

of violence and the rise of radical Kurdish nationalism caused a strong backlash in Turkey and a sharp increase in Turkish nationalist sentiments. That nationalism had become the most important ideological force in Turkish electoral politics became evident in the 1999 parliamentary elections, when two strongly nationalist parties, the center-left Democratic Left Party and the far-right Nationalist Action Party came in first and second respectively at the polls. The strengthening of nationalist tendencies in Turkish politics has thus far had its most visible impact on foreign policy in the strong public support for Turkey's actions during the crisis with Syria over the Öcalan affair in 1998.

Turkey is likely to continue its search for a greater regional political and economic role in the near future. It should be remembered, however, that despite its increased involvement in the neighboring regions, Turkey's principal strategic, political and economic relations continue to be with the United States and Western Europe. As the preceding analysis suggests, the strengthening of its ties with the West has been the primary motivating force for much of Turkey's recent activism in the Middle East, the Balkans, the Caucasus and Central Asia. Although Turkish policymakers view the development of political and economic relations with these regions favorably, they do not consider them to be substitutes for Turkey's nearly half-century-long close ties with the United States and Western Europe. ■

Turkey in a Changing Security Environment

IAN O. LESSER¹

"[O]ne can no longer measure Turkey's strategic importance in purely geographic terms.... Those factors remain—but Ankara is also an increasingly capable security actor in its own right, with the resources and the willingness to use military power beyond its borders. This does not necessarily imply a more unilateralist Turkey; in key areas such as the Balkans, Ankara has shown a strong preference for a more cautious, multilateral approach."

Much Western scholarship on Turkey has tended to view Turkish foreign and security policy from one of two perspectives: inside-out or outside-in. The former methodology considers the nature of Turkish society, and its internal organizational and bureaucratic developments, and draws conclusions about their implications for Turkish foreign policy. The latter tradition focuses on geo-politics as the prime motivator for the internal policies of Turkey and other states in its security complex. The distinction these traditions make is somewhat artificial. Turkey's internal affairs clearly have a profound influence on the nature and direction of the country's external policy, and developments in the strategic environment affect the evolution of Turkish society and politics. Modern Turkish history is replete with examples of both tendencies, and current developments continue to support this contention.

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The following is an overview of leading issues affecting Turkey's perceptions of, and position in, its changing security environment. It suggests that Turkey's role in the 21st century is likely to transcend well-established images and will be increasingly independent and assertive. At the same time, some of Turkey's long-standing spheres of competition, especially in its relationship with Greece, may become less salient. From the Western perspective, Turkey will become a more active, capable and, in some instances, independent ally.

Although this analysis concentrates on the country's external, international influences, it is important to note that Turkey's security policy elites consistently place internal challenges, including Islamism and Kurdish separatism, at the top of their agenda. In the Turkish context the discourse over these issues in the security debate interacts with their perceptions of the external security environment, particularly in relation to the Middle East.

A MORE ACTIVE DEBATE, A MORE CAPABLE ACTOR

One of the leading aspects of recent change in Turkish security policy has been the role of public opinion in the evolving concerns of security elites. Whereas during the Cold War Turkey's foreign and security policy outlook was relatively circumscribed and naturally dominated by the country's role in the containment of Soviet power, the last decade has witnessed a sweeping enlargement of the country's external horizons. The notion that Turkey's interests and potential influence stretch from the Balkans to western China has proven quite realistic, even if some of the early assumptions about Ankara's role in the newly independent Turkic republics of Central Asia proved somewhat overblown. Certainly, everyday events in the Balkans, the Caucasus and the Middle East are rapidly noted in the Turkish security debate and play a role in public opinion. Large and increasingly vocal lobbies, drawn from communities within Turkey that trace their origins to such places as Bosnia or Azerbaijan, have reinforced this trend.

Turkish policy interests and initiatives mirror this expanded concept of Turkey's security space. Recent examples include defending the welfare of Turkish residents in Germany, and more active diplomacy in the Caucasus. The rise of Turkish nationalism and closer attention to sovereignty questions as political forces within Turkey have led Ankara to vigorously defend its interests

in recent years.² The most impressive examples in this regard have included the use or the threatened use of force beyond Turkey's borders. Ankara credibly threatened to attack Russian-supplied S-300 surface-to-air missile sites if the system was deployed on Cyprus; the missiles were not deployed. Turkey made clear its willingness to act against Syria if Damascus did not end its cross-border support for the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) and expel the PKK leader, Abdullah Öcalan; Öcalan left and Syrian support for the PKK essentially ceased. In their counter-insurgency campaign against the PKK, Turkish forces have for some time engaged in extensive cross-border operations in northern Iraq and have established a *de facto* security zone in the region. With the important exception of the 1974 Turkish intervention in Cyprus, these assertive actions would have been difficult to imagine in previous decades and under Cold War constraints.

The Turkish experience during the Gulf War was a watershed in this respect. Under the leadership of then-President Turgut Özal, Ankara adopted an assertive stance in the conflict with Baghdad, facilitating the economic blockade, shifting forces to the border with Iraq and allowing the use of Turkish bases for air strikes against Iraqi forces and the strategic bombardment of Iraq itself. The Gulf War experience left an uncomfortable legacy in Ankara. By all accounts, the Turkish General Staff was reluctant to adopt such a forward-leaning strategy, and was disturbed by the technical and structural lack of preparedness of Turkish forces for the sort of modern warfare demonstrated during the conflict. The economic sanctions against Iraq, including the shutdown of most exports of Iraqi oil through Turkish pipelines, continue to impose enormous economic costs on Turkey. Many Turks worried that Operation Provide Comfort, an American-led effort that between 1991 and 1996 aimed to safeguard the Kurdish areas of northern Iraq, would encourage Kurdish separatism within Turkey.³ Many well-informed, Western-oriented Turkish observers remain convinced that the West actually sought (and seeks) the establishment of a "Kurdistan" carved, in part, from Turkish territory—a perception that might seem incredible from the

² See the discussion in Alan Makovsky, "Ecevit's Turkey: Foreign and Domestic Prospects," *Policywatch*, 398, Washington Institute for Near East Policy, 20 July 1999.

³ For information and a timeline, see Federation of American Scientists, Military Analysis Network, "Operation Provide Comfort" at http://www.fas.org/man/dod-101/ops/provide_comfort_2.html (25 May 2000).

perspective of other NATO members. Nevertheless, Ankara provided crucial support to the operation. Many in Turkey have interpreted their country's role in the Gulf War and subsequent experiences as a series of compromises on Turkish interests and sovereignty.

Such efforts serve as both cause and consequence of a clear reality: Turkey is becoming a more capable actor in regional security. In the wake of the Gulf War, Turkey embarked on a very significant program of military modernization and restructuring. The most recent procurement plans envision as much as US\$90 billion in modernization spending over the next decade, and as much as US\$125 billion over the next 20 years. Turkey will be acquiring additional first-line fighters to complement F-16s already built in Turkey, together with air refueling and airborne warning and control (AWACS) aircraft. It also plans major purchases of main battle tanks (to be co-produced in Turkey) and attack helicopters. Along with efforts to streamline and professionalize key elements of the Turkish force structure, these modern equipment purchases will greatly increase the Turkish military's capacity for power projection into adjacent regions. It will also facilitate Turkish participation in multilateral peacekeeping and other missions on the European periphery and beyond.

As a result of these developments, one can no longer measure Turkey's strategic importance in purely geographic terms that emphasize its location near areas of turmoil and international strategic interest. Those factors remain—but Ankara is also an increasingly capable security actor in its own right, with the resources and the willingness to use military power beyond its borders. Notwithstanding recent activism in Syria and Cyprus, this does not necessarily imply a more unilateralist Turkey; in key areas such as the Balkans, Ankara has shown a strong preference for a more cautious, multilateral approach.⁴

CHANGING DYNAMICS IN THE AEGEAN AND THE BALKANS

The end of the 20th century has witnessed significant steps toward Greek-Turkish détente. Several elements are at play in this unfolding but not fully solidified change in relations.

⁴ Turkey has contributed forces to the IFOR and SFOR operations in Bosnia, and to KFOR in Kosovo. It has also participated in UN peacekeeping operations elsewhere, including Somalia.

First, there has been a realization in Athens and Ankara that frictions over the Aegean, Cyprus, alleged Greek support for the PKK and the ever-present risk of an accidental military clash, had made Greek-Turkish relations one of Europe's most dangerous flashpoints. The Imia/Kardak incident⁵ and the confrontation over the planned deployment of the S-300 missiles in Cyprus underscored the potential costs to both countries of continued brinkmanship. A full-scale confrontation would work against the strategic interests of both countries. From the Turkish perspective, open conflict over sovereignty in the Aegean, or over Cyprus, a consummately nationalist issue, could result in Turkey's open-ended estrangement from the West, and affect Ankara's critical institutional and bilateral ties to Europe and the United States. Moreover, from a Western perspective, it would be highly problematic to discuss NATO and EU enlargement against the background of a Greek-Turkish war. The 1974 intervention in Cyprus imposed severe costs on Turkey in terms of its security relationships, but Cold War imperatives placed limits on Western sanctions. A decade after the end of the Cold War, however, a split could be permanent.

A second recent trend has been a widespread change in public sentiment, which created a political opening for better Greek-Turkish relations. Even before earthquakes in the summer of 1999 provided an unexpected catalyst for dialogue and mutual assistance, the advent of moderate, forward-looking foreign ministers in Ankara and Athens had allowed an opening for rapprochement. When violent and deadly tremors first struck Turkey, and then Greece a few weeks later, the emergency assistance provided by each country to the other had a remarkable and transforming effect on public opinion. In essence, it humanized the opponents in ways that allowed for new initiatives, free of nationalist pressures. Moderate officials (perhaps including military officers concerned about the risk of an accidental clash) and private sector activists used the opportunity to advance bilateral dialogue and cooperation.

Third, and perhaps most significantly, the events of 1999 encouraged fresh strategic thinking in Ankara and Athens and

⁵ In January-February 1996, Greek and Turkish marine, naval and air forces menaced each other on and around an unpopulated 10-acre islet, known to Greeks as Imia and to Turks as Kardak, in a bid to demonstrate and protect respective claims to sovereignty in the Aegean. Forces withdrew and war was averted following international mediation.

reinforced the idea that détente served the longer-term interests of both countries and the West. The European Union's Helsinki Summit in December 1999 was highly significant in this regard, even if the ultimate outcome of Turkey's EU candidacy remains uncertain. The Helsinki decisions reinvigorated Turkey's attachment to a European vocation and indicated Europe's strategic interest in a closer integration with Turkey. Turkish détente with Greece is now tightly linked to the evolution of Turkey's relationship with the European Union. The Greek government's interest in "anchoring" Turkey within European institutions is partly rooted in security concerns—specifically the balance of military power in the Aegean in light of the extensive Turkish modernization programs noted above. The disparity in the military balance increasingly favors Turkey, particularly in air power (Turkey was always predominant in land forces; only in naval forces are the two sides comparable).

The Cyprus problem, too, has become a central part of this equation. Formally speaking, Helsinki de-coupled the question of Cypriot accession to the European Union from a settlement on the status of the island's northern third (although many EU members clearly would still have reservations about accession if Cyprus remains divided). However, Helsinki also underscored the fact that Turkey's own entry into Europe—in a full institutional sense—would unavoidably be conditional on resolution of its bilateral disputes with Greece. Even if full Turkish membership proves illusory, Turkey will continue to have a strong stake in developing an ever-closer relationship with Europe. This, coupled with generational changes in the political leadership on all sides, could significantly change the tenor of disputes, and improve the prospects for agreement over the longer term. The resolution of other regional disputes and success in the Middle East peace process could also foster an atmosphere more conducive to a settlement in Cyprus.

Nevertheless, recent developments in the Balkans have negatively affected prospects for resolution of the Cyprus issue. Since 1974 (with the brief exception of the S-300 episode), Cyprus arguably has lost some of its significance as a proximate source of risk in Greek-Turkish relations. The new sources of risk lie elsewhere, in competition in the Balkans and the deterioration of strategic stability in the Aegean. By the early 1990s, Cypriots on both sides of the UN buffer zone often observed that risks more

often flowed toward the island from abroad, rather than vice-versa. Successive ethnic conflicts and crises in the Balkans also undermined the confidence of moderate policymakers in post-settlement security. If the international community had failed to act in time to prevent ethnic cleansing and aggression in Bosnia, how predictable and stable could one expect arrangements on Cyprus to be? These perceptions must be overcome if the progress in Greek-Turkish relations is to have a positive effect on the Cyprus situation.

The Balkans have come to occupy a more important but often misunderstood place in the Turkish security calculus. Interest stems partly from a Muslim kinship of sorts with various communities in the region, and from the various spillovers to which Turkey could potentially be exposed due to refugee movements and political violence. More fundamentally, there is the potential for broader, more dangerous geo-political competition between Turkey, Greece, Russia and other actors and for threats to the security of borders. However, despite repeated expressions of concern from Washington that Balkan conflicts could pit NATO allies Greece and Turkey against one another, such a confrontation has not materialized. In fact, for some time, Turkish policy has been at its most conservative and multilateral in Balkan issues, and the region has become a sphere of cooperation between Ankara and Athens.

Turkey is actively involved in the formation of the Southeastern European Brigade (SEEBRIG), and has participated in most of the major Western peacekeeping operations in the southern Balkans. Turkish aircraft flew in NATO air campaigns in the Bosnia and Kosovo crises, and Turkish humanitarian assistance has flown (in military aircraft) over Greek territory. In the final stages of the conflict with Serbia, Turkey offered the use of airbases in Thrace in support of the NATO air operations. In another dimension, the Turkish private sector is emerging as an important player in the economic reconstruction of the region, in some cases in joint ventures with Greek companies. Despite an affinity with Kosovo's Muslim population, Ankara (like Athens) is uncomfortable with the notion of an independent Kosovo, and has strong reservations about any changes in established borders. Overall, the Balkans have emerged as an area of some risk for Turkey, but also an important sphere for Turkish activism in a multilateral, Western setting.

The April 2000 election victory for the Pan-Hellenic Socialist Movement in Greece augurs well for a high degree of continuity in Greece's regional policies, including engagement in the Balkans and rapprochement with Turkey. The groundwork is now set for Athens and Ankara to move beyond the important but largely symbolic steps taken to date, and undertake serious negotiations on "high political" problems such as Cyprus and the Aegean that are at the core of their bilateral disputes. The more uncertain domestic variables in this equation may now lie on the Turkish side—not least the recent election of President Ahmet Necdet Sezer (formerly chief justice of Turkey's highest court), and its ambiguous influence on cohesion in the current political coalition. While the office of prime minister holds far greater formal power than that of the president, Sezer's progressive reputation suggests his potential as an agent of change on many issues, including those related to internal and external security.

NEW GEOMETRIES IN THE EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN AND THE MIDDLE EAST

Since the founding of the Republic, Ankara has been a relatively reticent actor in the Middle East. Turkish reserve in this regard has several causes and is echoed by a similar atmosphere of ambivalence toward Turkey displayed by most of its Middle Eastern neighbors.⁶ The Ottoman imperial experience in the region left an enduring legacy on all sides and contributes to Turkey's generally cool relations with its Arab neighbors. This lack of affinity is perhaps felt most strongly among Turkey's foreign and security policy elites, whose perceptions are less easily influenced by the commercial opportunities looming large in the priorities of Turkey's business community. For example, Iraq was Turkey's leading trade partner prior to the Gulf War, but few Turks would anticipate any sort of reliable regional partnership with Baghdad. In a more general sense, and despite the shortcomings of Turkey's democracy and economy, the Turkish system does not fit within the Middle Eastern mold. Turks are highly conscious of this reality. The general state of instability

⁶ This ambivalence is discussed in Philip Robins, *Turkey and the Middle East* (London: Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1991). For more recent analyses, see Sabri Sayari, "Turkey and the Middle East in the 1990s," *Journal of Palestine Studies*, XXXVI, (1997) p. 103; and Amikam Nachmani, *Turkey and the Middle East* (Ramat Gan: BESA, 1999).

and insecurity found among Turkey's Middle Eastern neighbors tends to convince Turkish policymakers to hold them at arm's length, much as their European counterparts do. During a coalition government led by the Islamist Welfare Party, when engaging neighbors to the South and the East was described as an important part of Turkish foreign policy, even Turkey's Islamists gave lower priority to relations with the Arab world. Prime Minister and Welfare Party head Necmettin Erbakan's much-vaunted tour of Islamic capitals shortly after he came to power in 1996 did not include a single Arab state.

For secular Arab nationalists, Turkey remains a difficult partner at best. It has been a colonial power in the region, and has been an integral part of the Atlantic Alliance—an unpopular institution in the region throughout the Cold War. Ankara's policies in the security sphere, in particular, tend to be viewed with suspicion. In recent years, Turkey's cross-border operations in northern Iraq and its expanding strategic relationship with Israel (which has entailed trilateral US-Turkish-Israeli naval exercises) has elicited concern even in moderate Arab states like Egypt. For Islamists in the Arab world, Turkey is equally problematic. Atatürk's secular legacy is viewed with deep distaste by Islamists, and this has been reinforced by periodic pressures from Turkey's military and secular elites to contain Islamist politics within Turkey.

More traditional geo-politics also play a role. Syria has a range of tangible disputes with Ankara, including access to water from the Tigris and Euphrates, and has at various times played the "Kurdish card" in relations with Turkey, through its support for PKK operations. Egypt is wary of Turkey's role as a rival in Middle Eastern affairs outside the Arab framework, not least because of Ankara's unique links to NATO and, more recently, Israel. Jordan has been open to a strengthened security relationship with Turkey, in part as an additional measure of reassurance against its own highly insecure environment, but it is not prepared for the sort of overt relationship that has emerged between Turkey and Israel.⁷

Ankara takes relations with Iran seriously, because of Iran's perceived regional weight and because it is a producer and conduit for energy supplies important to Turkey. But Turkish security

⁷ Although Jordan and Turkey have engaged in some joint training and military exchanges, Jordan has balked at participating in recent naval exercises in the eastern Mediterranean involving the United States and Israel.

concerns about Iran are also increasing. Iran is a substantial competitor as an outlet for Caspian energy in world markets. Observers often ascribe the slow progress on commercial aspects of the proposed Baku-Ceyhan pipeline to investors awaiting favorable political developments in Iran that might make a shorter and cheaper pipeline to the Gulf there more practical. Iran's nuclear and ballistic missile programs are of substantial concern to Turkish defense analysts, and revelations about Turkey's shadowy Hizbullah groups have raised new questions about an Iranian role in Turkey's Islamist politics. Finally, the reduction in Syrian support for the PKK has had the effect of increasing the PKK presence across the border with Iran, and has provoked a strong Turkish response.⁸

By the end of the 1990s, the Middle East and the eastern Mediterranean had become a center of the security policy activism that many analysts now see as the hallmark of a new Turkish approach to international affairs. Several developments stand out in this regard. The first of these was Turkey's threat to use military force to "neutralize" Cypriot S-300 surface-to-air missiles in the event that the Cypriots deployed the system. In the aftermath of the ensuing diplomatic maelstrom, Cyprus did not deploy the missiles. Turkey's threat to act revealed a new assertiveness and confidence in its policy, and may also reflect the changing military balance in the post-Cold War eastern Mediterranean.

Secondly, after several years of repeated Turkish threats to act against PKK bases in Syria and the Syrian-controlled Bekaa Valley, Turkish pressure against Syria reached a new and credible level preceding Abdullah Öcalan's flight from Damascus. Many Western observers are convinced that if Öcalan had remained in Damascus, and if Syria had maintained its support for the PKK at past levels, Turkish forces would have intervened in some way across the border. Notwithstanding the disturbance in Ankara's relations with Europe and NATO that might have resulted from such an intervention, its prospect was sufficiently credible to Damascus to warrant a reversal of Syrian policy toward the PKK.

A third manifestation of Turkey's new foreign policy, and perhaps the most significant, has been the emergence of its multi-faceted and overt defense relationship with Israel. Ankara has had an implicit and cooperative relationship with Israel for

⁸ Reportedly including Turkish air strikes against PKK bases on Iranian territory.

decades. Israel's need for allies on the Middle Eastern periphery, and their shared interests during the Cold War helped encourage quiet ties between the countries. By the end of the 1990s, however, this relationship had become explicit, and included a range of cooperative efforts spanning trade and defense. Ankara has a diversified stake in what is often described as a "strategic relationship" with Israel (although Israeli officials and analysts are notably more reserved in describing the scope and intent of the relationship). At the geo-political level, shared interests and cooperation with Israel give Turkey additional leverage to contain security risks on its Middle Eastern borders. This is particularly relevant with regard to Syria. A Syrian-Israeli rapprochement could actually increase Turkey's level of competition with Damascus at a time when water rights and other issues could put the two at loggerheads. Disengaged with Israel, Syria could more easily bring forces to bear on the Turkish border. Partly for such reasons, Turkey remains carefully mindful of Israeli affairs. Intelligence-sharing and cooperation on common and specific security threats like ballistic missiles and terrorism contribute to the relationship.

In terms of more specific defense cooperation, the benefits to Turkey are wide-ranging. They include opportunities to diversify Turkish defense-industrial programs and military procurement, both of which are currently very dependent on American sources and subject to arms transfer restrictions. Joint exercises and exchanges constitute important facets of the relationship, and Israeli aircraft regularly train in Turkish airspace. Finally, Turkish observers often describe the burgeoning relationship with Israel as an opportunity to improve the Turkish profile in Washington in ways that might be helpful in arms transfer and human rights debates. This, however, is an intangible element and may not weigh heavily, except perhaps in those cases where the relationship has a trilateral US-Turkish-Israeli dimension. Over the longer term, Turkey's relationship with Israel most clearly portends a more active strategic engagement in the Middle East for Turkey, in defense of geo-political and defense interests.

CAUTION AND CONCERN IN RELATIONS WITH RUSSIA

During the Cold War, Turkey's strategic importance to the West turned on the country's role in the containment of Soviet power—but the West now values Turkey's geo-strategic significance in

different ways. Notwithstanding Western opinions, and despite the fact that Turkey no longer shares a border with Russia, Ankara continues to view Russia with concern. A long tradition of Russo-Turkish competition contributes to Turkish unease, and reinforces more modern worries about Moscow as a geo-political competitor and source of regional risk.

Two issues stand out in this regard. First, there is a possibility that a resurgent and more assertive Russia would find new spheres for competition with the West, outside the center of Europe, on the Balkan and Middle Eastern periphery. Competition along these lines, which could, for example, take the form of increased Russian transfers of military technology to Turkey's Middle Eastern neighbors, would directly affect Turkish security. Even more tangibly, a reinforced (and permanent) Russian military presence in the region would go against the limits on Russian forces set out in the Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) agreement. Turkish military planners fear that Turkey might be left to face such revived flank risks alone, as NATO focuses more heavily on other missions. There is also concern about the growing reliance on nuclear forces, including tactical nuclear weapons, in Russian military doctrine.

Second, Turkey is exposed to spillover risks associated with instability in the Russian near-abroad, along the lines of the crisis in Chechnya. Turkey worries that in the future it might confront sudden and large-scale refugee flows, arms smuggling and terrorism on its borders as a result of developments in or around Russia and the Black Sea region. Risks of this sort might also negatively affect the progress and reliability of new energy infrastructure projects (for example, the Blue Stream, Trans-Caspian and Baku-Ceyhan pipelines) that are important to Turkey's own energy supply and economic prosperity. Russia has emerged as Turkey's largest trade partner, largely because of Turkish energy imports. Quite apart from Russo-Turkish competition, Turkish security interests are therefore closely interwoven with developments across the Black Sea.

As a result of these concerns, Ankara tends to be circumspect toward Russia within NATO circles, and places relatively strong emphasis on maintaining traditional NATO security guarantees—especially nuclear deterrence and the transatlantic link. The risk of friction with Moscow over regional policy has also encouraged a relatively conservative Turkish approach to developments in

the Caucasus and Central Asia, where there continue to be opportunities for more active Turkish involvement.⁹

WHAT ROLE IN EUROPEAN SECURITY ARRANGEMENTS?

As the preceding discussion suggests, security issues are prominent in the Turkish policy agenda. Moreover, many of these issues entail tangible military realities, and are not simply matters of political-military "architecture." Against this background, Turkey has a strong stake in future European security arrangements.¹⁰

NATO's new Strategic Concept,¹¹ articulated at the 1999 Washington Summit, emphasizes a range of non-traditional missions alongside traditional "Article V" commitments.¹² This is of considerable importance to Turkey because, in functional terms, these new missions in defense of common interests are most likely to be performed on the European periphery (in the Balkans or even farther afield), rather than in Central and Eastern Europe. Already, most of NATO's current planning scenarios involve contingencies in Turkey's neighborhood, many involving Turkey itself.¹³ To the extent that this functional focus on Europe's southern periphery continues and deepens, Turkey will occupy an even more central role in Alliance planning. In addition, NATO's Mediterranean Dialogue, a process involving seven non-member states in North Africa and the Middle East, is of increasing interest to Ankara because the initiative's center of gravity has shifted to the eastern Mediterranean in recent years.¹⁴ At the same time, with multiple risks on its borders, Ankara retains

⁹ See Malik Muftic, "Daring and Caution in Turkish Foreign Policy," *Middle East Journal* (Winter 1998).

¹⁰ For a prescient discussion, see John Roper, "The West and Turkey: Varying Roles, Common Interests," *The International Spectator*, xxxiv, no. 1 (January-March 1999) pp. 89-102.

¹¹ See "The Alliance's Strategic Concept," NATO press release (24 April 1999) at <http://www.nato.int/docu/pr/1999/pr99-065e.htm> (26 May 2000).

¹² Article V of the Washington Treaty that created NATO enshrined the Alliance's central purpose, that of collective defense, wherein "an armed attack against one or more [of NATO members] shall be considered an attack against them all."

¹³ See Ian O. Lesser, *NATO Looks South: New Challenges and New Strategies in the Mediterranean*, MR-1126-AP (Santa Monica: RAND, 2000).

¹⁴ Mauritania, Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Egypt, Israel and Jordan are members of NATO's Mediterranean Dialogue. This initiative is beginning to acquire a more operational flavor as key states such as Egypt, Israel and Algeria become involved. See Ian O. Lesser et al., *The Future of NATO's Mediterranean Initiative: Evolution and Next Steps* (Santa Monica: RAND, 2000).

a relatively strong interest in the preservation of a clear-cut Alliance commitment to territorial defense. Turks will be concerned if the enlargement of NATO membership and missions threatens to dilute this commitment or make it more conditional.¹⁵

Turks now view their still-unclear role in the European Union's own nascent security and defense arrangements as a key test case for Turkey's post-Helsinki place in Europe. The Helsinki decision to give Turkey EU candidate status, coupled with new European activism in defense initiatives, has revived a longstanding Turkish concern about where the country will fit in future European security structures beyond the NATO framework.¹⁶ Ankara is keen to preserve and expand the role accorded it as an associate member of the Western European Union, as the WEU organization is being absorbed in an as yet unclear manner by the European Union itself. If Europe is serious about building its stated "pillar" of a common foreign and security policy and giving substance to the European Security and Defense Initiative (ESDI), this question will be especially important. Specific Turkish concerns include the nature of Ankara's participation in EU decisionmaking in matters of crisis management and military intervention; a say in the use of NATO and its Turkish assets; and the maintenance of a strong transatlantic link.

Turkey's concern is understandable in light of European reticence on these issues. In the wake of the Helsinki Summit, many EU states have shown little enthusiasm for giving Turkey (or other non-EU members) an integral role in ESDI, and there is no consensus in Brussels about these questions. Turkey has offered to contribute a brigade to Europe's "headline goal" of 60,000 rapidly deployable troops in or around Europe, but has received no formal response.

Fundamentally, the European movement toward a common foreign and security policy and a more independently European defense capability requires judgements about who is "in" and what is to be defended. In large measure, these are questions

¹⁵ Initially skeptical of NATO enlargement, Turkish analysts have come to support this process, but insist that it should extend to the Balkans where Turkey has a strong stake in stability. For a discussion of the Turkish stakes, see Ali Karaosmanoglu, "NATO Enlargement and the South," *Security Dialogue* (June 1999).

¹⁶ On the troubled history of Turkish-EU relations, including the security dimension, see F. Stephen Larrabee, *The Troubled Partnership: Turkey and Europe* (Santa Monica: RAND, 1998).

not only about potential threats to Europe, but also its geographical definition and identity. These are issues of supreme, long-term importance for Turkey's place in the Euro-Atlantic system.

Because of these developments, Turkey's government faces delicate dilemmas. While it is committed to closer integration with Europe, the primacy of Turkey's security concerns mandates a continued and close strategic relationship with the United States. Its preferences in this regard are similar to those of Washington. Ankara wants Europe to emerge as a capable and concerted force in security matters, but wants a secure "seat at the table." Moreover, Turkey faces security challenges in its relationship with Russia and on its Middle Eastern borders that it cannot easily meet without the active engagement of the United States. Thus, Turkey has a particularly strong stake in maintaining a close coupling of European and transatlantic defense—not only for deterrence purposes, but also to hedge against the possibility of Turkish exclusion from core EU defense efforts.

CONCLUSION

This *tour d'horizon* of Turkey's position in a changing security environment highlights several important realities. First, Turkey's own security debate has changed in fundamental ways over the past decade, and this evolution is likely to continue. The country's security horizons are now much wider than they were during the Cold War and the Turkish discourse on these issues now extends to a broader range of actors, with the media and public opinion playing an active part. An important aspect of this evolution has been the persistence of internal security issues in the broader Turkish security debate, and the tendency to see some key developments in the external environment through this lens.

Second, Turkish foreign and security policy has become more far-ranging and assertive, generally, but not exclusively in a multilateral vein. In critical regions such as the Middle East, Ankara has demonstrated a willingness and an ability to act decisively in its own interests. At the same time, Turkey has played a key role in coalition approaches to regional security in the Balkans, and it has a strategic stake in détente with Greece.

Third, the European security environment has evolved in ways that should give Turkey a more important role. The growing emphasis on security problems around Europe's southern periphery, from the Mediterranean to the Middle East and

Central Asia, is central to this change. But Turkey's place in emerging European security arrangements designed to counter such problems remains an open question, along with the wider issue of Turkish economic and political integration with Europe. Under these conditions, Turkey's bilateral security relationship with the United States, the NATO link and the new geometries created through its cooperation with Israel all work to preserve Ankara's considerable weight in international security calculus.

Turkey may have foreign policy options in Eurasia and the Middle East, but in security terms, there are no viable alternatives to Ankara's Euro-Atlantic orientation. In the future, Turkey's role in this setting will be determined to a great extent by the activism of Turkish policy and the potency of its military capabilities, not only by the country's geo-strategic importance. In all likelihood, Turkey is set to become a more active, more capable and more independent trans-regional actor. ♦

The Evolution of the National Security Culture and the Military in Turkey

ALI L. KARAOŞMANOĞLU

"Turkey's cultural environment has influenced its quest for security through alliances, its circumspect foreign policy and the persistent efforts of successive governments to embrace the West."

Like any social behavior, modern Turkey's foreign and security policy is manifested in a historical and cultural context. The legacy of history is discernible in its relations with neighboring countries as well as its Western allies. Turkey's cultural environment has influenced its quest for security through alliances, its circumspect foreign policy and the persistent efforts of successive governments to embrace the West. The most elusive clues to understanding Turkish foreign and security policy are themselves best viewed in this cultural context. The evolution of Turkey's security culture and the role of its military are of special interest. The former has often been overlooked, and the latter has often been overemphasized. Therefore, these two interrelated factors deserve renewed attention and clarification while the limits of military interference in the policymaking process require further elucidation.

As Adda B. Bozeman argues, "each society is moved by the circumstances of its existence to develop its own approach to foreign relations. This means that diplomacy, and for that matter every other social institution, is bound to incorporate the traditions and values peculiar to the civilization in which it is practiced."¹

¹ Adda B. Bozeman, *Politics and Culture in International History* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1960) p. 324.