Union during the Cold War seems to have been replaced by Islam and the Middle East in the aftermath of 9/11 – determine Washington’s actions as well as perceptions towards specific regions to a great extent. It is self-evident that all of the above factors carry the risk of mutual misperception between the U.S. and the rest of the world, unless public diplomacy is given due consideration by all parties.

Against the background of these challenges, the relationship between Turkey and the United States stands out as a microcosm of the changing international parameters of the 21st century. On top of the impact of global ones, Turkey is facing its own challenges, related to an unprecedented pace of change, in a highly fluid regional environment. This engenders a more creative foreign policy requiring the combination of hard as well as soft power, a rather new practice for Turkish diplomacy. The actual era of domestic and foreign overtures for Turkey- including its emergence as an economic power, the trajectory of its democratization and the increasing role of public opinion on political decisions- seems conducive to new challenges and opportunities both in its regional and global relations. Turkish-American relations should therefore be re-adjusted accordingly, with a special emphasis on how to benefit from these opportunities.

┌

┌

└

└

Substance of the Turkish-American Relationship

In general terms, the foreign policy of any country is determined, *inter alia*, by the combination of international circumstances, political culture, and structural idiosyncrasies of the government system, along with perceptions of national interests. In a bilateral relationship, the level of compatibility between the countries concerned is not, however, so much proportional to similarities between political cultures or systems as to the convergence of interests emerging within the context of international circumstances. The Turkish-American relationship is a case in point, as these two countries belonging to considerably different political, cultural and historical traditions have nevertheless become important and durable partners for each other since the end of World War II, despite recurring crises, some of which having left long lasting scars.

Nature and History

As odd as it may seem, the decades-old Turkish-American relationship needs a new definition. Already a necessity in the wake of the Cold War, this has become indispensable especially after the episode of contention that opposed Ankara to Washington following the 2003 American invasion of Iraq. Moreover, the two allies have since then diverged on many issues including the policy to be conducted towards Iran and Israel. As a result, the fabric of the relationship was badly frayed, but on the other hand, leaders of both countries seem to agree that it is – or at least should be – a “Model Partnership”. At this point, one wonders what actually the specific nature of this relationship is.

At the macro level, it is a relationship between two friendly states, unequal in power, but based on reciprocity, with discernible benefits flowing in both directions.⁵ Within this larger context, it was more specifically described, all throughout the Cold War, as a “strategic alliance” aimed at the defense of the Western bloc through NATO and bolstered by a series of bilateral security agreements.

As the nature of the relationship has automatically become more ambiguous with the end of the Cold War, the new concept of “enhanced partnership” was introduced in 1991. Its official explanation fully reflects the ambiguity of Turkish-American relations at that time of transition. “This new concept is aimed at diversifying and deepening the Turkish-American relationship as well as developing it on a more substantial basis”.⁶ Obviously, there was a void to be filled.

Following the regional developments throughout the 1990s, yet another formula was proposed in 1999, that of “strategic partnership”, meaning that the expansive cooperation is multi-dimensional and multi-faceted, involving a wide range of overlapping interests in Europe, the Caucasus, Central Asia and the Middle East.⁷

A decade later, and after a major bilateral crisis, the nature of the relationship is still being debated, given the fact that there is a need for strategic consensus covering the newly emerged dynamics as well as regional and global challenges.

President Obama’s concept of “Model Partnership” could be a step in this direction but that remains yet to be seen. Although its content remains unclear, the concept of “Model Partnership” launched in April 2009 by President Obama in his – first bilateral overseas – visit to Turkey appears to contain the following elements: The cooperation within NATO; bilateral military relations

5. Philip Robbins, “The Opium Crisis and the Iraq War: Historical Parallels in Turkey-U.S. Relations”, *Mediterranean Politics*, Vol. 12 No.1 (March 2007), p. 17.

6. “Turkish-U.S. Political Relations”, Republic of Turkey, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, accessible online at www.mfa.gov.tr

7. Ibid.

including joint training, arms trade, the U.S. base in İncirlik, logistic support to Iraq and Afghanistan; shared values such as democracy, the rule of law, U.S. support for Turkey's EU membership, as well as educational and cultural ties.⁸ It should be pointed out, however, that the last two components have yet to be further elaborated as the substance of the relationship has largely remained security-oriented since the proclamation of the Truman doctrine in 1947.

Observation 1: The fundamental problem that has underlined the Turkish-American relationship has been its exclusively strategic nature existing only in function of common threats rather than a broader and consequently more solid basis that should have included a multi-level dialogue, a consensus around contemporary universal human values, as well as the involvement of non-state actors. The lack of it all has rendered the relationship highly fragile and overly dependent on the presence or absence of circumstantial strategic interests.

A brief look at history indeed confirms this view.

Until the aftermath of World War II, Turkey and the United States perceived each other as remote yet relatively positive powers, given that they had never waged war against one another throughout history. The relationship remained limited to primarily economic exchanges throughout the nineteenth century, when political isolationism was the benchmark of U.S. foreign policy while the Ottoman Empire was very much part of the European balance of power politics.⁹ The years that followed the foundation of the Republic in 1923 and the interwar period were marked by diplomacy of political and economic construction upon which the future Turkish-American alliance was built.¹⁰ The turning

8. Statement by James Jeffrey, U.S. Ambassador to Turkey, during the conference on "The Future of Turkey-U.S. Relations: Prospects for Cooperation in the Middle East", jointly organized in Istanbul by the Hollings Center and TESEV, May 7-9, 2010.

9. Füsün Türkmen, "Turkish-American Relations: A Challenging Transition", *Turkish Studies*, Vol. 10, No.1, (March 2009), p. 110.

10. For a detailed account of the interwar period, see Şuhnaz Yılmaz, "Challenging the Stereotypes: Turkish-American Relations in the Interwar Era", *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 42, No. 2 (March 2006), p. 223-237.

point came with the post-World War II Soviet threat against Turkey. Determined to take advantage of the relative political isolation of Turkey in the aftermath of a war in which it had not taken part despite heavy pressure, Moscow made claims for the rectification of the Turkish-Soviet border in favor of the Soviet Union, the establishment of Soviet land and naval bases on the Turkish Straits “for joint Turkish-Soviet defense of the area”, and the amendment of the 1936 Montreux Convention that determined the regime of the Straits. This was going to pave the way to the proclamation of the Truman doctrine, as Washington took over the economic and military assistance to Greece and Turkey, following Great Britain’s request in February 1947.

From that moment on, four main periods can be distinguished in Turkish-American relations: the “honeymoon” period which lasted from the proclamation of the Truman doctrine in 1947 to the 1964 Johnson letter; the years of digression, covering almost two decades, from 1964 to 1980; the new rapprochement, starting in 1980 and lasting until the U.S. invasion of Iraq in 2003; finally, the period of restructuring since then which seems to be marked by a more assertive Turkish foreign policy.

Turkish-American relations were never closer than in the first period as the first bilateral agreements were concluded, economic and military assistance was extended to Turkey, the two armies fought together in Korea, Turkey was admitted to NATO in 1952, and U.S. air and strategic bases as well as radar and communication facilities were established across Turkey.

The factor that put an end to this “honeymoon” period was the Cyprus issue. As inter-communal violence between Greeks and Turks of the island reached an all-time high in 1963, the Turkish government, under tremendous public pressure, started to make preparations for a military intervention. While Prime Minister İnönü was still expecting U.S. mediation between two NATO members came the infamous “Johnson letter” as a fatal blow for bilateral relations. The letter not only harshly reminded the Turks that according to Article 4 of the 1947 Assistance Act they should first consult with Washington and were not entitled to use U.S. weapons should such an intervention take place, it also “warned”

that NATO could not guarantee its support in the case of Soviet military reaction to an eventual Turkish intervention. Even though İnönü was then immediately invited to Washington and the Johnson administration, realizing the scope of this diplomatic faux pas, hastened to put together the Acheson Plan in Cyprus, the damage was done and Turkish-American relations were never the same again. Beside a series of diplomatic reprisals marking Turkey's digression from the USA, the crisis also triggered a strong wave of anti-Americanism coinciding with the violent rise of the left and which was never going to disappear entirely from the political scene.¹¹ In the subsequent decade, relations deteriorated further due to the "opium crisis" when the Nixon administration put public pressure on Turkey to close all its opium fields as drug abuse increased in the United States as a post-Vietnam syndrome.¹² The 1970s saw the Cyprus problem resurface again, as the 1974 Turkish military intervention on the island led to an arms embargo on Turkey, voted by Congress in 1975 as a result of intense efforts by the Greek lobby, despite the opposition of the Ford administration. The latter's attitude had been largely determined by Secretary of State Henry Kissinger who "was concerned with the maintenance of Turkish goodwill as a bulwark between the Soviet Union and the Arab states as well as with the continued use of U.S. bases in Turkey. He was also concerned with the effects of United States policy over Cyprus on the resolution of the Arab/Israeli problem, and regarded this as more important than Greek hostility towards the United States, despite the effect of Greek withdrawal from NATO on the Southern flank".¹³ Turkey responded to the embargo by abolishing the 1969 Mutual Defense Cooperation Agreement and gained control of all joint military installations. It should be pointed out that in style and substance, the Agreement was already very different from the ones reached in the 1950s, having established a greater control over the bases in the aftermath of the Johnson letter.

11. Following the crisis, Turkey refused to take part in NATO's Multilateral Nuclear Strike Force, which it had accepted in 1963; refused to send troops to Vietnam and condemned that war before the UN General Assembly; voiced its reservation against a CENTO declaration in favor of the United States; and expressed discontent over the passage of the American battleships through the Straits.
12. In fact, Turkey was more a transit country than a major producer, but this was ignored by the U.S. government, in quest of a quick fix that would satisfy public opinion.
13. British Foreign Secretary James Callaghan in his memoirs, quoted by Makarios Droushiotis, "Kissinger and Callaghan's unknown tug-of-war over the Cyprus crisis", published on August 17, 2010, accessible online at *Cyprus Mail*, October 4, 2010, <http://www.cyprus-mail.com/cyprus/kissinger-and-callaghan-s-unknown-tug-of-war/20100817>

Also in 1975, the first House bill was introduced with a view to recognize the 1915 events involving Ottoman Armenians as genocide. The efforts of the Armenian lobby in this respect continue to this day, still causing tension in the Turkish-American relations and occasionally opposing the White House to Congress.

Following the lifting of the arms embargo in 1978 under the Carter administration, the turning point came with the 1980 intervention by the Turkish armed forces that put an end to the political violence which had claimed more than 5000 lives in the country throughout the 1970s. The ensuing marginalization of the radical left and the renewal of the cooperation between Ankara and Washington – through a new Defense and Cooperation Agreement concluded just before the military intervention – gave a further boost to Turkish-American relations, in particular after Turgut Özal became Prime Minister following parliamentary elections in 1983. Fully backing the U.S. administration during the Gulf war, Özal shut down the Kirkuk-Yumurtalık oil pipeline to cut off Iraq's oil export; granted access and over-flight rights to U.S. combat aircraft operating from the Incirlik Air Base; deployed troops along the Iraqi border; and subsequently allowed allied aircraft to monitor the no-fly zone over northern Iraq.¹⁴ This was not only a sign of rapprochement with the United States but also a major shift in regional policy, characterized thus far by non-interference and support for status quo for the sake of domestic/regional stability.

Turkish-U.S. cooperation was further enhanced under the Clinton administration at various levels, including energy – as the U.S. politically backed the Baku-Ceyhan oil pipeline project despite resistance from major oil companies – economic issues, security cooperation and regional cooperation. This also includes the multilateral forces in the humanitarian crises of Somalia, Bosnia, and Kosovo. Moreover, the administration helped Turkey resolve a major crisis with the EU over its candidacy issue in 1997 and enabled IMF assistance during the 1999 economic crisis. The culmination came with President Clinton's visit to Turkey in the

14. F. Stephen Larrabee, "Turkey as a U.S. Security Partner", RAND Corporation Report prepared for the U.S. Air Force, 2008, p. 25.

same year. This was a major success not only in diplomatic, but also in human terms, as he was widely acclaimed by the victims of the recent earthquake whom he visited.

The advent of the George W. Bush administration was not expected to change the course of the renewed ties as the Republicans had traditionally been aware of Turkey's role as a strategic ally since the Cold War years. This was further confirmed by Turkey's full support for the U.S. in the wake of the 9/11 terrorist attacks, as it swiftly assumed the leadership of the International Security and Assistance Force in Afghanistan between 2002 and 2003. But as the Bush administration turned its attention towards Iraq as the next battlefield of its war against global terror, Turkey started to grow increasingly restless. The reason was simple: For Turkey, Iraq was not only about Iraq, but also about the Kurdish issue. In the eyes of Ankara, an American intervention could pave the way to Iraq's disintegration and consequently, to the emergence of an independent Kurdish entity in the North, strengthening the terrorist threat long posed by the PKK and at the same time endangering the security of the Turkmen minority. Thus came the "acid test of the Turkish-U.S. relationship"¹⁵ as the resolution on the passage of American troops through Turkish territory to invade Northern Iraq was not approved by the Turkish General National Assembly (TGNA) on March 1, 2003, with 264 votes in favor – while a minimum of 267 were required –, 250 against, and 19 abstentions. This led to a last minute change of Washington's war plans and created the second biggest rift between Turkey and the USA since the Johnson letter. There were many factors contributing to the unexpected decision of TGNA including the campaign waged by the opposition and the inexperience of the newly elected AKP Government in managing a critical international crisis. In fact, neither side was blameless as Ankara misguidedly gave the green light to the U.S. prior to the invasion, while Washington failed to predict the difficulties it would encounter in the new Turkish political environment.

15. Morton Abramowitz, "Introduction and Overview" in Morton Abramowitz (ed.), *Turkey's Transformation and American Policy* (New York: The Century Foundation, 2000), p.15.

When, on top of it, the Suleymaniya incident broke out on July 4, 2003, Turkish-American relations literally collapsed. In this Kurdish-held northern city of Iraq, U.S. troops arrested, cuffed, hooded and detained eleven members of Turkey's special forces, accusing them of plotting a political assassination. They would be released two days later, but neither side offered a satisfactory explanation to the public while this new crisis triggered a new, highly vociferous wave of anti-Americanism in Turkey.

Since then, both parties have undertaken serious efforts to overcome the tension with ambiguous results. The rift that has appeared in 2003 seemed to dissipate in 2006-2007. High level contacts were accelerated already under the Bush administration as Secretary of State Rice visited Ankara before and during the proclamation of the 2006 "Shared Vision and Structured Dialogue to Advance the Turkish-American Strategic Partnership"¹⁶ while Prime Minister Erdoğan and President Gül were invited to the White House, in 2007 and 2008 respectively. Despite such efforts, the "Who lost Turkey?" debate was gaining ground in Washington as Turkish public opinion continued to give highly negative signals concerning the present and the future of the relationship.

The first sign indicating the fact that the incoming Obama administration was acutely aware of the turn taken by the relationship was the inclusion of a specific paragraph on Turkey in the foreign policy position paper issued by the then candidate Obama during the presidential campaign.¹⁷ The second, more forceful sign was going to be Secretary of State Clinton's visit to Turkey practically right after the election, as she announced the upcoming visit of the President himself in April. The visit – the first overseas state visit after President Obama took office – was undoubtedly a success as the right messages were conveyed at a time they were badly needed. Since then, an intense dialogue is being maintained between Ankara and Washington as leaders of the two countries have held many bilateral summits, meeting also occasionally during multilateral conferences.

16. For the full text, see Information Resource Center, Embassy of the United States, Ankara, Turkey, turkey.usembassy.gov/statement_070508.html.

17. On the campaign website: www.obamaforamerica.com

The first concrete results were an increased U.S. support for Turkey in its fight against the PKK, and Turkey's newly established dialogue with the leadership of northern Iraq as opposed to its past inflexibility. Besides, Washington's strong backing for Turkey's EU membership continues, at least through forceful public statements that sometimes even antagonize European leaders.

Problems, however, remain. They include issues upon which Turkey and the U.S. seem to differ, especially with regard to Iran and Israel, as well as mutual negative perceptions.

Observation 2: The history of Turkish-American relations shows that, to this day, most of the crises that have erupted between the two countries have been somehow linked to third parties rather than issues belonging to a strictly bilateral context.

Current Issues

Today, nearly all of the issues upon which Turkish and American interests converge-or diverge- originate from the Middle East and this is likely to continue.

Resting upon three layers of foreign interference across a century – European in the wake of World War I, Soviet-American during the Cold War, and American since 2003 –, harboring 59.9% of the worldwide oil and 41% of natural gas reserves¹⁸, and scene to the longest ongoing regional conflict in international relations through the Arab-Israeli rift, the region has been undergoing a profound strategic and socio-political transformation for some time.

2011 will indeed go down in history as one of the great landmarks in Middle Eastern history, as the peoples of successive Arab countries challenged their governments, demanding a better and freer life. The problems they have long been facing, such as social backwardness, authoritarianism, poverty, and inequality, are well-known.

18. BP Statistical Review of World Energy 2010

The immediate triggers of these movements were partly political – long years of non-democratic rule –, partly social and economic – rising food prices and great hardship for many people –, and partly an awareness of the freedoms and blessings which people in other parts of the world enjoy, but are denied to all except a small elite in many Middle Eastern countries. Communication technology has been crucial in the awakening of the Arab world, and is henceforth likely to be reckoned with in any future mass movement throughout the world.

Turkey, as the only large country of the region so far to give its citizens a modern life, and with deep cultural and historical affinities with its Middle Eastern neighbors naturally feels great solidarity with them. At the same time, Turkey is eager to see each one of them determine its own destiny without becoming the prey of foreign interference.

In two countries, Tunisia and Egypt, there has already been a change of regime. These countries now require solidarity and urgent assistance to build stable and effective institutions to cope with poverty, backwardness, and inequality. If they are not given this support, then their new freedom may well prove only temporary and they could relapse into another phase of harsh authoritarianism. The future of both countries is crucial to the Middle East and to the Mediterranean. It has to be recognized that their economic outlook, at least in the short term, is bleak and the need to support them is urgent.

In four other countries, Libya, Yemen, Bahrain, and Syria, there have been strong protests and demonstrations but the incumbent governments have used a considerable degree of violence against their own people in order to resist change. In Libya, a severe civil war has erupted as a result of Muammar Gaddafi's insistence upon staying in power, which has triggered an international intervention with the UN and NATO trying to protect the civilian population of that country. This is in accordance with the "responsibility to protect", a concept that was developed and recognized by the international community in the wake of the ethnic conflicts of the 1990s.

The insurgency seems to have succeeded in removing Gaddafi from power, putting an end to decades of tyranny. Nevertheless, the situation remains explosive and a new leadership will need the sustained support of the international community to be able to install a viable democracy.

In Bahrain and the Gulf, there is the danger that popular protest against authoritarianism will become entangled with religious sectarianism with potentially explosive consequences. Turkey notes with approval – though with caution- that Iran has made explicit its acceptance of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Gulf States. As Turkey's close neighbor with the longest common border, the violence in Syria causes Turkey great distress.

The upheavals of 2011 have been painful and often bloody. But they offer a clear message from the people that times have changed and that the relationship between governments and peoples must evolve. States choosing to respond positively to this message may have to face uncertainty and upheavals, but in the medium to longer term they will undoubtedly emerge strengthened and more prosperous.

Turkey is eager to assist by encouraging dialogue and cooperation wherever it can, through practical assistance. There is certainly no simple 'Turkish model' to export, but as a modern industrial democratic society Turkey does have a certain experience – including pitfalls as well as successes – that might be of use to neighboring societies as they embark on a quest for greater freedom and prosperity.

Turkey, the only industrial democratic society in the Middle East with close ties both with the region and the transatlantic world, has long been eager to play a constructive and helpful role in the evolution of its neighbors through bilateral and multilateral diplomacy.

Aspirations in North Africa and the Middle East towards a new democratic and social order presents fresh opportunities for cooperation between Turkey and the USA. Fostering economic,

social and political progress in the region corresponds exactly to the interests of the two countries. So it is likely to become a positive key factor in rebuilding mutual trust in the years ahead, provided that both sides have the wisdom to recognize this opportunity and seize it. The challenge of the new Middle East offers an exciting prospect of cooperation to build peace and stability there. Such cooperation would ideally combine a policy of values with concrete action – including joint business, educational, academic and scientific ventures –, which is the very cement long needed to underpin the Turkey-USA relationship.

Observation 3: As demonstrated by the recent developments, non-state actors who triggered the awakening of Middle Eastern civil societies are the new influential players. They are likely to continue playing a role in the region through their political action and discourse until the advent of democracy and beyond.

Against this background, it is obvious that Turkey and the United States need carefully crafted regional as well as bilateral policies. The fact that,

- a) Turkey acts as a more independent regional power since the end of the Cold War and that it has more recently developed a new approach towards its neighbors through political, diplomatic and commercial openings;
- b) The Obama administration tries to implement a policy based on mutual respect and dialogue with the Muslim world rather than engaging in military action, and ultimately aims at achieving peace on the Arab-Israeli front, and supporting the forces of democratization in the region, are big advantages in themselves.

As compared to the past, Turkey enjoys a much higher prestige and popularity among its neighbors as an agent of stability and the biggest economic power in the region, while the U.S. has succeeded in somewhat restoring its badly frayed image. This is certainly a good beginning for both, but definitely not enough given the complexity of the issues.

Currently, the national priorities of both countries in the Middle East can be identified as follows:

- For the USA
 - Regional stability and cooperation
 - Access to energy resources
 - Unified stable Iraq
 - Elimination of international terrorism
 - Avoiding nuclear proliferation
 - Security of Israel
 - Democratization in the region

- For Turkey
 - Regional stability and cooperation
 - Access to energy resources
 - Unified stable Iraq
 - Elimination of international terrorism, in particular that of PKK.
 - Nuclear-free Middle East
 - Increased trade and investment
 - Democratization in the region

At first glance, there seems to be a great deal of compatibility between the two while the reality is somewhat more nuanced. Turkey and the United States indeed converge on certain issues while they diverge on others, at least about means rather than ends.

Points of Convergence

The 2006 document entitled “Shared Vision and Structured Dialogue to Advance the Turkish-American Strategic Partnership” appears to be still the most comprehensive reference on issues of common concern to both countries – in the Middle East and beyond. It enumerates them as peace and stability in the Middle East including a democratic and unified Iraq and a permanent settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict on the basis of a two-state solution; contributing to stability, independence and democracy in the Black Sea region, the Balkans, the Caucasus, Central Asia,

Pakistan and Afghanistan; a just and lasting solution to the Cyprus question; enhancing energy security through diversification of sources and routes including those from the Caspian basin with a view to avoid the danger of political blackmail; strengthening of NATO and the Transatlantic alliance; countering terrorism including the fight against the PKK; preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction; and promoting the understanding, respect and tolerance between and among religions and cultures in order to find durable solutions to international crises.

These are obviously shared goals and, as U.S. Assistant Secretary Philip H. Gordon pointed out, “in every one of these areas, U.S.-Turkish cooperation can be a force for progress” with Afghanistan, Iraq, Turkey’s EU membership, energy, Armenia and Cyprus as currently the most prominent examples of areas of cooperation.¹⁹

As far as Afghanistan is concerned, Turkey – which has close cultural, ethnic and linguistic ties with this country dating back to the 1920s- has been in the field since 2001 as the TGNA, through its Resolution 722, has granted permission to deploy Turkish Armed Forces in Afghanistan in accordance with Article 92 of its Constitution. Turkey served as the lead nation under ISAF-II in 2002-2003 contributing 1,300 personnel and commanding 4,800 from 22 countries, while it ran the Kabul International Airport and the Multinational Headquarters. Leading ISAF for the second time in 2005, it established a Provincial Reconstruction Team in November 2006 in Wardak Province with a view to improve the administrative and judiciary system and train the Afghan police force.²⁰ Since 2009, Turkey has been running ISAF Regional Command-Capital with 1,700 personnel and has extended its command for another year starting in November 2010 upon the request of NATO.²¹ Besides their military contribution, Turkish Armed Forces have, since 2002, contributed USD 40 million in humanitarian aid through infrastructure and health care projects. The construction of four hospitals, eight health clinics and twenty-seven schools across the country, the granting of 260 scholarships

19. Philip H. Gordon, “The United States and Turkey: A View from the Obama Administration”, Sabancı Lecture, The Brookings Institution, Washington, D.C., March 17, 2010.
20. Information and figures provided by the United States Central Command.
21. TİKA, 2008 *Annual Report*, (Ankara:2009)

to Afghan students, the training of Afghan land forces and the medical treatment of 205 Afghan military personnel and their families in Turkey are among the implemented projects. The popularity of Turkish forces in Afghanistan stems not only from all these endeavors, but also from the fact that they are not part of Operation Enduring Freedom, the allied combat force, and therefore not linked to any loss of life among the Afghan population.

Regarding Iraq, a most spectacular transformation took place as Turkish-U.S. relations turned from confrontation to cooperation over the last couple of years. Following the 2003 crisis opposing Ankara to Washington, both sides have made huge diplomatic efforts in order to restore friendly relations, as already indicated. The turning point came in 2007 when intelligence-sharing and military cooperation was initiated between the Pentagon and the Turkish General Staff by a trilateral counter-terrorism mechanism between Iraq, Turkey and the United States to bolster the fight against the PKK. Indeed, the United States has created a joint “centralized command center” with Turkey for surveillance drones flying over northern Iraq. Turkish officers look at the imagery and are free to target suspicious activity when they see it fit.²² Once the joint effort was under way, Ankara progressively abandoned its policy of marginalization towards the KRG and established a dialogue with its leaders, got involved in the process leading towards the Status of Forces Agreement between Washington and Baghdad, contributed to the stabilization of Iraq by supporting Sunni participation in politics and opened Consulates General in Basra and Erbil. In the meantime, Turkish economic and educational investments have been growing considerably in northern Iraq. As the withdrawal of U.S. combat forces from Iraqi territory started in August 2010, a highly delicate transitional era has begun. The potential developments till the final withdrawal of the remaining 50,000 American troops by the end of 2011 will be decisive. Iraq’s eventual fall into chaos might unleash other dynamics creating serious security and energy problems for

22. David Ignatius, “Dazzling New Weapons Require New Rules for War”, *The Washington Post*, November 11, 2010.

Turkey and the broader region as well, not to mention the global economy. The unresolved issue of Kirkuk's status – as Turkey remains concerned with its inclusion in Kurdish territory rather than being granted a special status – is one of the question marks for the future.

Observation 4: U.S. support for Turkey's struggle against the PKK is the *sine qua non* condition for Turkish-American cooperation in the region and beyond.

An area of “temperate” or “parallel” cooperation is Syria. For Turkey, it had long been a suspicious neighbor given its ties with the Soviet Union, its territorial claims on the province of Hatay, the contention over the waters of the Euphrates and its explicit support for the PKK, including providing safe haven to its leader, Abdullah Öcalan. The turning point came with Öcalan's expulsion from Syrian territory following Ankara's ultimatum in 1998 and later the death of President Hafez al-Assad, as Syria gradually moved towards a mainstream foreign policy. Turkish-Syrian relations have greatly improved since 2002 under the AKP government, with strengthened economic ties and Ankara's mediation between Israel and Syria which lasted from 2004 to 2008. Yet, the policy of repression and violence that the current Bashar al-Assad regime has been carrying out against its own people is met with explicit criticism in Turkey, leading to increasingly strained relations between the two countries.

A decades-old grand strategy of democratization, Turkey's EU accession process has already played a critical role in substantive reforms since 1999, but has lately stalled and proved ineffective in preventing the recent deterioration of democratic standards in some critical areas. Although the EU project still carries the potential to bring Turkey much closer to its Western allies in terms of values and practices, it demands philosophical and political ownership by leaders on both sides.

The United States has been strongly in favor of Turkey's membership since the beginning of the process in the late 1990s. This unwavering support is not only based on the American

tradition of *Moralpolitik* but also on the awareness that true liberal democracy is a guarantee of stability in domestic and foreign policy. A democratic, prosperous and stable ally is all the more vital for U.S. interests in the highly volatile region where Turkey is located. Moreover, the enthusiasm felt by Middle Eastern countries for the prospect of the membership of a fellow Muslim country indicates that should it happen, it will be perceived as a sign of peace and reconciliation between the East and the West, especially in the post-9/11 world where the clash of civilizations thesis has already done a lot of damage. Hence, President Obama's strong messages to both Turkey and the EU to relentlessly pursue the project, first in his historic Prague speech and then before the Turkish Parliament in his 2009 visit, when he declared: "The United States strongly supports Turkey's bid to become a member of the European Union...Turkey has been a resolute ally and a responsible partner in transatlantic and European institutions. Turkey is bound to Europe by more than the bridges over the Bosphorus. Centuries of shared history, culture and commerce bring you together. Europe gains by the diversity of ethnicity, tradition and faith – it is not diminished by it. And Turkish membership would broaden and strengthen Europe's foundation once more".²³ He repeated his faith in Turkey's European destiny at another occasion and remarked that if Turks continued to feel excluded from the European family, it would be only natural that they end up looking elsewhere for affiliations and alliances.²⁴ It is indeed self-evident that Europe's increasingly discouraging attitude towards Turkey illustrated mainly by the French and German leaderships has so far seriously undermined this integration project, exposing, by the same token, the natural limits of U.S. influence.

In the eyes of the U.S. administration, energy is a key issue related to Europe's and therefore Western security. As indicated by one of its high officials, Turkey has the potential to play a crucial role as a transit energy hub to the rest of Europe. The role played by the U.S. in enhancing Turkey's development in this sense is undeniable, as already indicated. The Baku-Tbilisi-

23. Remarks by President Obama to the Turkish Parliament, Turkish Grand National Assembly Complex, Ankara, Turkey, April 6, 2009.

24. Interview granted by the President to the Italian daily *Corriere della Sera*, July 8, 2010.

Ceyhan pipeline, which became operational in 2006, can deliver up to one million barrels per day of petroleum and in 2007 the South Caucasus pipeline began bringing natural gas from Azerbaijan to Turkey. According to a State Department official, “What these various projects and a variety of proposed future initiatives show is that Turkey will be an integral part of meeting Europe’s energy needs and providing for Europe’s energy security”.²⁵

As to Ankara’s recent Armenian overture, it appears to be as much the consequence of Minister Davutoğlu’s “zero problems with the neighbors” principle, as of the EU process which helped overcome many taboos within Turkish society. The Armenian overture is indeed the outcome of a 10-year old on-and-off process which had started with a bilateral Reconciliation Commission composed of eminent diplomats and academics from both Turkey and Armenia, with American support. After the cessation of the Commission’s activities, secret negotiations between the two countries were launched in the Swiss capital Bern under the aegis of the Swiss government. The last stage was the signing of the Protocols between Turkey and Armenia in October 2009 in the presence of the American, Russian and French foreign ministers, with a view to open the border, normalize the relations and create a joint Commission to work on the 1915 events. The ratification of the Protocols by the respective parliaments has not yet materialized, given the resistance by nationalist oppositions in both countries and the pressure of Azerbaijan on Turkey not to give in before the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict is resolved. Washington is strongly backing the overture, but if the process continues to drag on, this might be transformed from an area of cooperation into an area of disagreement, especially since the Armenian lobby in the U.S. is against any prospect of peace that would deprive it from its *raison d’être*. An important factor that could contribute to the advancement of the process is cooperation between Russia and the United States provided that the former is also in favor of resolving the problem, which does not seem clear so far.

25. Philip H. Gordon, *op.cit.*

As opposed to the Cold War years when it constituted a major issue of contention between Turkey and the United States, the Cyprus problem has now become a “point of convergence”, in particular since the Annan Plan strongly backed by Washington was supported by Turkey and Northern Cyprus. Despite the fact that the plan was later rejected by Greek Cypriots and Cyprus is now part of the EU scheme – which definitely limits the scope of U.S. involvement – the Obama administration declares itself clearly in favor of a settlement that will reunify Cyprus into a bi-zonal and bi-communal federation and the administration has recently voiced its support for Prime Minister Erdoğan who endorsed this solution.²⁶

The aforementioned points of convergence constitute the substance of current Turkish-American cooperation.

Points of Divergence

Recent developments in Turkey’s relations with Israel and Iran have indeed created considerable tension with Washington and although the public reaction of the Obama administration was rather moderate, the Congress seems to be adopting an increasingly negative attitude towards the Turkish government. This presages another low for Turkish-American relations, which are just recovering from the 2003 crisis, unless both parties draw the necessary lessons from past experiences and apply effective damage control.

Turkish-Israeli relations have a long history. It is true that Turkey was the first Muslim country to recognize Israel in 1949, but its relationship with the Jewish people goes as far back as 1492 when the Ottoman Empire welcomed the Jewish population of Spain expelled by the Catholic Monarchs as King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella were known. Since then, Turkey remained one of the rare countries in Europe and the Middle East with practically no tradition of anti-Semitism, while during the infamous 1930s it again offered safe haven to many refugees of Jewish origin

26. Ibid.

fleeing Hitler's Germany. Among them were numerous intellectuals and scholars who undoubtedly contributed to the scientific and cultural development of the young Turkish Republic, while some of the future founders of the State of Israel were familiar with Turkish culture. Israel's first two prime ministers, David Ben-Gurion and Moshe Sharett, spoke Turkish. Ben-Gurion studied law in Istanbul. Sharett had served as an officer in the Ottoman army during World War I.²⁷ While some of the Turkish Jews left for Israel when this new state was founded, many remained behind, and continued to live and to prosper in perfect harmony with the rest of the Turkish society. During the Iranian revolution and all throughout the 1980s, Turkey has helped the Jewish citizens of Iran, Iraq and Syria who were subject to repression by their respective governments, and quietly organized their transfer to Israel by providing them with safe-conducts and transportation.

Regional developments such as Israel's subsequent military invasions of Arab lands and the resulting plight of the Palestinians have led, across time, to occasional regressions in Turkish-Israeli relations. Following another low in the 1980s, relations improved in a spectacular manner in the 1990s within the prevailing security problematic as both countries aimed at countering the Syrian threat through defense, military training and intelligence cooperation. Moreover, agreements were concluded covering cooperation on trade, water, tourism and other fields. At the same time, Turkey's support for the newly launched Israeli-Palestinian peace process was perceived as an element of political impartiality, despite its close military cooperation with Israel. This positive atmosphere continued until 2000 when the second *intifada* broke out, triggered by Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's visit to the Al-Aqsa mosque, which was deemed as sheer provocation by the Palestinians. Israel's ensuing crackdown on Palestinians was harshly criticized by the Turkish leadership as the then Prime Minister Bülent Ecevit did not refrain from using the word "genocide" in describing the attack on Jenin in 2002.²⁸

27. Aluf Benn, "What a Missed Opportunity", in the Israeli daily *Haaretz*, June 9, 2010.

28. Jim Dymond, "Turkey Accuses Israel of Genocide" *BBC News*, April 4, 2002, quoted by Kemal Kirişçi et.al., "A Neighborhood Rediscovered: Turkey's Transatlantic Value in the Middle East", Brussels Forum Paper Series, The German Marshall Fund of the United States, 2010, p.7.

As tension grew between Palestinians and Israelis, Ecevit's successor, Prime Minister Erdoğan, went on using harsh words accusing Israel of "state terrorism" or waging an "illegitimate" war in Lebanon.²⁹ Although, in the meantime, President Shimon Peres visited Turkey and was the first Israeli head of state to address its Parliament in 2007, things have taken a turn for the worst since 2008-2009 with Israel's Operation Cast Lead in Gaza, killing 1,400 civilians, and profoundly shocking Turkish public opinion. With this, Turkey's mediation efforts between Syria and Israel came to an end. The January 2009 incident at the Davos World Economic Forum during which Erdoğan accused Israel of crimes against humanity in the person of President Peres was considered a peak in the Turkish-Israeli tension – that is until the highly unfortunate incident of the Gaza Flotilla Raid on 31st May 2010. The tragic killing by Israeli commando forces of nine Turkish humanitarian aid workers on board the Mavi Marmara, part of an international flotilla bringing aid material to the population of Gaza and organized by the Free Gaza Movement, was the most serious incident opposing Turks to Israelis as blood was shed for the very first time. The fact that the Turkish ship did not abide by Israel's warnings not to dock in Gaza cannot, of course, justify the killing of civilians on international waters, as confirmed by the report of the fact-finding mission established by the UN Human Rights Council.

The report indeed concludes that crimes against international humanitarian law and human rights law have been committed by Israel, given that a) Article 147 of the Fourth Geneva Convention was violated through acts of willful killing, torture or inhuman treatment and willfully causing great suffering or serious injury to body or health and b) various fundamental rights recognized by the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights were violated, such as the right to life (art.6), the interdiction of torture, and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment (art.7), the right to liberty and security of the person and freedom from arbitrary arrest or detention (art.9), the right of detainees to be treated with humanity and respect for the inherent dignity

29. Quoted in *ibid.*

of the person (art.10), and freedom of expression (art.19). Finally, the Mission calls for adequate and prompt compensation by the Government of Israel.³⁰

Besides the Mission, both Israel and Turkey have set up national inquiries and the Secretary General of the UN has established a Panel of Inquiry with the mandate to receive and review the reports of the national investigations with the intention of recommending ways of avoiding similar incidents in the future.³¹ Both parties have decided to send a representative to the Panel, which was interpreted as a sign of the willingness to mend their relationship, although this is not going to be an easy task while the question remains open on how further Turkish-Israeli relations will regress, and whether they will start recovering at some point. Despite the fact that Turkey wants to get this incident behind it, the conditions for a settlement announced in the summer of 2010 remain valid: an apology and compensation. And if the dispute is not resolved fairly quickly, the climate of hostility may become irreversible.

The reasons behind the deterioration of Turkish-Israeli relations run deeper than just the flotilla incident. They can be explained as much by the Israeli intransigence and excessive use of force against the Palestinians as the more pro-active nature of Turkish regional policy. It is self-evident that if Israel could remove the blockade around Gaza and soften its peace terms, the picture would greatly improve. Although the Turkish officials' discourse inevitably affects perceptions and policies, there is a considerable number of people in Turkey who, even after the adversity caused by the Mavi Marmara episode, still hold the view that a working Turkish-Israeli relationship is important for both countries. Besides, Turkish officials claim that the problem is with the current Israeli government and not with Israel itself.

-
30. Report of the international fact-finding mission to investigate violations of international law, including international humanitarian law and human rights law, resulting from the Israeli attacks on the flotilla of ships carrying humanitarian assistance, Human Rights Council, Fifteenth Session, September 22, 2010, A/HRC/15/21.
31. Daily press briefing by the Office of the Spokesperson for the Secretary General, August 2, 2010, http://www.un.org/News/briefings/docs/2010/db_100802.doc.htm.

The reaction of the Obama administration to the Gaza Flotilla Raid was quite cautious, with both the State Department and the White House condemning the acts leading to the tragedy, expressing regret over the loss of life and calling for an impartial and transparent investigation. On the other hand, Vice-President Joe Biden strongly defended Israel's concern for security, while President Obama called the incident "tragic", appealed for an investigation of international standards and expressed hope that this would boost Middle East peace efforts, declaring the Gaza blockade no longer "sustainable".³² In sum, despite certain differences of nuance, nobody blamed Israel for the killings, while some Congress members went as far as blaming Turkey for it.³³ At a time when both Turkish and American officials have been trying to defuse the already existing tensions at the bilateral level, such an attitude can only harm the recovery process.

Some in Washington think that despite Turkey's importance for the U.S. and the region, it will never emerge victorious from an influence competition with Israel. Some others argue that "although the U.S. and Israel do share certain common interests, it is becoming increasingly clear that their interests are not identical"³⁴ and that America's pro-Israeli policy "can lead to 'losing' Turkey, a Muslim democracy and the pivotal actor in Near-Eastern and Central Asian affairs. Without Turkey, the United States will achieve few of its regional objectives – whether in Iran, Afghanistan or the Arab world".³⁵ Obviously, having to choose between two valuable allies is the worst possible dilemma for the American administration unless it seriously – and this time definitely – tackles the core of the problem: the resolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict itself.

Nowadays, Turkish-Iranian relations constitute yet another subject of contention between Washington and Ankara, at odds over Iran's nuclear policy. Turkey shares its oldest border with Iran,

32. Vice President Joe Biden on PBS Television's "Charlie Rose Show" on June 2, 2010; President Obama on CNN's "Larry King Live" on June 3, 2010.

33. Shelley Berkley, Democratic Representative of Nevada during the press conference organized by some members of the House of Representatives on June 16, 2010.

34. Such as John J. Mearsheimer and Stephen M. Walt in *The Israel Lobby And U.S. Foreign Policy*, (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2007).

35. The late Tony Judt, director of the Remarque Institute at New York University and the author of *III Fares the Land*, in "Israel Without Clichés", *The New York Times*, June 9, 2010.

drawn in 1639 through the Kasr-ı Şirin agreement. Following centuries of close relationship involving elements of cooperation and rivalry, the 1926 Security and Friendship agreement marked a new era in bilateral relations as the new monarch Reza Shah who had toppled the Qadjar dynasty in 1925 was determined to establish good relations with Kemal Atatürk, impressed as he was by the latter's reforms. He tried to modernize his country after the Turkish model, but Iran fell under his personal autocracy – prolonged later by his son Mohammed Reza Shah – while Turkey slowly but surely made its way towards democracy despite occasional regressions.³⁶ Both countries, as allies of the U.S. during the Cold War, have seen their latent competition continue however, with the Shah trying to counter-balance Turkey's strategic role with his oil wealth and over-armament and going as far as inspiring the Nixon doctrine in 1969.³⁷ After the fall of the Shah in 1979, Turkey became highly anxious about Iranian attempts to “export” the Islamic revolution. In the meantime, Iran-U.S. relations had collapsed, leaving Turkey practically alone as Washington's full strategic partner in the Caucasus area. In the last couple of years though, the relationship between the two neighboring countries have greatly improved after Iran ceased to actively support the PKK while bilateral trade – actually around USD 10 billion –, energy ties – Iran providing 16% of Turkey's needs in natural gas – and diplomatic contacts between Ankara and Tehran increased considerably.³⁸ Nevertheless, there are certain issues upon which the two countries do not see eye to eye: In Iraq, Iran continues backing the Shiites whereas Turkey feels closer to Sunnis. In the Caucasus, Iran sides with Armenia against Azerbaijan – given its concern over Azeri separatism – as opposed to Turkey, standing behind Baku for well-known reasons.

As to the nuclear issue, both Turkey and the United States – in conformity with President Obama's ultimate aim of a nuclear-free world – are in agreement over a nuclear-free Middle East,

36. See Stephen Kinzer, *Reset: Iran, Turkey, and America's Future*, (New York:Times Books, 2010) for the detailed account of the parallel evolution of Iran and Turkey.

37. Known also as the Guam doctrine, it charged Iran – along with Saudi Arabia – with ensuring the security of the Persian Gulf region as the U.S., in the aftermath of the Vietnam War, no longer wished to defend alone dependent allies against external threats.

38. IEA Turkey Report 2009

with differences in their respective perceptions of threat and the methods of dealing with it. Combining Iran's failure to declare sensitive enrichment and re-processing activities to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) with its radical anti-Israeli discourse, the U.S. perceives it as a major threat to the very existence of Israel and, consequently, regional security. This is a long way from the 1950s when the U.S. started supporting Iran's nuclear energy program within the "Atoms for Peace" program, since the Shah was an unconditional ally and friend of Israel – itself an undeclared nuclear power. The Western support – including the contributions of France and Germany – continued well until the Islamic Revolution when the nuclear program was temporarily stopped to be revived in the 1990s mostly with Russian help. Currently Iran's nuclear program includes two uranium mines, a research reactor and uranium processing facilities with three known uranium enrichment plants. Its first nuclear power plant, Bushehr I reactor, was inaugurated on August 21, 2010.

According to the Turkish government, all countries have the right of access to nuclear energy and there is no proof of Iran's intentions of acquiring nuclear weapons given that IAEA reports do not point to any evidence of links to a nuclear weapons program – although it remains unable to verify all the aspects of Iran's nuclear program. That being said, Turkey – as a long-time signatory of the NPT – is fully aware of the risks carried by a nuclear Iran as a potentially destabilizing factor in the region. On the other hand, some experts contend that even if Iran has the intention of going nuclear – which, according to some others, might be the long-term result of Saddam's use of chemical weapons during the Iran-Iraq war – it will not be automatically transformed into a superpower.³⁹

Turkey and the United States also differ on the methods to be used in dealing with the Iranian leadership on the nuclear issue, with the former favoring diplomacy and the latter, a gradually toughening policy of sanctions. In 2003, the IAEA Board of Governors launched an investigation after the revelations by a

39. Fawaz Gerges on the link to Saddam's use of chemical weapons, quoted by Stephen Kinzer, *op.cit.*, p.122.

dissident Iranian group on the construction of two nuclear sites – Natanz and Arak – and in 2006, reported Iran’s non-compliance to the UN Security Council which imposed its first sanctions. Since then, there has been arm wrestling between Iran and the West around the latter’s pressure for total suspension of the enrichment program and Iran’s refusal to do so, although it accepted to place some limits on its nuclear program. In the meantime, the EU’s mediation efforts collapsed and the year 2007 saw the widening of the UNSC sanctions to be followed by new sanctions in 2008 covering additional financial institutions, restrictions on travel and the ban of exports on nuclear-related goods to Iran.

Since then, two new non-permanent UNSC members elected at the end of 2008, Turkey and Brazil, unexpectedly moved to the center stage in the controversy on the Iranian nuclear issue through their mediation efforts, illustrating the increasing role of medium-range regional powers in the new multipolar world order. They brokered a deal with Iran for the transfer of low-enriched uranium to Turkey, but insufficient coordination with the U.S. – and at the level of the UN – resulted in the diplomatic mismanagement of the issue. In fact, “the Turkish government had good reason to believe that the U.S. government would support its attempts to engage Iran”⁴⁰.

Nonetheless, on June 9, 2010, twelve UNSC members led by the U.S. imposed, through Resolution 1929, a complete arms embargo on Iran, travel bans on certain Iranian figures, banning Iran from any activities related to ballistic missiles, and freezing all the assets of the Iranian Revolutionary Guards and Iran Shipping Lines, including the inspection of all Iranian cargo or financial institutions such as banks, on their territory. Turkey and Brazil voted against, while Lebanon abstained.

Although it might be argued that an abstention would have been more in line with Turkey’s general policy of cooperation for peace, the “no” vote should be seen against the backdrop of

40. Hugh Pope, “Pax Ottomana?: The Mixed Success of Turkey’s New Foreign Policy”, *Foreign Affairs*, November/December 2010, Vol. 89, No. 6, p. 168.

Turkey's general skepticism about the effectiveness of sanctions. It also has to do with the dynamics of a more autonomous regional policy under the aegis of the AKP government. It can be argued that the carrot-and-stick policy is an outdated diplomatic technique from the Cold War era and is more likely to backfire in today's globalized, multipolar world. Secondly, as indeed Zbigniew Brzezinski advised with regard to Iran: "The unintended result of imposing indiscriminately crippling sanctions would likely be to give the Iranians the impression that the United States' real objective is to prevent their country from acquiring even a peaceful nuclear program – and that, in turn, would fuel nationalism and outrage".⁴¹ As far as the Turkish government is concerned, it contends that peaceful dialogue rather than confrontationalism should prevail, while no regional actor should be isolated.⁴² If, however, these initiatives do not help Iran give up the objective of becoming a nuclear power, the final outcome might pose a serious threat for all.

One must also note that sanctions have a very negative connotation in Turkey since ever the Gulf War when the U.S. imposed economic blockade of Iraq cost Turkey billions of dollars in trade, thereby destabilizing its economy and increasing poverty in the southeast. Moreover, as sanctions failed to resolve the problem, a military operation followed, creating additional security risks right across – and inside – the border.⁴³ Consequently, Turkey remains highly skeptical about any kind of sanctions imposed upon its immediate neighbors.

Impervious to these arguments, Washington has been stepping up pressure on Turkey, while the latter continues to deploy diplomatic efforts aimed at conveying its arguments. A Turkish delegation headed by the Secretary General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs visited the U.S. capital in August 2010, holding meetings with State Department officials and various Congress

41. Zbigniew Brzezinski, "From Hope to Audacity...", *op.cit.*, p. 23.

42. Obama Dönemi Türk-Amerikan İlişkileri (Turkish-American Relations in the Obama Era), SETA, No. 8, April 2009, p.7.

43. Kemal Kirişçi et.al., *op.cit.*, p.5.

members, including representatives of the pro-Israeli lobby. Noting that Turkey would not stop asking for an apology and compensation from Israel for the May 31 flotilla attack, the Turkish diplomats expressed their desire to normalize ties with Israel. On Iran, their chief argument was: “Turkey’s objective was not and is not to defend Iran, but to solve the problem through diplomacy”. They repeated Turkey’s commitment to the UN Resolution and their decision to implement it, but also indicated that given Turkey’s close ties with Iran, Washington’s unilateral sanctions would not be endorsed.⁴⁴ These are included in the Iran Sanctions Act, a 1996 U.S. law that has authorized the imposition of U.S. penalties against foreign companies that invest in Iran’s energy sector. The law has been expanded significantly following UNSC Resolution 1929 in June 2010 to sanction firms that help Iran meet its needs for importation and additional production of gasoline. The broadening U.S. effort to persuade foreign firms to choose between the Iranian market and the much larger U.S. market now encompasses also Turkey, as Washington explicitly conveyed its expectations in this regard and many Turkish companies had to cancel deals negotiated with Iran.

Moreover, in the aftermath of the visit, it has become clear that some projected U.S. arms sales to Turkey were threatened by suspension, as Congressional approval is needed to finalize them. Since some Congress members antagonized by Turkey’s relations with Iran and Israel are most likely to block the latest sales, the Obama administration has momentarily decided to delay its request for approval. While already approved sales are likely to be processed, a more recent plan for the acquisition of new weapons like AH-1W Super Cobra attack helicopters and sophisticated Reaper drones might not get approval, whereas the two weapon systems are considered by the Turkish armed forces as high-priority items in the struggle against the PKK.⁴⁵ Nevertheless, a recent positive development was the international bidding open by the Turkish Ministry of Defense for the production of the T-70 Blackhawk helicopters, won in April 2011 by a U.S. firm.

44. *Daily News & Economic Review*, 27 August 2010.

45. F. Stephen Larrabee, “Troubled Partnership: U.S.-Turkey Relations in an Era of Global Geopolitical Change”, RAND Corporation, 2010, p. 79.

Evidently, arms sales do not constitute the only dimension of Turkish-American military cooperation. It includes a strong NATO connection, the use of the İncirlik air base by U.S. forces – although strictly limited with the 1980 Defense and Economic Cooperation Agreement – and joint military maneuvers.⁴⁶ Within this context, the most recent issue is Ballistic-Missile Defense (BMD), a long-time U.S. project to deal with a potential Iranian missile threat. Turkey is among the countries where it is planned to be deployed. From the start, its government has made three conditions for the deployment explicit: a) it should be a NATO project; b) target countries (i.e. Iran, Syria) should not be named; and c) in case the shield is deployed, the radars should cover the entire Turkish territory rather than only parts of it. BMD was, indeed, tabled as a NATO initiative at the Lisbon Summit in 19-20 November 2010, while the final declaration mentioned “the increasing threat by the proliferation of ballistic missiles” without naming any potential aggressor, and underlined that the missile defense capability would “protect all NATO European populations, territory, and forces”,⁴⁷ as yet another point of convergence between the U.S. and Turkey.

46. Among the latter is the “Anatolian Eagle” performed jointly with the USA, NATO and other armies – including Israel – on a yearly basis since 2001 at the Konya Air Base. This year, the United States declared for the first time that it had postponed its participation in the “Anatolian Eagle”, as an obvious show of solidarity with Israel.

47. Lisbon Summit Declaration Issued by the Heads of State and Government participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Lisbon, Press Release (2010) 155, Issued on November 20, 2010.

┌

┌

└

└

Mutual Perceptions

Mutual perceptions among international actors are as important as facts, since they considerably influence state behavior. As far as Turkey and the United States are concerned, this is increasingly a problematic area despite frequent references by officials on both sides to the importance of the relationship. Looking beyond these declarations, one sees a) an ongoing wave of intense anti-Americanism seemingly triggered by the 2003 crisis within Turkish society and, b) a growing polarization about Turkey in Washington. For the moment, in the case of Turkey, it is mainly the public opinion that is concerned, while in the U.S., the body politic – or at least parts of it – are affected. In both cases, it may spread in opposite directions, however: Politicians in Turkey might give in to anti-Americanism for domestic political purposes, while the growing criticism of Turkey in Washington has the potential of negatively influencing American public opinion. The risk of negative mutual perception(s) is therefore real for both sides.

Anti-Americanism in Turkey

Although the origins of anti-Americanism in Turkey go as far back as the 1964 Cyprus crisis and the ensuing “Johnson letter”, the 2003 invasion of Iraq by U.S. forces seems to have literally led to an “anti-American madness” in the country.⁴⁸ But there are certainly other, deeper, reasons that have transformed the Turks into “the most anti-American nation” today, as opinion polls conducted worldwide indicate.⁴⁹

48. The expression belongs to Robert L. Pollock, author of “The Sick Man of Europe-Again” in *The Wall Street Journal*, February 16, 2005.

49. Soner Çağaptay, “President-Elect Obama, Is Turkey Western or European?” Bitterlemons International, November 20, 2008.

It is possible to divide the sources of Turkish anti-Americanism into two broad categories: external and internal.⁵⁰ External sources correspond to what is identified as an “episode of contention” between a given country and the USA. These episodes represent a breaking point in the relationship at any given time, altering the nature of the relationship and even if seemingly overcome, determine the actors’ subsequent behavior because they remain engraved in collective memory. Within the Turkish-American context, the Johnson letter and the 2003 Iraq crisis are cases in point.

Among the internal sources, we can mention religious extremism, the rise of a new version of nationalism, and remnants of the radical left. In other words, all illiberal political movements in Turkey do carry a nucleus of anti-Americanism, while many parts of the liberal minority seem also affected by it for various reasons, including disappointment over U.S. policies.

Since the 1964 Johnson letter – the birth date of anti-Americanism in Turkey –, print and visual media has widely reflected the anti-American public sentiments. Beneath lies a combination of ideological bias in the fringe papers, sensationalism, and an insufficient understanding of the American system. With regard to the last point, the main problem appears as a monolithic perception of “America” as opposed to the fact that Washington is actually a market place of ideas where pluralism prevails; and the administration, Congress, think tanks and academics are in constant interaction, producing ideas, issuing reports and undertaking studies on various foreign policy issues. Each and every one of them, however, is at times misleadingly perceived and reported in Turkey as an official policy designed or to be conducted by “America”.

Recently, the intensity of the public’s reaction to the U.S. seems to have somewhat decreased, but some knee-jerk reactions remain vivid, such as immediate speculations about “the use of the İncirlik base by U.S. forces” or other “demands” from Turkey,

50. For this part, see article by Füsün Türkmen, “Anti-Americanism as a Default Ideology of Opposition: Turkey as a Case Study”, *Turkish Studies*, Vol. 11, No. 3, September 2010, p. 329-345.

triggered by any American official's visit to Ankara. One such example is U.S. Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Michael Mullen's visit in early September 2010. This time, the speculations could only last 24 hours though, since the Admiral publicly denied any such demand, gracefully conveying his thanks to Turkey for its support in Afghanistan, and focusing on the existing military cooperation between the two countries.⁵¹

As already indicated, anti-Americanism in Turkey is a matter of internal dynamics – including the coming of age of a new generation that never knew the Cold War – combined with episodes of contention in the realm of foreign policy. At this point, America's general policy towards Israel should also be taken into consideration, especially in the light of the recent developments that have involved Turkey. Moreover, a general phenomenon that is typical of the globalization era ought to be taken into account: the cycle of expectation-disappointment, as the U.S. is deemed the only power capable of solving complex international problems. When this naturally fails to happen, the U.S. is criticized bitterly.

The consequence of all of the above is reflected by numerous international surveys conducted on the Turkish perception of the USA. One must admit that the results are quite striking, bordering on the irrational. For instance, the yearly polls of the Pew Global Attitudes Survey show that throughout the last decade, Turkey emerges systematically as the most critical country of the U.S. among Muslim countries, scoring even lower than Palestinians.⁵² On the other hand, the intensity of Turkish nationalism is reflected in the "Transatlantic Trends 2008" conducted by the German Marshall Fund, as on a 100-point thermometer scale Turkey views itself at 80 degrees while its warmth towards the U.S. is at no more than 14 degrees.⁵³

It is also worth noting that Turkey has been quite impervious to the Obama effect despite the President's successful trip to this country and his friendly messages. "Transatlantic Trends 2009"

51. Press conference held by Admiral Michael Mullen on September 4, 2010 in Ankara, as reported by the daily *Hürriyet*.
52. All survey results available online at www.pewglobal.org
53. "Transatlantic Trends 2008", <http://www.transatlantictrends.org>

indeed reveals that “Turks’ confidence in Obama, their support for the United States, American global leadership, and NATO were among the lowest in any country surveyed” and that only one in five Turks had a favorable view of the USA.⁵⁴ In the same poll, it is easily observable that this attitude is closely linked to a growing “Euro disenchantment” in Turkey, triggered by the ambivalent – if not outright negative-attitude of the EU towards this country’s eventual membership. The same pattern has been sharpened in 2010, given the unsatisfactory evolution of Turkey-EU relations and a lack of breakthrough in Turkey-USA relations: “Transatlantic Trends 2010” indeed reveals that Turkish public opinion is digressing particularly from Europe, as support for cooperation with EU countries has declined from 22% to a mere 13%, while support for cooperation with the U.S. has very slightly moved up, from 4% to 6%. As to the approval rate for President Obama’s international policies, the decline is quite sharp, from 50% in 2009 to 28%, evidently based on the disappointment caused by the administration’s so far ineffective Middle East policy, and also Turkish public opinion’s growing sensitivity to regional issues.⁵⁵ The 2011 poll conducted by the Pew Research Center to measure the impact of the Arab Spring on the U.S. image, shows that in Turkey “U.S. Favorability and Confidence in Obama” dropped by 7 points since 2010 – from 17% to 10%.⁵⁶

Tackled within a recently developed typology of various anti-Americanisms, Turkish anti-Americanism may be classified as a) “sovereign nationalist anti-Americanism” and b) “legacy anti-Americanism”.⁵⁷ For sovereign nationalists, national identity and sovereignty represent much-cherished goods, especially since the latter is often obtained after a long struggle. A strong state tradition is also important. All three are quite relevant for Turkey with its history of staunch nationalism, still vivid memories of the War of Independence, and the public perception associating the prestige of the country with the strength of its state apparatus.

54. “Transatlantic Trends: Key Findings 2009”, German Marshall Fund, p. 4-5.

55. Figures from “Transatlantic Trends 2010”, <http://www.transatlantictrends.org>

56. Pew Research Center, Pew Global Attitudes Project, “Obama’s Challenge in the Muslim World”, <http://pewglobal.org/2011/05/17/arab-spring-fails-to-improve-us-image/?scr=pp-fo>.

57. For the typology, see Peter Katzenstein and Robert O. Keohane (eds.), *Anti-Americanisms in World Politics*, (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2007) and in particular, their chapter entitled “Varieties of Anti-Americanism: A Framework for Analysis”.

Consequently, certain U.S. policies – with regard to Cyprus, and more recently, in Northern Iraq – may have been perceived as detrimental to Turkish national sovereignty. As to “legacy anti-Americanism”, it stems from the resentment caused by past episodes of contention or rather “wrongs committed by the United States towards the country in question”, the latest being the Sulaymaniya incident in the case of Turkey. Experts contend that this type of anti-Americanism can be expected to decline over time, unless reinforced by another, more institutionalized form of anti-Americanism.⁵⁸

Washington Dialectics: Criticism and Support

Washington’s current perception of Turkey includes factors of considerable support along with – fair and sometimes unfair – criticism. Up until the 2003 Iraq crisis, Turkey was perceived through a single perspective in Washington, that of a long-time ally belonging to the Western camp, despite occasional difficulties in the bilateral relationship mainly caused by the Cyprus issue. This was a bipartisan perception, with a traditionally stronger bias in favor of Turkey within the Republican Party, motivated by Cold War dynamics and then regional strategic arguments which were confirmed by the Turkish-American cooperation during the first Gulf War. As to Democratic administrations, they were usually more distant in their approach to Turkey at the beginning, mostly under the influence of ethnic lobbies that are usually part of their constituency, as well as their particular concern on issues of democracy and human rights. But once in power, they almost always ended up realizing Turkey’s strategic importance as an ally, and more than once, battled with Congress on resolutions against the interests of this country, be it an arms embargo or the Armenian issue.

This long-settled pattern was perturbed in 2003, when the TGNA rejected the passage of American troops through Turkish territory within the U.S. invasion plan of Iraq. This marked the beginning of an anti-Turkey rhetoric mainly centered on criticism of the

58. Ibid., p.37.

government. Highly vocal but still somewhat marginal until last year's Gaza Flotilla Raid incident and Turkey's negative vote at the UNSC on sanctions against Iran, this adverse perception of Turkey has suddenly gained momentum, once it was endorsed by the hard-line components of the Israeli lobby with reverberations in Congress. More strident voices were heard from the ranks of Congress, calling Turkey's actions "shameful" and warning Ankara that if it continues its policy of rapprochement with Iran and antagonism toward Israel, this would have a price.⁵⁹

On the opposite side, one finds that some liberal circles, scholars and think tanks are undertaking more constructive analyses on Turkey. These actors view Turkey as a more confident and economically stable nation that is asserting itself on the international scene. While some see this as neo-Ottomanism or a new version of non-alignment, others call it a Turkish variant of Gaullism, reinforced by a growing national pride rather than strictly religious affinities.⁶⁰

Currently, some experts argue that the administration stands somewhere between the two sides. According to this view, key figures in the Obama administration analyze Turkey's foreign policy in a rational manner, and rather than using a superficial categorization like "Islamist" or "pro-Western", they go by national interest, admitting that American and Turkish national interests diverge over issues like Iran, Israel or Hamas. This being said, they fear that a highly negative attitude displayed by the Congress might seriously harm the relations with Turkey. Consequently, the administration is likely to temper Congress, while conducting a pragmatic give-and-take relationship with Turkey focusing on the points of convergence.⁶¹ Besides, the Obama administration's increasing criticism of certain issues that still pose a problem for Turkey's democratization process (i.e. the freedom of the press)

59. The first remark was made by Representative Eliot Engel (D-New York) and the second, by Representative Mike Pence (R-Indiana), during a press conference organized at the House of Representatives in the aftermath of the Gaza Flotilla Raid, reported by the Turkish daily *Cumhuriyet*, June 18, 2010.

60. See Ian Lesser, "Nonalignment Revisited" and Ömer Taşpınar "Rise of Turkish Gaullism" in *Policy Notes*, The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, Number 3, January 2011, p. 7-9 and 10-12.

61. Ömer Taşpınar, "Türkiye Masaya Güçlü Gelmeli" (Turkey Should Come Strong to the Negotiating Table), in the Turkish daily *Sabah*, June 21, 2010.

indicates that universal values might become more prominent in bilateral relations, as they have been with Europe. This could be considered a healthy synthesis – in the dialectical sense – between fair criticism and unconditional support.

Observation 5: If the Obama administration is willing to develop a Model Partnership with Turkey, then a purely pragmatic relationship will not be sufficient to fill in this concept.

Finally, according to an alternative viewpoint, the Obama administration is already giving in to the pressure of interest groups and populist motivations in the realm of foreign policy, especially through its attitude towards Turkey: “Instead of welcoming – as an important first step towards a wider negotiation – the fuel swap agreement which Turkey and Brazil reached with Tehran on May 17, Washington dismissed the deal as a time-wasting ploy and proceeded to secure Security Council backing for further sanctions against Iran...In the wake of Israel’s assault on 31 May on the Gaza-bound aid flotilla...instead of condemning Israel’s attack on the convoy, Obama has allowed himself to be turned against Turkey. This is a blunder of first importance...Turkey could, in fact, be of great help, not only if defusing the crisis with Iran, but in extricating the United States from the Afghan quagmire. Turkish forces and contractors in Afghanistan...are the only foreigners welcome there. Obama is in danger of throwing away this asset by bowing to pressure...”⁶²

Evidently, it is too early to reach such a conclusion. For the moment, Washington’s perception of Turkey remains in limbo as the polarization seems to be gaining ground. This, in turn, seems to be related to the persistent influence of foreign policy lobbies on the legislative and the growing ideological rift between Democrats and Republicans. Moreover, the general lack of knowledge and/or interest of the American public towards foreign policy increase the margin of issue manipulation by politicians, especially in times of crisis.⁶³

62. Middle East analyst Patrick Seale, “Obama’s Foreign Policy Blunders”, *Middle East Online*, June 14, 2010.

63. Zbigniew Brzezinski, “From Hope...”, *op.cit.*, p. 29-30.

Regarding Turkey, a recent poll indicates that the American public currently seems quite distant and sceptical towards Turkey with a close-to-neutral average rating of 49 on the scale of “feelings”. Turkey on the other hand receives the lowest rating for both present (3.9 on a 10 point scale) and future influence in ten years (4.4 on a 10 point scale) among all the countries where the poll was conducted.⁶⁴ Although these figures show that Turkey’s influence might be expected to rise somewhat over the next ten years, the country is not considered “very important” to the United States, with only 10 percent thinking this (as opposed to 42% who think it “somewhat important”). Americans do not seem concerned by Turkey’s increasing independence in foreign policy as 69% deem it “mostly good because they do not rely on the United States so much”, with only 28% thinking this is “mostly bad because then they are more likely to do things the United States does not support”.⁶⁵ As a whole, this is a picture of neutral distance with no special affinity or clear-cut opinion on Turkey. Consequently, negative – or, for that matter, positive – perceptions reflected by powerful interest groups, Congress members and/or mass media might easily influence the American public which still remains highly malleable as far as Turkey is concerned. On the one hand, this is an advantage. On the other hand, quite a challenge, given the current limitations of Turkish lobbying in the USA, as opposed to the considerable influence of the groups critical of Turkey.

Observation 6: The “perception gap” that currently exists between Turkey and the U.S. predominantly highlights the negative and unless adequately filled, may become a determining factor in long-term bilateral relations.

64. Global Views 2010, “Constrained Internationalism: Adapting to New Realities”, Results of a 2010 National Survey of Public Opinion, The Chicago Council on Global Affairs, 2010, p. 72-73.
65. Ibid., p. 73.

Mutual Perceptions

With regard to the recent incidents that contributed to the mounting tension on Capitol Hill, diplomacy and common sense might prevail once again, as certain signs seem to indicate. The agreement between Turkey and Israel to work on the UN-sponsored investigation of the Gaza flotilla incident, to which both parties sent a representative, the fact that they have been refraining lately from fiery public exchanges, and Turkey's efforts to re-establish a dialogue with the Israeli lobby in the United States, can be interpreted as a) positive developments for Turkey-USA relations and b) a sign of the mutual willingness of Turkey and Israel not to damage their relationship further. The contribution of the Obama administration has so far been undeniable in this context.

Recommendations

After decades of ‘strategic partnership’ dominated by Cold War concerns, and post-9/11 period Turkish-American relations needs to be elevated to a much broader and higher ground that recognizes and emphasizes the common aspirations of the two peoples.

American psyche is above all dominated by a love of freedom – politically, economically, and in every other aspect of human endeavor. The U.S. was founded by a cosmopolitan gathering of people who escaped bondage, and aspired for freedom. Turkish people, too, universally aspire for freedom, and value their independence, economically and politically. Throughout history, Turks have never been dominated or ruled by any other peoples and their most recent and longest lasting empire, the Ottoman Empire, was a multi-ethnic and multi-religious entity, in which people enjoyed freedom of life and opportunity regardless of their race and religion. In short, the Turks and the Americans have much in common and can forge a new relationship based on their common aspirations and background. The combination of the emerging economy of Turkey, and its young population, can indeed be the spearhead of economic and political freedom in this important region of the world, with the cooperation of the United States. Thus, both countries have so much to gain from this ‘partnership of aspirations’.

Against this background, it can be said that the future of Turkish-USA relations will be influenced by uncertain short and long term developments which are difficult to predict, including a) the outcome of the 2012 elections in the U.S., b) what happens in the Middle East, and c) the extent to which both parties are willing to apply – separately and together – self correcting policies.

As far as the latter is concerned, it is already self-evident that both the United States and Turkey need to undertake a serious and concerted effort in order to continue repairing their old alliance and face the challenges of the 21st century together. Hence, the following recommendations:

Recommendations for Turkey

- First and foremost, Turkey should complete its full democratization. It is undeniable that since the beginning of the EU accession process, reforms have been undertaken through constitutional amendments and legislative “harmonization packages” with a view to democratize the system in accordance with the Copenhagen criteria. Nevertheless, serious problems remain with regard to the implementation of these reforms. The European Commission indicated in the “2010 Turkey Progress Report” that despite considerable progress in areas like civilian oversight of security forces, judicial reform, and continued efforts towards preventing torture and ill-treatment, Turkey’s approach, *inter alia*, to minority rights – including the issue of the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate in Istanbul- and freedom of the press still cause serious concern. With regard to the first point, although the latest initiatives of the Turkish government on returning/ indemnifying confiscated properties of the minority foundations is highly commendable, issues such as the re-opening of the Halki Seminar yet remain. Whereas, with regard to the last point, the report drew attention to the high number of cases initiated against journalists and undue political pressures on the media.⁶⁶ This has further been confirmed by the Department of State, in its 2010 Human Rights Country Report on Turkey.⁶⁷ These criticisms continue to be valid. Turkey ought to resolve these remaining problems not only for its own people’s sake, but also because this will enable her to be more integrated with Europe and also to be considered a more predictable and reliable ally by EU countries and the United States. In addition, it will enable Turkey to lead by example in the Middle East and Central Asia: The democratization process

66. European Commission, “Turkey 2010 Progress Report”, Brussels, November 9, 2010, SEC (2010)1327.
67. U.S. Department of State, “Human Rights Country Reports-Turkey”, 2010, p.15.

should encompass the resolution of pending problems regarding the religious minorities. It should also aim without delay to resolve the Kurdish problem which constitutes the greatest challenge for its future. Besides, the issue of democratization is directly linked to that of security as it is the *sine qua non* condition for resolving the Kurdish problem, vital for Turkey, its relations with neighboring countries, and also with the United States.

- If Turkey wishes to remain a respected regional power, then it should be careful in keeping its equal distance from its neighbors and avoid becoming a party to existing conflicts. One can think that Turkey's toughened attitude towards Israel in the recent period is at odds with this approach. However, it is important to remember that, it was Israel's continued occupation of Palestinian lands and the military operations it carried out in Gaza that led to Turkey's change of heart. The Mavi Marmara incident, a by-product of the increased tension, is regrettable for both parties. Israel should do its best to remedy the situation. Turkey, for its part, should stick to reason in its dealings with Israel. Moreover, it should not ignore the shortcomings and continue to support the aspirations of its other regional partners in the realm of democracy and human rights, especially in such days marked by popular uprisings throughout the region. This could do nothing but add to Turkey's prestige and credibility in these respects.
- Notwithstanding considerable obstacles, Turkish diplomacy should concentrate more on delivering rather than merely initiating highly publicized processes without finalizing them, such as the still-dragging ratification of the Armenian protocols or the unresolved Cyprus issue within the context of Turkey-EU relations. It is true that these are delicate issues involving as much historical sensitivity as political courage. On the other hand, it is also true that Turkey absolutely needs to resolve these problems because a) they are very important in themselves; b) they have a direct impact on Turkey-USA and Turkey-EU relations and, c) they constitute a test on the political credibility of Turkey. The resolution of these problems,

however, requires a minimum dose of realism. To expect, for instance, that the Nagorno-Karabakh issue can be resolved in the foreseeable future and posit it as a pre-condition for the ratification of the protocols signed with Armenia, reflects an excessive optimism, if not delusion. As to the Cyprus problem, it is clear that the procrastination in the implementation of the Ankara protocol – requiring the full extension of the provisions of the Customs Union with the EU to southern Cyprus – is inevitably stalling Turkey’s EU accession process. Obviously, the Cyprus issue will continue to be one of the main obstacles to EU membership. Although, in recent years, it had a marginal impact on Turkey-U.S. relations – the U.S. House of Representatives passed a resolution on September 28, 2010 calling for the protection of religious sites and respect for religious freedom in northern Cyprus –, a resolution of this problem would also have a beneficial effect on them by contributing to the improvement of the NATO-EU cooperation and creating a more conciliatory atmosphere towards the transatlantic community in Turkey.

- In Turkey, there is an insufficient understanding of the American political system and culture which often leads to erroneous perceptions and evaluations. This calls for objective, serious, and scientific studies in this domain. Concerned ministries, academia and think tanks in Turkey can play a constructive role by organizing bilateral conferences and meetings on current issues involving the two countries, including courses on American government and U.S. foreign policy in the International Relations and Political Science departments of universities. There should also be more studies and reports in Turkish on these subjects. This would not only contribute to improving the general knowledge of the public, but also lessen the impact of an often irrational anti-Americanism which, in the long run, might constitute a serious hindrance in bilateral relations, especially since non-state actors play an increasingly bigger role in today’s diplomacy.
- Given the idiosyncrasies of the American political system and the influence and methods used by its competitors, Turkey

ought to develop a well-organized and efficient lobby in Washington. There are, however, two impediments to this: The lack of a substantial Turkish constituency in the United States, and the increasing fragmentation of the Turkish lobby reflecting the current political polarization in Turkey. Consequently, instead of having a single, consensual voice in Washington, Turkey is now represented by different factions of the highly polarized political landscape, competing for attention and trying to get their diverging viewpoints across. The result is an ideological “intra-Turkish” debate that is often confusing for the American public opinion, whereas a more coherent, professionally organized lobbying activity is badly needed. Moreover, the monolithic perception of the American political system in Turkey has so far led to a neglect of dialogue with the Congress. In addition, there has been an insufficient level of non-governmental contact, given that most of the interaction has been centered on the strictly inter-governmental domain. Institutionalized contacts among think tanks and universities on both sides of the Atlantic would contribute further to cultural cooperation and dialogue between the civil societies of Turkey and the U.S. While all this ought to be remedied, investing in those states where “rival” ethnic lobbies are absent or not influential might be a good way of promoting Turkey.

- Both the government and the private sector in Turkey have so far failed in developing the economic dimension of Turkish-U.S. relations and exploiting the spirit of enterprise common to both peoples. Currently a G-20 member and with a rapidly growing economy relatively unharmed by the global economic crisis, Turkey should do its utmost to a) increase its share of exports to the USA; b) promote itself as a preferred FDI and portfolio investment destination as well as of technology transfer particularly in energy, defense and IT; c) promote its contracting sector as a reconstructing force for Iraq, Afghanistan and Palestine; d) use its G-20 status in global economic policy issues in cooperation with the U.S. and try to upgrade its position in the international financial institutions; e) develop and promote itself as a regional hub for international business.

Recommendations for the United States

- The United States should firmly and openly support the deepening of democratic practices in Turkey and work with any democratically elected government that respects fundamental rights and freedoms as well as the supremacy of law. This process is crucial for Turkey as it will ultimately transform an illiberal democracy into a truly liberal one and anchor it in the West in terms of substance and not just style. By standing for rights, liberties and the rule of law in Turkey, the United States will be a) helping the Turkish people reach a better quality of life; b) promoting the importance of values in U.S. politics and foreign policy; c) avoiding a misperception leading to the exclusive identification of Europe with human rights and of the U.S. with hard power: The U.S. should not omit the very fact that soft power is America's main asset to win the hearts and minds of peoples across the world.
- As a corollary, the United States should continue backing Turkey's bid for EU membership. Europe was the key factor behind Turkey's democratization process since 1999, but it has somewhat lost its leverage as the democratization process has stalled in certain domains since then. Nevertheless, Europeanization is already in full progress in this country and no longer a top-down but also a bottom-up process given the spectacular awakening of Turkish civil society in recent years. Washington's support for EU membership does not only constitute a "point of convergence" and a concrete proof of friendship between Turkey and the United States, but also helps keep the pressure on a currently reluctant – if not negative – EU. However, as political pressure backfires in European capitals, discreet diplomacy on the part of the American leadership might be more appropriate and lead to better results in the long run.
- The Kurdish question is vital for Turkey's internal stability and external security. At times, a lack of support on the part of Europe and the United States in its long struggle against the PKK has disappointed Turkey and helped nourish a

growing suspicion towards the West. It has taken the U.S. until 2007 to realize Turkey's concerns in this regard and adopt a tougher stance against the PKK by supporting Turkish military action and providing operational intelligence to Turkish armed forces. This was obviously the right thing to do and since then, it has had a positive result in terms of the rapprochement between Turkey and the KRG, long considered taboo by Ankara. The U.S. can also help the situation indirectly by asking the central government in Baghdad and the Kurdish administration in northern Iraq to facilitate a permanent cessation of PKK operations conducted from Iraqi territory, and, last but not least, contribute to the resolution of the problem concerning the future status of Kirkuk.

- The Middle East peace process should be the top priority of the Obama administration if it wants to a) stabilize the region to a great extent; b) help end the long ordeal of the Palestinian people; c) remove the ongoing security threat on the Israeli people; d) put an end to the hostility towards the United States in the Islamic world; e) avert the further isolation of Israel, given the fact that an increasing number of countries recognize Palestine as an independent state; and f) prevent the spillover of the conflict to intra-regional relations, such as the recent rift opposing Israel to Turkey, so far unprecedented and pointing to a new type of danger. On this latter point, Washington should be careful in handling inter-ally diplomacy and act rationally without sacrificing one ally to the other.
- A Cold War type of Manichean vision, classifying the countries as friends or enemies, and using outdated diplomatic tools like the carrot-and-stick policy should be abandoned in favor of a more open and mature dialogue between equals. The history of Turkish-American relations constitutes an example in itself on how the stick often backfires. An increasingly multipolar world and a growing number of regional rising-stars obviously require a readjustment, whereby the United States should lead by example rather than pressure, as proclaimed by President Obama himself.

In order to improve Turkish-American relations further and help remedy Turkish public opinion's misperceptions about the United States, public diplomacy should be enhanced. The already mentioned lack of information of the Turkish public on the U.S. system facilitates the spreading of conspiracy theories and constitutes one of the main components of anti-Americanism in this country. Consequently, media-related, academic and diplomatic means should be fully deployed and utilized in order to reflect an objective and real image of America. In sum, America should become a palpable and accessible entity rather than an abstract and distant concept that can be easily filled with conspiratorial legends and ill intentions.

Recommendations for both Parties

- Revitalizing the Turkish-American relationship is imperative, as spelled out in the 2006 document entitled "Shared Vision and Structured Dialogue to Advance the Turkish-American Strategic Partnership", signed by both parties: "Our consultation and cooperation will also include enhanced bilateral relations with particular emphasis on economic and commercial relations and investments: defense/military cooperation; science and technology; and public diplomacy efforts and exchanges". Structural consultation mechanisms are obviously needed to implement all this, as proposed in the same document. Expert-level consultations on issues of common concern, policy planning consultations to analyze trends and developments regularly, a broad-based dialogue that would involve civil society, academia, media and think tanks as suggested earlier, but also a better dialogue between Congress and the Turkish Grand National Assembly, and a high-level review to be conducted on a yearly basis at the level of Under Secretaries are the new mutually-reinforcing tracks envisaged five years ago but have not yet been fully established. The "Shared Vision..." document obviously constitutes the foundation upon which Turkey and the United States can build a partnership to be revived.

Recommendations

- Crisis management and damage control should be the priority for both parties, given the stakes and sensitivities involved in the bilateral relationship. For example, a good way of preventing further embitterment between Ankara and Washington would have been, for Turkey, to abstain at the UN Security Council with regard to sanctions against Iran, especially since it now abides by Resolution 1929; and for the United States, do likewise at the UN Human Rights Council with regard to the report on the Gaza Flotilla Raid, especially since the administration has rightly condemned the killings. Crisis prevention methods should also be developed, such as, in the Armenian issue: While the American administration should continue its efforts to prevent the passage of a resolution in Congress, the Turkish government should be prepared to temper the reaction of its public opinion in case such a resolution is approved.

- The central underpinnings of the era of globalization are international economic prosperity and the consolidation of liberal democracy. Consequently, a) military power is no longer the sole criterion of international power which also relies upon a country's internal economic and social organization – including respect for universal moral values and norms; b) the nation-state is no longer the sole unit of the international system as non-state actors gain in importance, and c) inter-governmental relations are no longer the sole channel of communication between nations as transnational mechanisms develop rapidly in a world of free communications. Against this background, the Turkish-American relationship clearly needs to liberate itself from a Cold War pattern favoring exclusively strategy-based inter-governmental relations, and enlarge its basis with a view to include commonly shared values. If it remains limited to the current relationship, its solidity and sustainability will constantly be at the mercy of circumstantial strategic interests and easily manipulable misperceptions. Consequently, the U.S. should attach as much importance to Turkey's democratization process as the European Union does, while Turkey should as much take into consideration America's values as its hard power.

Therefore, they both need to enhance their relationship so that it encompasses cultural, societal and norm-based dimensions. After all, they already have more in common than it seems, as “Turkey’s revolution took shape in ways comparable to America’s revolution 150 years earlier... Among their principles were self-determination and a broadened – though not complete – recognition of each citizen’s rights...”⁶⁸ There is no reason why, as 21st century powers, they should not share more in terms of universal principles and ideals, especially if they have the objective of building a Model Partnership together.

- Both parties should realize that style counts as much in diplomacy as substance. Consequently, they should refrain from using outdated arguments and knee-jerk methods of reprisal like “arms embargo vs. the use of the Incirlik base” as well as irreparably harsh language in judging each other’s policies. Sectarian approaches are equally dangerous and can have a distortive effect on the bilateral relations, such as conceiving any criticism of the Israeli government’s actions as outright anti-Semitism or any dialogue with non-U.S. allies as sheer anti-Americanism. In other words, third parties should not be allowed to determine the tone, agenda or fate of Turkey-USA relations and this ought to be taken into consideration by both Ankara and Washington.
- At a more specific level, dialogue should be maintained on the latest developments across the Middle East and North Africa with a view to develop a consensus on the stabilization of the region and the advent of democracy. Moreover, it should be recognized that the current transformation of the Middle East may create the opportunity to foster political, social, and economic progress and development in the countries of the region. Turkey and the United States should be able to work together in various projects involving joint business ventures, as well as educational, academic and scientific cooperation, with a view to meet the needs of these societies and by this token, rebuild mutual trust and sustainability in their own relations.

68. Stephen Kinzer, *op. cit.*, p.48.

Recommendations

- Last but not least, both parties, as partners sharing the common values of the Euro-Atlantic realm, should consider their relationship as an end in itself rather than a means to achieve short-term objectives.

Both countries seem quite aware of all the stakes involved in Turkey-USA relations as demonstrated by the mutual efforts they have so far deployed in enhancing them. Renewing the partnership, however, certainly requires more in the 21st century, as bilateral relations will apparently be determined by, *inter alia*, such issues as peace-building, democratization, energy, private entrepreneurship and free trade. These are opportunities for Turkey and the United States to jointly exploit if they are willing to contribute together to regional and global stability, while maintaining a 65-year old alliance that has survived the end of the Cold War among other great challenges.

┌

┌

└

└

Task Force Contributors

The list of distinguished guests who contributed to the Task Force is as follows:

Prof. Lenore Martin

Emmanuel College, Harvard University

Dr. Bülent Alirıza

Center for Strategic and International Relations (CSIS)

Prof. Stephen Walt

Harvard University John F. Kennedy School of Government

Mustafa Özbey

Retired Rear Admiral

Selim Yenel

Ambassador, Deputy Undersecretary at the Turkish Foreign Ministry

Dr. Sharon Anderholm Wiener

U.S. Consul General in Istanbul (August 2007-July 2010)

Sedat Ergin

Columnist at Hürriyet Newspaper

┌

┌

└

└

Task Force Members

H. Edip Bařer

Edip Bařer is the Director at the Institute of Atatürk's Principles and Turkish Revolutionary History at Yeditepe University in Istanbul. Dr. Bařer, a retired four-star general, served as Commander of NATO LANDSOUTHEAST in İzmir, Deputy Chief of Turkish General Staff and Second Army Commander. During his career, he also served as plans officer in the Operations Division of the International Military Staff at NATO HQ. (Brussels), Chief of Plans and Operations Branch of the Turkish General Staff, Commander of the Army Academy in Ankara, Military Advisor to the Prime Minister and Chief of Intelligence at NATO AFSOUTH in Naples. After graduating from the Turkish Army Staff College, Dr. Bařer also attended courses at British Army Staff College (Camberley) and the U.S. Army War College, (Carlisle). He has numerous national and NATO decorations. Dr. Bařer received his PhD in Turkish Revolutionary History.

Aslı Bařgöz

Aslı Bařgöz is a member of the global four-partner Executive Committee of White & Case LLP and a partner in the Firm's Istanbul office. She founded the Firm's offices in Turkey in 1985. Her practice involves a wide range of corporate and financial transactions. Ms. Bařgöz has extensive experience in mergers and acquisitions, privatizations and joint ventures, particularly in cross-border transactions. Ms. Bařgöz is a member of TÜSİAD and YASED. Ms. Bařgöz received her B.A. in economics and political science from Indiana University and her J.D. from the University of Michigan Law School. She is a member of the New York Bar.

Hanzade Dođan Boyner

Dođan is currently a board member at Dođan Holding, the Chairwoman of Dođan On-line and Dođan Gazetecilik, and Vice Chairwoman of Hürriyet Newspaper. As the former Chairwoman of Petrol Ofisi, she also pursues Dođan Holding's interests in the energy sector. After graduating from LSE, Hanzade Dođan Boyner commenced her professional career at Goldman Sachs London's CMT department as a financial analyst. She earned her MBA from Columbia University. In 1999, Dođan founded Turkey's leading Internet company, Dođan Online. In 2003, she became the CEO of Dođan Gazetecilik, which has the highest selling daily, Posta, in its portfolio. In 2006, she played a leading role in forming a strategic partnership, at Petrol Ofisi, between Dođan Holding and Central Europe's leading oil and gas company, OMV. She is the founding member and Vice Chairwoman of Global Relations Forum, Vice President of World Association of Newspapers. Dođan is also a member of several business, trade and think tank organizations including the Brookings Institute International Advisory Council, European Council on Foreign Relations, Foreign Economic Relations Board, Association of Turkish Businessmen and Industrialists, Young Presidents' Organization and Association of Woman Entrepreneurs. A philanthropist, Dođan is the patron of "Dad Send me to School" campaign that aims to remove economic and cultural barriers to girls' education in Turkey. The campaign raised the necessary funds to grant 10,000 scholarships and to build 32 girls' dormitories across Turkey.

Yavuz Canevi

Yavuz Canevi is the Chairman of Türk Ekonomi Bankası (TEB), a privately owned commercial bank. He also serves on the Board of Directors of several enterprises including FNSS Defense Systems and the Turkish Industrial Development Bank (TSKB). Mr. Canevi previously served as Governor of the Central Bank, the Undersecretary of the Treasury, Chairman of the Turkish Eximbank and deputy Chairman of the Istanbul Stock Exchange. He is the Honorary Chairman of YASED, member of the High Advisory Board of TÜSİAD and Chairman of Forum Istanbul. Mr. Canevi has also served on the Board of Directors at the Institute of International Finance (IIF). He has received many awards including

the Chevalier dans l'ordre du Merit given by the French Government. Mr. Canevi received his BS at Ankara University and his MA in Economics at the University of Southern California.

Gökhan Çetinsaya

Professor Çetinsaya graduated from the School of Political Sciences at Ankara University in 1985, where he also received his MA in 1988. He completed his PhD at the University of Manchester's Department of Middle Eastern Studies in 1994. Prof. Çetinsaya worked in the Public Administration Department at Hacettepe University (1994-2001), and in the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences at the Istanbul Technical University (2002-2008). He has also worked as a visiting professor at the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London (Summer 2001), Institute for Turcology at the Free University of Berlin (Summer 2004), and at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars (Washington DC, 2007-2008). His PhD dissertation, later published as *Ottoman Administration of Iraq, 1890-1908* (London: Routledge, 2006), won the Malcolm H. Kerr Best PhD Dissertation in Social Sciences Award of MESA in 1994, and the Leigh Douglas Best PhD Dissertation Award of the British Society for Middle Eastern Studies (BRISMES) in 1995. Prof. Çetinsaya's areas of interest include the Ottoman/Turkish history and politics (19th and 20th centuries), Middle Eastern history and politics (19th and 20th centuries), and Turkish foreign policy. Prof. Çetinsaya currently serves as the Rector of Istanbul Şehir University.

Umran S. İnan

Umran S. İnan received his B.S. and M.S. degrees in electrical engineering from Middle East Technical University, Ankara, Turkey, in 1972 and 1973, respectively, and the Ph.D. degree in Electrical Engineering from Stanford University, Stanford, CA, in 1977. He is currently the President of Koç University. He used to work at Stanford University, as a Professor of Electrical Engineering with the Department of Electrical Engineering and the Director of the Space, Telecommunications, and Radioscience Laboratory. Dr. İnan is a Fellow of the American Geophysical Union and is a member of Tau Beta Pi, Sigma Xi, and the Electromagnetics Academy. He has served as the Chair of the

U.S. National Committee of the International Union of Radio Science (URSI) and the International Chair of Commission H (Waves in Plasmas) of URSI. He is currently serving as the Vice President of URSI. He was the recipient of the 2007 Stanford University Allan V. Cox Medal for Faculty Excellence in Fostering Undergraduate Research; the 1998 Stanford University Tau Beta Pi Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching; several Group Achievement Awards from the National Aeronautics and Space Administration and the European Space Agency; the Antarctic Service Medal of the U.S., with an Antarctic Mountain named “Inan Peak” in his honor; and the 2008 Appleton Prize from URSI and the Royal Society. Prof. Inan received the 2010 Special Science Award of the Scientific & Technological Research Council of Turkey, and in 2010 has been elected as a Principal Member of the Turkish Academy of Sciences (TÜBA).

Memduh Karakullukçu

Memduh Karakullukçu is the Vice-Chairman and President of Global Relations Forum, the Managing Partner at Kroton Consulting, and the Founding Partner of the online legal informatics initiative, kanunum.com. His advisory work specializes in higher education and technology policy, and analysis of international economic and political affairs. He has served as the senior advisor to the Chairwoman of Turkish Industrialists and Businessmen’s Association (TÜSİAD) during 2007-2010. Previously, Mr Karakullukçu was the Founding Managing Director of Istanbul’s leading science park, Istanbul Technical University (İTÜ) ARI Teknokent, currently an innovation community of 80 technology companies. During this period, Mr Karakullukçu also served as the senior advisor to the President of Istanbul Technical University (İTÜ), the Coordinator of the Law Technology and Policy MSc programme and the strategic advisor at the ITU Remote Sensing Facility. He has been a member of the academic staff at the LSE and ITU. Earlier in his career, he has worked as a specialist in structured finance at the London and Istanbul offices of an international investment bank (1992-1994). His previous academic work includes research commissioned by the IMF and the World Bank on the dynamics of Turkish debt markets. He has presented his work on technology and innovation policy at various

international fora like the OECD, NATO ARW, SEFI and AURP. Mr Karakullukçu received his B.S. in Electrical Engineering and B.S. in Economics at MIT, M.Sc. in Finance at the LSE and his J.D. at Columbia University. He is a member of the New York State Bar.

Sami Kohen

Sami Kohen is a veteran of the Turkish press. He has been working at Milliyet Newspaper since 1954, as an expert on Turkish foreign policy and international affairs. He covered extensively major world events during the long years he served as Foreign Editor of that newspaper. He is continuing his job as a columnist. Mr. Kohen has worked as the correspondent in Turkey of “The Guardian”, “The Economist” and “The Christian Science Monitor” in the 1970s and 1980s. He continues at present to act as a correspondent of “Newsweek”. Mr. Kohen is a member of the Center of American Studies at the Bahçeşehir University.

Sönmez Köksal

Sönmez Köksal is a retired career diplomat who has served as Ambassador of Turkey in France, in Iraq and as Permanent Delegate to the Council of Europe. He was Undersecretary of State in charge of Turkish National Intelligence Organization from 1992 to 1998. Mr. Köksal has served in several posts at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, including as Deputy Director General in charge of Multilateral Economic Relations, Deputy Permanent Delegate to the EEC, Director of the Middle East and Africa Department and Director of the Policy Planning Department. Mr. Köksal was until recently President of the Board of Trustees of the Istanbul Commerce University and a member of the academic staff at Işık University. He is currently a member of the Wise Men Center for Strategic Studies and member of High Advisory Board of Global Political Trends Center in Istanbul. Mr. Köksal is a graduate of the Faculty of Political Science of Ankara University.

Özdem Sanberk

Mr. Sanberk is a graduate of the Law Faculty of Istanbul University. As career diplomat, he served in Madrid, Amman, Bonn and Paris. Advisor to Prime Minister Turgut Özal between 1985-1987, he was the Turkish Ambassador and Permanent Representative to the EU in Brussels between 1987-1991. From 1991 to 1995 he was Permanent Secretary General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Ankara. From 1995 to 2000, Mr. Sanberk served as the Turkish Ambassador to London. Following his retirement in 2000, he was Director of TESEV in Istanbul until September 2003. He is the author of several articles on foreign policy and commentator and broadcaster in written and audiovisual press. Mr Sanberk is currently Director of USAK and one of the four members of the UN Panel of Inquiry of the Flotilla incident of May 31, 2010. Özdem Sanberk is married with Sumru Sanberk, with one daughter and two grandchildren.

Füsun Türkmen

Füsun Türkmen is an Associate Professor of International Relations at Galatasaray University. Born in Istanbul, Turkey, Füsun Türkmen graduated from the French Catholic High School Notre Dame de Sion in Istanbul before attending George Washington University in Washington D.C., where she obtained her B.A. in Political Science with honors, Phi Beta Kappa, Pi Sigma Alpha (Political Science Honor Society) and Pi Delta Phi (French Honor Society) in 1982. She then completed her Ph.D. at the Graduate Institute of International Studies in Geneva, Switzerland in 1991 with a thesis entitled "President Carter's Human Rights Policy towards the USSR". Subsequently, she became an international civil servant at the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA) until 1996. Since 1999, she has been teaching human rights and U.S. foreign policy at Galatasaray University Department of International Relations. She has published extensively (in Turkey, France, the U.S. and Great Britain) on human rights, U.S. Foreign Policy, Turkish-USA and Turkey-EU relations. As of 2011, she was nominated Director of the University's Center for Research and Documentation on Europe and is Chair-Elect of the Human Rights Research Committee of the International Political Science Association. Currently working on a book on Turkey-USA Relations, Füsun Türkmen is fluent in English, French, and Italian.

Gözde Küçük (Project Director)

Gözde Küçük was born in Istanbul, Turkey in 1984. She graduated from Princeton University in 2006 with a B.A. degree (cum laude) in Political Economy and certificates in Near Eastern Studies and European Politics and Society. Her senior thesis, “Diplomacy of Seismic Waves: Greek-Turkish Earthquake Diplomacy, 1999-2002” was the recipient of Near Eastern Studies Senior Thesis Prize. Gözde Küçük holds an M.A. in International Economy and International Relations, with a concentration in Europe, from Johns Hopkins University, Paul Nitze School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS). In 2009, Ms. Küçük spent time in Germany, working at the Mayor’s Office in Wiesbaden, the State Capital of Hesse. She has been the Program Director at Global Relations Forum since the organization became operational in September 2009. Her research areas include integration of immigrants in Europe, Greek-Turkish Relations, Turkey-USA Relations and Modern Turkish Politics. Küçük is a Board Member at ELİT Chocolate and Confectionary, FABSIT (Friends of American Board Schools in Turkey) and the Turkey ASC (Alumni School Committee) Chair of Princeton University. She is fluent in Turkish, English and German, and conversational in Italian.

┌

┌

└

└