

**‘Axis Shift’ in Turkish Foreign Policy during AKP
Administration: New Fundamental Foreign Policy
Principles and Challenges**

Mehtap Kara

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Approval of the Institute of Graduate Studies and Research

Prof. Dr. Elvan Yılmaz
Director

I certify that this thesis satisfies the requirements as a thesis for the degree of Master of Arts in International Relations.

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Erol Kaymak
Chair, Department of International Relations

We certify that we have read this thesis and that in our opinion it is fully adequate in scope and quality as a thesis for the degree of Master of Arts in International Relations.

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ahmet Sözen
Supervisor

Examining Committee

1. Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ahmet Sözen

2. Assoc. Prof. Dr. Erik L. Knudsen

3. Asst. Prof. Dr. Erhan İçener

ABSTRACT

Turkish foreign policy has evolved since 1923. The Second World War, the Cold War and the post-Cold War period externally and separatist and Islamist movements, military interventions and economic instabilities domestically designate Turkish foreign policy until new millennium. Since 2002, with arrival of the AKP, foreign policy decisions had a rapid transformation through new set of foreign policy principles. Ahmet Davutoğlu perceived as most influential person on this new foreign policy line, he believes that Turkey has strategic depth and he puts his foreign policy objectives in practice especially when he became a Foreign Minister of Turkey in 2009. The purpose of this study is to evaluate Turkish foreign policy of current AKP administration and past administrations and analyze that if there is an “axis shift” in Turkish foreign policy. In addition, this research work is based on the analysis of AKP administration’s new fundamental foreign policy principles. While analyzing Turkey’s new role in world affairs and its relations with other actors, challenges need to be taken into consideration because outcome of external and domestic problems affects foreign policy decision making process. So this study also analyzes current external and internal challenges against AKP’s set forth principles.

Keywords: Turkish foreign policy, strategic depth, axis shift.

ÖZ

Türk dış politikası Türkiye Cumhuriyeti'nin kuruluşu olan 1923 yılından bu yana evrim geçirmiştir; dışta İkinci Dünya Savaşı, Soğuk Savaş ve Soğuk Savaş sonrası dönemi ve içte ayrılıkçı ve İslamcı hareketler, askeri müdahaleler ve ekonomik istikrarsızlıklar Türk dış politikasını yeni milenyuma kadar belirlemiştir. 2002 yılından bu itibaren AKP'nin iktidara gelmesiyle beraber dış politika kararları yeni ilkeler aracılığıyla hızlı bir dönüşüm geçirmiştir. Ahmet Davutoğlu bu anlamda türk dış politikasının yeni çizgisindeki en etkili kişi olarak kabul edilmiştir. Özellikle AKP'nin ikinci döneminde 2009 yılında dış işleri bakanı olduktan sonra Türkiye'nin stratejik derinliği ile ilgili görüşlerini uygulamaya koymuştur. Bu çalışmanın amacı mevcut olan AKP yönetimini ve geçmişteki diğer yönetimleri inceleyerek Türk dış politikasında eksen kayması olup olmadığını analiz etmektir. Buna ek olarak bu araştırma da AKP yönetimi'nin yeni temel dış politika ilkeleri'nin analizi esas alınmıştır. Türkiye'nin dünya meselelerindeki yeni rolünü ve diğer aktörlerle olan ilişkilerini analiz ederken zorluklarda dikkate alınmalıdır, çünkü iç ve dış problemlerin sonuçları dış politika kararlarını etkilemektedir dolayısı ile bu çalışma AKP'nin ortaya koyduğu ilkelere karşı olan mevcut dış ve iç zorlukları da incelemektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Türk dış politikası, stratejik derinlik, eksen kayması.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT.....	iii
ÖZ.....	iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT.....	vii
1 INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1 Literature Review.....	4
1.2 Methodology.....	10
1.3 Thesis Outline.....	11
2 HISTORICAL ANALYSIS OF TURKISH FOREIGN POLICY BETWEEN 1923- 2002 AND RISE OF AKP.....	12
2.1 Transition from Ottoman Empire to the New Turkish Republic.....	12
2.2 Turkish Foreign Policy during the Cold War.....	16
2.3 Post-Cold War Era.....	22
2.4 AKP Era.....	24
3 THE AXIS SHIFT AND NEW FUNDAMENTAL FOREIGN POLICY PRINCIPLES OF AKP ADMINISTRATION.....	28
3.1 What Does “Axis Shift” Mean in Turkish Foreign Policy?.....	28
3.2 Strategic Depth Doctrine	36
3.3 Concept of Neo-Ottomanism.....	38
3.4 New Fundamental Foreign Policy Principles.....	39
3.4.1 Balance between Freedom and Security.....	40

3.4.2. Zero Problems with the Neighbors.....	42
3.4.3. A New Diplomatic Discourse	48
3.4.4. Multi-dimensional and Multi-track Policies	50
3.4.5. Rhythmic Diplomacy.....	53
4 EXTERNAL AND DOMESTIC CHALLENGES AGAINST NEW FOREIGN POLICY PRINCIPLES.....	55
4.1 External Challenges.....	55
4.1.1 New Dynamics in Turkey-EU Relations: Some of the EU Member States’ Oppositions to Turkey’s Membership.....	56
4.1.2 Popular Uprisings in the Middle East and North Africa.....	61
4. 2 Domestic Challenges.....	67
4.2.1 Normalization of Civil-Military Relations in Turkish Politics	68
4.2.2 Kurdish Problem and Drafting a New Constitution	74
5 CONCLUSION: EVALUATION AND FUTURE PROSPECTS OF TURKISH FOREIGN POLICY	81
REFERENCES	87

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

The geopolitical position of a state affects its relations with other countries and hence directly influences its foreign policy decisions. Sometimes geography of the country is an opportunity for the policy makers because it gives additional power to the country and shapes its foreign policy. In case of Turkey, its unique geographic location provides an access to Europe, Asia and also Middle East. Turkey played greater role in world politics for instance, its peerless geo-strategic position to contain the Soviet Union until the end of Cold War.

The set of foreign policy principles under AKP¹ administration does not only occupy political agenda in Turkey but because of its proactive foreign policies in the last decades it aroused attention of international community. The victory of the AKP administration in 2002 and its impacts on Turkey's foreign policy behavior is undeniable. During the AKP administration Turkey had three Minister of Foreign Affairs; Abdullah Gül, his successor Ali Babacan and in 2009 he was succeeded by Ahmet Davutoğlu, but during this process Davutoğlu was the chief advisor of Prime

¹ Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi, Justice and Development Party.

Minister on foreign affairs² but even while he was serving as chief advisor, his political ideas were dominated in Turkish foreign policy. In addition, after being Minister of Foreign Affairs he started to implement his political ideas more effectively which is identified in his *Strategic Depth (Stratejik Derinlik)*³ book. Due to his political and academic background and also political objectives he becomes the key person for reshaping and determining of choices of foreign policy during AKP administration. In his book he expresses his thoughts about his new foreign policy aims and emphasizes on geographical and historical importance of Turkey. Davutoğlu aims to exploit Turkey's geo-strategic and historical importance under Turkey's "strategic depth". Under Davutoğlu leadership AKP administration asserted a new set of foreign policy principles which aims to combine Turkey's geopolitical position with its Ottoman history. Moreover, Turkey attempt to develop its relations it "has been rediscovering its neighbors and trying to capitalize on its geo-political position in three distinct, yet interlocking regions. This process of re-discovery has been proceeding at an increasingly faster pace during the AKP era."⁴

These new asserted foreign policy principles aim to increase Turkey's role in world affairs and turn Turkey a global player in the future. Turkey's regional role and new foreign policy principles developed its relations with its neighbors, especially in the including the Middle East. These new fundamental Turkish foreign policy principles

² Ioannis N. Grigoriadis, "The Davutoğlu Doctrine and Turkish Foreign Policy," *Hellenic Foundation for European and Foreign Policy*, Working Paper No. 8 (2010) p. 3 http://www.stratim.org.tr/files/downloads/reports_and_papers/Davutogu_Doctrine.pdf (10 July 2011)

³ Ahmet Davutoğlu, "Stratejik Derinlik: Türkiye'nin Uluslararası Konumu," (İstanbul: Küre yayınları, 2001).

⁴ Ziya Öniş, "Multiple Faces of the "New" Turkish Foreign Policy: Underlying Dynamics and A Critique," *Insight Turkey*, Vol. 13, No. 1 (2011), p. 62.

are also known as Davutoğlu principles. First one is balance between freedom and security; according to this principle while security is a vital concern for state, this situation shouldn't limit citizens' freedom in the country. Second, which is the most popular principle; "zero problem policy toward Turkey's neighbors"⁵, under AKP administration Turkey improved its relations with neighboring states which had problems in previous administrations. On the other hand the principle also offers improvement of existing relations with neighbor states. Third principle emphasizes on multi-dimensional and multi-track policies; in multi-dimensional policy foreign policy expanded beyond security issue such as economical and cultural relations. At the same time through multi-track policy, Turkey started to develop its relationships beyond its borders; NGOs and business companies started to have influence on foreign policy decisions. Fourth, new diplomatic discourse which is based on improvement of relationship with neighbor states and beyond its borders, Turkey also plays active role as a mediator in international crisis. Fifth and last principle is rhythmic diplomacy.⁶ It is called "rhythmic" because Turkey aims to find balance between dynamic and static nature of international system and follows changes. Turkey increases its role in international arena through summits and high level visits. Davutoğlu believes that this is one of the important principles because in this way Turkey participates in global issues which will transform Turkey to the global player in world affairs.⁷

⁵Ahmet Davutoğlu, "Turkey's Foreign Policy Vision: An Assessment of 2007," *Insight Turkey*, Vol. 10, No. 1 (2008) p. 77.

⁶ For further details see Ahmet Sözen, "A Paradigm Shift in Turkish Foreign Policy: Transition and Challenges," *Turkish Studies*, Vol. 11, No. 1 (March 2010).

⁷ Davutoğlu, "Turkey's Foreign Policy Vision: An Assessment of 2007," p. 83.

During the AKP administration there were important developments in Turkey's external relations such as Turkish parliament rejection for using Turkish airbase to launch U.S troops during the 2003 Iraq war, deterioration of relations with Israel, diplomatic and economic relations with Middle Eastern states especially rapprochement with Iran (support for its nuclear energy programme). All these developments and implementations of new foreign policy principles led to the perception of "axis shift" (*eksen kayması*)⁸ in Turkish foreign policy. The thesis aims to analyze if there is an "axis shift" in Turkish foreign policy during the AKP administration.

Moreover, in order to achieve its intended goals of AKP administration; to make Turkey a global actor, AKP needs to eliminate existing external and domestic challenges against these new foreign policy principles so this study analyzes some of these external and domestic problems which are preventing or might prevent AKP's foreign policy objectives.

1.1 Literature Review

Turkey was declared candidate country in 1999 Helsinki Summit and its prospective EU membership gained importance when AKP administration came to power in 2002. The AKP "proved to be both moderate and reformist in orientation."⁹ The rapid transformation and reforms started to take place in Turkey in 2001 through EU membership process. Therefore reforms took place in various areas and mainly

⁸ Svante Cornell, "Axis Shift," *The Washington Institute for Near East Policy*, No: 3 (January 2011) p. 3 <http://www.silkroadstudies.org/new/docs/publications/1101-SC-WINEP.pdf> (accessed 5 July 2011)

⁹ Ziya Öniş, "Turkey-EU Relations: Beyond the Current Stalemate" *Insight Turkey*, Vol. 10, No. 4 (2008) p. 38.

“broad realm in which the formal Europeanization process appears to have made a profound impact is Turkey’s foreign policy behavior.”¹⁰

There are many foreign policy experts who claimed that there is an “axis shift” in Turkish foreign policy in the new millennium especially when AKP came to power in 2002 due to the important turning points in Turkish foreign policy (2003 Iraq war, Cyprus issue, rapprochement with Middle Eastern states; Syria and Iran). There are many also who are worried about future of Turkey, thinking that Turkey will be more Islamic than ever and this is against the Republic of Turkey which was established as a secular state. Ziya Öniş, who questions “axis shift” during AKP administration, claimed that shifting foreign policy became clearer especially 2007 elections.¹¹

Davutoğlu is perceived as key person in shifting Turkish foreign policy with his new policy objectives. Nicholas Danforth explains Davutoğlu’s geographical and historical depth vision as:

Davutoğlu argued that Turkey is located at the center of several ‘geo-cultural basins’- the West (including the United States), the Middle East, the Balkans and Central Asia- and that Turkey Should pursue an active policy to take advantage of the opportunities that exist in all of them. Davutoğlu also argued that Turkey’s historic depth enhances its geographic depth (these being the two components of the eponymous strategic depth). According to Davutoğlu, a country acquires strategic depth from having been “at the epicenter of [historical] events,” as Turkey was during the Ottoman Empire. Calling on Turkey to “rediscover its historic and geographic identity”-which its traditional foreign policy neglected-Davutoğlu recommended a “balance approach towards

¹⁰ Ziya Öniş, “Recent Foreign Policy Attitudes in Turkey: How to Reverse the Gradual Shift away from Europeanization?” *DISS Brief* (November 2008) p. 2 <http://www.diis.dk/graphics/Publications/Briefs2008/Recent%20Foreign%20Policy%20Attitudes%20in%20Turkey.pdf> (accessed 12 July 2011)

¹¹ Öniş, “Turkey-EU Relations: Beyond the Current Stalemate” p. 42.

all global and regional actors” and “strong economics linkage with all regional states.”¹²

Davutoğlu claims that Turkey has potential to become more than a “wing state.”¹³ He believes that if Turkey has more pro-active foreign policy it will be a regional or global actor in world affairs because Turkey has geopolitical and historical depths to achieve this goal. He claims that Turkey will be “a global actor as we approach 2023, the one hundredth anniversary of the establishment of the Turkish republic.”¹⁴

Bülent Aras interprets Davutoğlu’s strategic depth and he claims that “Davutoğlu’s doctrine is based on self confidence, good-neighborliness and stability at home. Methodologically, the doctrine is novel and visionary as well as integrated and inclusive.”¹⁵

On the other hand, William Hale questions new principles especially Turkey’s capability to achieve “zero problems” policy. The aim of Turkish foreign policy under AKP administration is based on strengthening existing ties or improvement of relationship with Middle Eastern states such as Iran and Syria and also improvement of existing relationship with Balkan countries. However conflicts in Turkey’s neighborhood such as Israel-Palestine conflict prevent successful implementation of

¹² Nicholas Danforth, “Ideology and Pragmatism in Turkish Foreign Policy: From Ataturk to AKP,” *Turkish Policy Quarterly*, Vol.7, No.3, p. 91. http://www.turkishpolicy.com/images/stories/2008-03-tpq/nicholas_danforth.pdf?&lang=en_us&output=json (20 June 2011)

¹³ Ahmet Sözen, “A Paradigm Shift in Turkish Foreign Policy: Transition and Challenges,” *Turkish Studies*, Vol. 11, No. 1 (March 2010) p. 110.

¹⁴ Davutoğlu, “Turkey’s Foreign Policy Vision: An Assessment of 2007,” p. 96.

¹⁵ Bülent Aras. “Turkey’s Foreign Policy in a Changing World: Old Alignments and New Neighbourhoods,” International Conference, Oxford 30 April – 2 May 2010, Session 2, p. 13

“zero problems” principle. Thereby, he believes that it is difficult to implement “zero problems” principles in all regions. Ahmet Davutoğlu asserted that “Turkey’s diverse regional composition lends it the capability of maneuvering in several regions simultaneously; in this sense, it controls an area of influence in its immediate environs”¹⁶ So he believes that Turkey’s unique position gives Turkey an additional power and capacity to establish good relations in many different regions at the same instant.¹⁷

There are domestic and external problems or challenges that might prevent these principles or at least might weaken implementations of them. Some of the domestic challenges are Balyoz operations/Ergenekon investigation¹⁸, ongoing conflict with PKK and AKP closure case in 2008. The closure case of AKP was an important domestic challenge which occurred on March 14 2008. Gareth H. Jenkins and Hüseyin Gülerce believe that developments in domestic politics turned to the secularist and Islamist confrontation. Gareth H. Jenkins wrote; “AKP to be outlawed on the grounds that it was attempting to undermine the principle of secularism enshrined in the Turkish constitution.”¹⁹ When AKP administration adapts new amendments about headscarf,

¹⁶ Davutoğlu, “Turkey’s Foreign Policy Vision: An Assessment of 2007,” p. 78.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Member of the Ergenekon organization are assumed as defender of secularism who are military forces and mainly oppose to AKP administration and secretly plans to overthrow AKP government. For more information see Gareth H. Jenkins, “Between Fact and Fantasy: Turkey’s Ergenekon Investigation,” *Central Asia-Caucasus Institute & Silk Road Studies Program* (August 2009) p. 45. <http://orientemiedo.files.wordpress.com/2010/05/gareth-h-jenkins-between-fact-and-fantasy-turkeys-ergenekon-investigation-08-2009.pdf> (accessed 13 July 2011)

¹⁹ Gareth H. Jenkins, “Between Fact and Fantasy: Turkey’s Ergenekon Investigation,” *Central Asia-Caucasus Institute & Silk Road Studies Program* (August 2009) p. 45. http://www.silkroadstudies.org/new/docs/silkroadpapers/0908Ergenekon.pdf?&lang=en_us&output=json (accessed 13 July 2011)

“the main opposition Republican People’s Party (CHP) immediately apply to the Constitutional Court for the amendments to be annulled.”²⁰Hüseyin Gülerce, columnist in Zaman newspaper claims that competition and ideological differences between both parties are used to weaken Republic of Turkey. He stated that; “there have always been efforts to divide us. Following defeats on many fronts, those countries that have been nurturing animosity toward us for ages gave considerable thought to how to weaken us from inside.”²¹So, he claims Turkey did not have such division but some powers try to create such a division by promoting and linking incidents on secularist and Islamist problems to encourage Turkey’s division such as assassination of journalist Uğur Mumcu in 1993, who was accepted as representative of secular society where attacker was assumed as religious group member.²² Hüseyin Gülerce suggested that if Turkey was divided into two different opposing groups (Secular and Islamist), they will always be competing with each Turkey’s position in international arena and Turkish foreign policy will be weaker. The Ergenekon investigation is another internal factor which proves lack of domestic cohesion in society. These domestic problems and ongoing challenges weaken the power of the AKP administration which created negative impacts on Turkey’s foreign policy orientation because the international community also follows these developments.

On the other hand, external challenges also play a crucial role for shaping Turkish foreign policy, such as some of the EU member states’ opposition to Turkey’s

²⁰Ibid.

²¹Ibid, p. 46.

²²Hüseyin Gülerce, “Greatest Hypocrisy in History,” *Today’s Zaman*, 14 February 2008. <http://www.todayszaman.com/columnist-133957-greatest-hypocrisy-in-history.html> (accessed 12 July 2011)

full EU membership; especially opposition of the French President Nicolas Sarkozy. Esra LaGro states that French President “is against full Turkish membership to the EU because it is against the current cultural global French foreign policy interests to enlarge the EU further and include a big country like Turkey.”²³ So one of the main reason behind the opposition is Turkey’s population and its integration with EU countries. Moreover, Kemal Kirişci claims that other reasons for opposition are “domestic opposition and fear that Turks may flood the Union’s labor market and aggravate immigration-related problems.”²⁴ On the other hand there are other external factors such as tension and conflicts between Turkey’s neighboring and non-neighboring states (Iran, Syria, Israel, and Palestine).

There is also ongoing argument of the neo-Ottomanism. AKP administration and Davutoğlu “rejects the expansionist tag of “neo-Ottoman” bandied about by AK critics, preferring his well-used slogan, “zero problems with neighbors.””²⁵ On the other hand, there are many writers who claim that Ahmet Davutoğlu’s strategic depth is the rise of the neo-Ottomanism so in a way the concept perceived as criticism of the AKP administration’s new foreign policy principles.

The US-Iraq war in 2003 was a historic moment for the US-Turkey relation and also a sign of the decline of Turkey-U.S relations. Turkey failed to pass resolution to

²³ Esra LaGro, “Why is President Sarkozy Actually against Turkish Accession to the EU?, “ *Perceptions* (Spring/Summer 2008) p. 75
http://www.sam.gov.tr/perceptions/volume13/Why%20Is%20President%20Sarkozy%20Actually%20Against%20Turkish%20Accession%20to%20the%20EU.%20Facts%20and%20Challenges.%20Esra%20Lagro.pdf?&lang=en_us&output=json
(accessed 18 July 2011)

²⁴ Kemal Kirişci, “The December 2004 European Council Decision on Turkey: Is it an Historic Turning Point?” *The Middle East Review of International Affairs*, Vol. 8, No. 4 (December 2004) p. 91.

²⁵ Delphine Strauss, “Turkey’s Ottoman Mission,” *Financial Times*, 23 November 2009, <http://www.ft.com/intl/cms/s/0/af859474-d868-11de-b63a-00144feabdc0.html> (accessed 10 July 2011)

allow U.S troops deployment in İncirlik airbase in 2003 because of its clashing interest with the U.S because any instability in Iraq might lead rise of the Kurdish state within Turkish boundaries.

So this breakdown of relationship is perceived as one of the important elements of the “axis shift” debate because according to this argument Turkey left its previous foreign policy which was based on close ties with West and renewed its approach to Middle East states through its new foreign policy principles. On the other hand, Kemal Köprülü believes that decline of Turkey-U.S relations did not started with 2003 resolution but even before that but this last disagreement caused mistrust between two allies.²⁶

1.2 Methodology

The methodology of this thesis mainly relies on secondary sources such as journal articles, newspaper articles, online sources, books and research center reports which are related with Turkish foreign policy. All these sources reveal literatures available for the content. Primary sources are also used such as official documents and official web-sites like Turkey’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs. This thesis is based on historical study method but case studies are also used to illustrate new set of foreign policy principles and emphasize on events that brought important changes to Turkey’s policy behaviors. The thesis seeks to analyze the influence of new fundamental foreign policy principles and evaluate new characteristics of Turkish foreign policy under AKP administration since 2002.

²⁶ Kemal Köprülü, “Paradigm Shift in Turkey-U.S Relations,”(2005) p. 2. <http://www.turkishpolicy.com/images/stories/2005-01-TRUSrelations/TPQ2005-1-koprulu.pdf> (accessed 20 May 2011)

1.3 Thesis Outline

The thesis is divided into five chapters. The first chapter introduces the main argument; it covers literature review on the “axis shift” in Turkish foreign policy during AKP administration, new fundamental foreign policy principles and challenges against them. This part also includes methodology and thesis outline.

Chapter two briefly examines Turkish foreign policy between 1923 -2002. This chapter analyzes Turkish foreign policy in four phases which starts from 1923 until the current AKP administration.

Chapter three analyzes the concepts of “axis shift”, “strategic depth doctrine”, “neo-Ottomanism” as well as the new fundamental Turkish foreign policy principles of AKP administration.

Chapter four of this thesis deals with external and domestic challenges against new foreign policy principles. It also examines how and why these principles are being prevented by different sources.

In the conclusion chapter is the summary of the thesis, moreover, the chapter ends with a focus on probability, success and failure of these asserted principles the new foreign policy principles and also speculations on the future prospects of Turkish foreign policy are evaluated.

Chapter 2

HISTORICAL ANALYSIS OF TURKISH FOREIGN POLICY BETWEEN 1923-2002 AND RISE OF AKP

In order to understand current Turkish foreign policy, it is important to analyze developments and evolution of the Turkish foreign policy and decision making process. This chapter deals with historical background of Turkish foreign policy until the current AKP administration.

2.1 Transition from Ottoman Empire to the New Turkish Republic

In the nineteenth century Ottoman Empire started to decline and European powers had started to call it the “sick man of Europe”²⁷ because it had lack of power to control and protect its territories and protect from enemies. So as a result of this situation empire adopted more defensive policy and aimed to preserve and defend its remaining territories.

The Ottoman Empire aimed to stay out of war but by entering the WWI on the side of Allies the empire lost its remaining territories. At the end of the war, victorious power started to partition Ottoman Empire through international agreements, but the “Young Turks” refused to recognize Treaty of Sèvres. The partition plan of the Axis

²⁷ Necati Ulunay Ucuzsatar, “The Dissolution of the Ottoman Empire and the Foundation of Modern Turkey under the Leadership of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk,” *Journal of Istanbul kültür University* (2002/2) p. 56. http://www.iku.edu.tr/TR/iku_gunce/SosBilSanGunceC1S2/SosBilSanC1S2_55.pdf (accessed 20 June 2011)

powers with this treaty created “Sèvres Syndrome”²⁸ and rooted in Turkish nation in early republican period. Mustafa Kemal Atatürk as the leader of the national independence struggle, on 1 March 1921 stated that “the terms of Sèvres treaty can never be forcibly imposed upon Turkey”²⁹ and he refused to accept imposition of this treaty.

The collapse of the Ottoman Empire was the beginning of an independence war; Turkish National Struggle for independence was started under Mustafa Kemal Atatürk leadership in 1919 and ended in 1923. Atatürk’s “foreign policy objectives reflected a departure from the expansionist ideology of the Ottoman Empire. He was mainly concerned with independence and sovereignty.”³⁰ Bülent Aras states that Turkey’s “new mindset was responsive and defensive, with serious concerns for the survival of the new nation-state.”³¹ So new established republic aimed to preserve its independence and adopted defensive policy like last period of Ottoman Empire.

Treaty of Sèvres created Sèvres syndrome which made negative effects on Turkish population; “historical experience reinforced the Ottoman heritage of conspiracy and betrayal that already was a part of the social habitus of the republican

²⁸ It refers to the Treaty of Sèvres and fear of the partition of the republic like Ottoman Empire after WWI.

²⁹ Ucuzsatar, p. 60, http://www.iku.edu.tr/TR/iku_gunce/SosBilSanGunceC1S2/SosBilSanC1S2_55.pdf (accessed 20 June 2011)

³⁰ Mustafa Aydın, “Turkish Foreign Policy Framework and Analysis,” (December 2004) p. 6 <http://www.sam.gov.tr/perceptions/sampapers/mustafaaydin.pdf> (accessed 3 July 2011).

³¹ Bülent Aras, “Turkey’s Rise in Great Middle East: Peace-Building in the Periphery,” *Journal of Balkan and Near Eastern Studies*, Vol. 11, No. 1(March 2009) p. 30.

elite.”³² “Therefore, any attempt to change the basic principles of Atatürkism is viewed as a direct threat to the integrity and sovereignty of the state.”³³ So Kemalist principles are accepted as irreversible and any challenge to these principles is perceived as threat to Turkish Republic. Gökhan Bacık and Bülent Aras put forward that the new republic under Atatürk has two important foreign policy principles; first it was current state affairs and second it was pro-Western.³⁴ So Turkey’s foreign policy decisions are heavily affected from the Western powers.

After the establishment, the new republic faced many internal challenges; “religious fundamentalism and ethnic separatism posed real threats to the young Republic.”³⁵ Most important ethnic separatism was “the Kurdish rebellion under the Sheikh Said (1925).”³⁶ After the establishment of the republic these uprisings started against Turkish authorities because under the new Turkish Republic “the 1924 constitution defined a “Turk” as anyone living within the boundaries of Turkey and attached to Turkey by bonds of citizenship. Legally, the state would be indifferent to a

³² Dietrich Jung, (2003), “The Sèvres Syndrome: Turkish Foreign Policy and Its Historical Legacies,” AmericanDiplomacy.org, available at: http://www.unc.edu/depts/diplomatic_archives_roll/2003_07-09/jung_Sèvres/jung_Sèvres.html (accessed 7 July 2011).

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Gökhan Bacık and Bülent Aras, “Turkey’s Inescapable Dilemma: America or Europe?” *Alternatives: Turkish Journal of International Relations*, Vol. 3, No. 1 (2004) p. 58.

³⁵ Ahmet Sözen, “Changing Fundamental Principles in Turkish Foreign Policy making,” Paper presented at the Annual Conference of the International Studies Association in San Diego, March 22 – 25, 2006, p. 3. (accessed 15 June 2011)

³⁶ Jung, http://www.unc.edu/depts/diplomat/archives_roll/2003_07-09/jung_sevres/jung_sevres.html (accessed 7 July 2011)

citizen's religious or ethnic identity.”³⁷ Hereby, ethnic groups other than Turkish nation such as Kurds excluded from Turkish citizenship so mainly Kurdish originated rebellions started to occur in Anatolia. As a result, Kurdish issue became one of the most important challenges to Turkish foreign policy. In relation to this, Graham Fuller depicts that “everyone was a Turk even if they had forgotten the fact — the Kurds were the “mountain Turks”. However, by insisting on Turkish identity, there was a backlash and the “discovery” of a Kurdish identity”³⁸ He argues that when new republic was established Kurds were excluded from Turkish citizenship. So he believes that self-determination of Turkish nation caused birth of the Kurdish problem in Turkey.

Atatürk became the first president of the republic and adopt a series of reforms in order to modernize Turkey in the light of Western principles. “Atatürk's ideological perspective and principles embodied the “Six Arrows” which was adopted by the Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi (The Republican's People Party) in 1931 and endorsed within the constitution in 1937. These principles were; nationalism, republicanism, populism, statism, reformism and secularism.”³⁹ These six principles became milestone for Turkey's domestic and external policies. Turkish foreign policy in post-World War I, is described by Tevfik Rüştü Aras, foreign minister of Turkey, as; “our foreign policy is

³⁷ Kemal Kirişçi, “The Kurdish Question and Turkish Foreign Policy,” in *The Future of Turkish Foreign Policy*, edited by Lenore G. Martin and Dimitris Keridis, (Cambridge: The BCSIA, 2004) p. 276 <http://www.pols.boun.edu.tr/uploads/files/909.pdf> (accessed 12 July 2011)

³⁸ Graham E. Fuller, “The new Turkish republic: Turkey as a pivotal state in the Muslim world,” Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace Press 2008, 196pp <http://www.transnational-perspectives.org/transnational/articles/article332.pdf> (accessed 7 July 2011)

³⁹ Ucuşsatar, p. 66, http://www.iku.edu.tr/TR/iku_gunce/SosBilSanGunceC1S2/SosBilSanC1S2_55.pdf (accessed 20 June 2011)

simple and direct; we seek friendship with all, alliance or *groupement* with none.”⁴⁰The new republic aimed to establish friendly relations with all states but also remained neutral in any armed conflict and instability in the region or as William Hale points out “Turkey had to make sure that if it could not stay out of the war, then it was at least on the winning side.”⁴¹Turkish decision-makers believe that being neutral during Second World War was the best option of the new Republic. Therefore, Turkish leaders did not want to drag Turkey into another destructive war because they did not want to lose part of their territory or independence that they gained in 1923.

Turkey desired to survive from destructive war without making any territorial sacrifice but it had military weaknesses so “İsmet İnönü and his colleagues successfully exploited Turkey’s strategic position, adopting classic method of playing one power off against another.”⁴²As a result of this policy, Turkey gained military supply from allied powers and prepared itself for possible invasion from Germany and also Soviet Union.

Until the Second World War, Turkey remained neutral.⁴³ So even after Atatürk’s death new president İsmet İnönü followed neutral policy line like Atatürk. Turkey did not enter Second World War physically but declared war against Germany just before the end of the war in early 1945.

2.2 Turkish Foreign Policy during the Cold War

⁴⁰Feroz Ahmad, “The Historical Background of Turkey’s Foreign Policy,” p. 19 http://mitpress.mit.edu/books/chapters/0262134020chap2.pdf?&lang=en_us&output=json (accessed 12 July 2011)

⁴¹ William Hale, *Turkish Foreign Policy (1774-2000)* (Oregon: Frank Cass Publishers, 2000) p. 63.

⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 103.

⁴³ Jung http://www.unc.edu/depts/diplomat/archives_roll/2003_07-09/jung_sevres/jung_sevres.html (accessed 7 July 2011) .

After the Second World War, international system moved towards bi-polar system where proxy war started between two superpowers; the U.S and Soviet Union. Turkish policy makers believed that with pressure from Soviet Union being neutral could not protect Turkey's territorial integrity anymore and as a best option Turkey joined Western alliance. Hereby, "containment"⁴⁴ policy was introduced as a part of Truman Doctrine; the doctrine was set forth by U.S President Harry Truman. Thus as a part of the containment policy Turkey received financial aid from the U.S and joined NATO in 1952. Turkey became one of the corner stone of the containment strategy due to its geostrategic position.

In bi-polar world being a member of NATO was important foreign policy objective for Turkey in order to increase its national security which is based on *realpolitik* ideology and in this way Turkey would be under the NATO security umbrella. So Turkey sacrificed its autonomy in its decision making especially in foreign policy when it decided to take on side of the U.S against Soviet Union. When Turkey became an ally of the West it became "a founding member of the Organization of European Economic Cooperation in 1948, as a member of the Council of Europe from 1949, with the Ankara association agreement with the European Community since 1963."⁴⁵

In addition, during the Cold War many important developments took place which had an impact on Turkey's foreign policy. Some of these developments were;

⁴⁴ Policy aimed to prevent expansion of the communist Soviet Union and formulated by George F. Kennan.

⁴⁵Jung, http://www.unc.edu/depts/diplomat/archives_roll/2003_07-09/jung_sevres/jung_sevres.html (accessed 7 July 2011)

Jupiter missiles deployment, Cuban missile crisis, détente, several military interventions in Turkey, Cyprus problem in 1960s and 1970s. All these developments and problems were important factors in the evolution of Turkey's foreign policy. Especially after three coup d'état military gained importance in Turkish foreign and domestic policy formulations.

“In October 1959, through containment strategy Menderes-Eisenhower administration has agreed on 15 Jupiter intermediate-range ballistic missiles deployment in Turkish territory.”⁴⁶ There was a concern between some members of the Turkish foreign ministry staff because they believed that “those missiles might provoke possible Soviet attack.”⁴⁷ On the other hand, when U.S offered to trade off Jupiter missiles in Turkey, in 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis, Turkish politicians became uncomfortable because U.S offered a deal to Soviet Union without consulting Turkey. “In October 1962, President Kennedy's agreement with Premier Khrushchev to remove missiles from Turkey in exchange for the removal of missiles from Cuba alarmed Ankara. The government realized that Turkey's strategic importance was declining and its role and status within NATO would be revised accordingly.”⁴⁸ This was the first disappointment of Turkey with the Western alliance.

One year after the Cuban missile crisis, due to Cyprus problem, Turkey experienced second disappointment on its relation with the U.S. In 1963 constitutional

⁴⁶ Hale, “Turkish Foreign Policy,” 133.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Ahmad, p. 32
http://mitpress.mit.edu/books/chapters/0262134020chap2.pdf?&lang=en_us&output=json (accessed 12 July 2011)

deadlock crisis between Turkish and Greek Cypriots drew Greece and Turkey to the conflict as guarantor powers. Turkey clearly claimed its intervention intention but U.S President Lyndon B. Johnson wrote warning letter to Turkish authorities. This meant that NATO was not going to help Turkey in possible Soviet invasion. At the same time U.S clearly implied that Turkey could not use U.S military equipments for intervention. Feroz Ahmad states that “President Johnson’s letter of June 1964 proved to be traumatic.”⁴⁹ “The Johnson letter forced Turkey to reevaluate its policy and to diversify it instead of depending entirely on Washington.”⁵⁰ Turkey committed itself to the Western interest but the U.S did not support Turkey’s decision to intervene in Cyprus and imposed its decision by warning letters so Turkey was disappointed with this decision and this was the second disappointment for Turkey After a year later from Cuban missile crisis Jupiter missiles removed from Turkish territories. During the Cyprus crisis the U.S concerned that Turkey’s intervention in the island may have create problem between NATO members because; “the Americans also feared that a break out of war between Turkey and Greece would herald Soviet involvement in the unprotected Eastern Mediterranean through Cyprus. Thus, they assumed a peace making role between the participants,”⁵¹ possible struggle between two NATO allies might weaken or destroy NATO alliance and this was not acceptable by the U.S and so the U.S did not take any side in Cyprus conflict.

⁴⁹ Ahmad, p. 32 http://mitpress.mit.edu/books/chapters/0262134020chap2.pdf?&lang=en_us&output=json (accessed 12 July 2011)

⁵⁰ Ibid., p. 33.

⁵¹ Cihat Göktepe, “The Cyprus Crisis of 1967 and its Effects on Turkey’s Foreign Relations,” *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 41, No. 3 (May 2005) p. 431.

In 1974, Cyprus problem came to the agenda again with Greece intervention in the island. On 15 July 1974 Greek junta intervened in the island and aimed to achieve “Enosis.”⁵² Greece intervention was followed by Turkey’s intervention on 20 July 1974. This time Cyprus intervention occurred during the “détente”⁵³ period so this eased possibility of Soviet intervention unlike 1963. This time U.S did not warn Turkish authorities so Turkey as guarantor power intervened in Cyprus unilaterally in 1974.

In 1962 U.S offer of trade off proves that the U.S is ready to sacrifice its relation with Turkey in order to maintain its own security. In addition to this, during the 1960s Cyprus crisis the U.S failed to take side on Turkey against Greece and instead the U.S president Lyndon B. Johnson sent warning letters to İsmet İnönü. Moreover, after 1974 Turkish intervention in Cyprus, U.S imposed an arm embargo to Turkey. After all these incidents Turkey became uncomfortable and foreign policy decision makers worried about declining Turkey and the U.S relations and loss of strategic importance for the U.S.

After the military intervention in 1980, military regime went through civilian administration under military control in 1983. The Motherland Party (Anavatan Partisi-ANAP) won the election. New administration with Turgut Özal’s new foreign policy objectives mainly emphasized on the economic liberties and rapprochement with Turkey’s neighbors. So Turkey aimed to become a regional power by establishing good relations with Ottoman Empire former territories.

⁵² Ideology of the Greece and Greek Cypriots which aims to united Cyprus Island with Greece.

⁵³ Period of the normalization of relations between U.S and Soviet Union in 1970s, during this period both superpowers signed series of agreements; SALT, SALT II and Helsinki Agreement. Détente ended with Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979.

Turkey formally applied to EC in 1987 which was responded two years later. In 1989 the EC presented its proposal that it was early to start full membership negotiation with Turkey. Ahmet Sözen argues that “application in 1987 was premature but EC did not want to alienate Turkey.”⁵⁴ Thus, according to 2004 EU report Turkey “was not yet ready to take on the obligations of membership and instead recommended the formation of a customs union”⁵⁵ and as a result in 1995 EU and Turkey signed Customs Union agreement which actually came from Ankara Agreement.

In general, role of Turkey in NATO was containing the communist challenge. Nicholas Danforth describes role of Turkey the Cold War as the “‘gatekeeper’, defending Europe’s southeastern flank.”⁵⁶ In the official web page of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Turkey’s role until the disintegration of Soviet Union is described as the following:

In the aftermath of the Second World War, Turkey made the historic choice of siding with the free world and stood up against communism and Soviet expansion. This policy was crowned on 18 February 1952, with Turkey’s accession to NATO. Since then, NATO has been the cornerstone of Turkey’s defence and security policy.⁵⁷

⁵⁴ Ahmet Sözen, “Turkey-EU Enlargement at a crossroads: Turkey’s Democratizations in Light of Its EU Candidates Status,” Paper prepare for presentation at the 2004 Conference Enlargement and the Future of the European Union: Parallel Paths or Crossroads?, in Warsaw, Poland 1-3 July 2004, p. 2.

⁵⁵ Kirişçi, “The December 2004 European Council Decision on Turkey: Is it an Historic Turning Point?” *The Middle East Review of International Affairs*, Vol. 8, No. 4 (December 2004) p. 88.

⁵⁶ Danforth, p. 87. http://www.turkishpolicy.com/images/stories/2008-03-tpq/nicholas_danforth.pdf?&lang=en_us&output=json (20 June 2011)

⁵⁷ “Turkey’s Security Perspectives, Historical and Conceptual Background,” Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Turkey, http://www.mfa.gov.tr/i_-turkey_s-security-perspective_-historical-and-conceptual-background_-turkey_s-contributions.en.mfa (accessed 2 July 2011)

During the Cold War Turkey struggled with military interventions, domestic instability, economic problems and terrorism. As a result of all these problems, as Ahmet Sözen pointed out, “Turkish foreign policy became a prisoner of chronic domestic instability and frequent economic crises, which made effective planning or implementing a program almost impossible.”⁵⁸

2.3 Post-Cold War Era

After the disintegration the Soviet Union Turkey aimed to preserve its Western relations stronger and also develop its relations with other states because Turkey alienated some of its neighbors due to the Cold War period. In addition to this, in post-Cold War period Turkey’s primary objective became full EU membership.

In 1990s, decision making process has changed because through globalization security based foreign policy orientation was declined and economical and cultural values emerged. The EU values and norms such as democracy, rule of law and respect to human rights, emerge of the economic markets, increasing role of NGOs and media gained importance.

On the other side, Turkey had to deal with domestic problems such as PKK insurgencies so Turkish foreign policy in 1990s was based on strong military ties with Israel and U.S. Thus, due to the domestic problems Turkey failed to adapt to the post-Cold War changes. In this period Turkey’s neighbors such as Iran and Syria threat

⁵⁸ Sözen, “A Paradigm Shift in Turkish Foreign Policy: Transition and Challenges,” p. 8.

country's stability and security.⁵⁹in addition, "William Hale argues that Kurdish problem started to have;

Costly effects in Turkey's external relations. Until 1990s, the outside world paid little attention to the problem, but with the end of the Cold War, the increased concern shown for universal adherence to democratic norms began to have a marked effect in foreign polices-especially those of the European Union (EU).⁶⁰

In post-Cold War period Kurdish problem became more than a domestic problem because it became an external problem and affected Turkey-EU relations negatively. On the other hand, disintegration of Soviet Union diminished importance of the Turkey in the NATO because there wasn't Soviet threat anymore. Ali Tekin argues that Turkey adapted new policy in this new period; "policy style of "defensive realism" that the Republic had inherited from the Ottoman Empire could not meet the new challenges, giving way to a new policy style that can be labeled as "cautious activism,""⁶¹So with this new policy Turkey aimed to examine probable effects and consequences of its acts. Turkish foreign policy started to be more active in order to deal with external problems such as Israel-Turkey partnership against PKK threat from Syria and Iran. The new policy of cautious activism can be seen in Turkey's direct threat to prevent Syria to support PKK activities. In 1990s Turkey's counter attacks against PKK gained strength and had an impact on Turkey's relations with its neighbors. "Ocalan's expulsion from that country was a notably example of the

⁵⁹Jung http://www.unc.edu/depts/diplomat/archives_roll/2003_07-09/jung_sevres/jung_sevres.html (accessed 7 July 2011)

⁶⁰ Hale, "Turkish Foreign Policy," p. 10.

⁶¹Ali Tekin, "New Turkish foreign Policy: The Impact of 'Europeanization'" p. 2 <http://www.pol.mq.edu.au/apsa/papers/Non-refereed%20papers/Tekin%20New%20Turkish%20foreign%20policy.pdf> (accessed 02 July 2011)

transition from the reactive foreign policy behavior of the Cold War period to a more pro-active approach.”⁶²In addition, “threat to use force to prevent the deployment of the SS-300 missiles by the Greek Cypriot government and capture of PKK leader Abdullah Öcalan in Kenya in February 1999.”⁶³So these developments proved that Turkey adopted more pro-active policy.

When Cold War over Turkey and Israel relationship became closer and both states strengthened their relations diplomatically and militarily through high level visits and bilateral agreements. The strategic partnership was mainly based on common interests and same concerns of threats from neighboring states such as Syria and Iran.

In post-Cold War period, Turkey had to deal with several problems, such as the 2001 financial crisis which “was the result of the failure of the public sector to maintain the austerity targets and the failure to fully implement the free market rationale of globalization.”⁶⁴So as a result, in spite of militarily active policy due to the other domestic problems Turkey had difficulties to adapt the new international system values.

2.5 AKP Era

AKP⁶⁵came to power in November 2002 general elections as conservative Muslim democrat party. Turkish foreign policy under AKP administration is based on

⁶² Ibid., p. 172.

⁶³F. Stephen Larrabee.(2000), “Turkish Foreign and Security Policy: New Dimensions and New Challenges excerpt from Zalmay Khalilzad, Ian O. Lesser, and F. Stephen Larrabee, *The Future of Turkish-Western Relations: Toward a Strategic Plan*, Santa Monica, CA: RAND Report, 21-51.

⁶⁴Yeldan Erinc, “Neoliberal Global Remedies: From Speculative-Led Growth to IMF-Led Crisis in Turkey” *Review of Radical Political Economics*, Vol.38, No. 2 (Spring 2006) p. 1.

⁶⁵After the Constitutional court decision to ban Virtue Party (Fazilet Partisi), Islamic movement transformed towards more democratic and forward-looking Islamist party and this was the rise of the AKP (Justice and Development Party). F. S. Larrabee and Ian O. Lesser state that this transformation could be easier to integrate Islamic rooted party into Turkish political system. For further details see F.

“stability, win-win strategy, values over interests principle and a proactive approach.”⁶⁶

When AKP came to power new administration had to deal with series of problems such as Cyprus problem, Iraq impasse and economic problems.

The main goal of Turkish foreign policy is described by Turkish Foreign Ministry in its web page it states that “the primary objective of the Turkish foreign policy is to help secure and nurture a peaceful, prosperous, stable and cooperative environment that is conducive to human development at home and its neighborhood.”⁶⁷ So these objectives are also adopted by AKP administration.

The Iraq war played important role in changing Turkish foreign policy behaviors because in 2003 Turkey and the U.S relations came to a deadlock on airbase issue. As a result, Turkey-U.S relations started to decline. The U.S and Turkey’s clashing interest can be described as; “the core of friction between Washington and Ankara was the fact that American threats to overthrow Saddam were viewed by the Turkish government as a catalyst that would encourage the Kurds to establish their own state.”⁶⁸ So because of the Kurdish issue Turkey did not allow the U.S to use its territory in 2003 Iraq war.

Turkey was concerned that U.S invasion would create destabilization in the region. In addition to this, Turkish people demonstrated that they opposed the war. In new foreign policy activism, AKP administration did not want to wait in case of he crisis

Stephen Larrabee and Ian O. Lesser, “Turkish Foreign Policy in an Age of Uncertainty,” RAND National Security Research Division (2003).

⁶⁶Ömer Çelik, “The Efficiency of Turkish Foreign Policy,” *Turkish Policy Quarterly*, Vol. 9, No, 4 (March 2011) p. 35.

⁶⁷ “Synopsis of the Turkish Foreign Policy,” Turkish Foreign Ministry web site <http://www.mfa.gov.tr/synopsis-of-the-turkish-foreign-policy.en.mfa> (accessed 05 July 2011)

⁶⁸ Erik L. Knudsen, “The Quagmire of Northern Iraq: The Clash of United States, Turkish and Iraqi Kurdish Interests,” *Journal of South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 26, No. 4 (Summer 2003) p. 32.

which failed to prevent crisis and instead of that preferred to adapt new policies in order to be more active in politics.⁶⁹ Davutoğlu's strategic depth and new set of foreign policy principles are important factors in evolution of the new Turkish foreign policy. Suat Kınıklıoğlu states that under Davutoğlu's strategic depth and new neighborhood policy Turkey changed its perception and stopped seeing its neighbors as an enemy or trouble maker "instead, the new approach rebranded neighbors as brothers, relatives, people with whom we share a common history, culture and often religion."⁷⁰ He also claims that AKP's new "policy seeks to reintegrate Turkey into its immediate neighborhood."⁷¹ Some of these immediate neighbors are Syria and Iran and under AKP administration Turkey developed its relations with both states.

Under the AKP administration Turkey adopted "self-confident, multi-dimensional and dynamic foreign policy approach"⁷² which contradicts Turkey's past approaches. Bülent Aras states that in the past "Turkish policymakers were designing foreign policy based on their interpretation of the international system and projecting their domestic concerns onto the foreign policy-making process."⁷³ But new Turkish foreign policy became more assertive and new policies are not only based on domestic concerns of the policy makers.

⁶⁹ Ahmet Selim Tekelioğlu, "AK Party's Performance in Foreign Policy," *Siyaset, Ekonomi ve Toplum Araştırmaları Vakfı*, 06 July 2007 <http://www.setav.org/public/HaberDetay.aspx?Dil=tr&hid=12459&q=ak-party-s-performance-in-foreign-policy> (accessed 07 July 2011).

⁷⁰ Suat Kınıklıoğlu, "Turkey's Neighbourhood Policy: Reintegration into Multiple Regions," in *What Does Turkey Think*, ed. Dimitar Bechev (London: European Council on Foreign Relations, 2011) p. 64.

⁷¹ *Ibid*, p. 65.

⁷² Bülent Aras, "Turkey's Rise in Greater Middle East: Peace-Building in the Periphery," p. 30.

⁷³ *Ibid*.

“From 2001 to 2004, various political reform packages were adopted in order to fulfill the Copenhagen criteria that resulted in deepening Turkey’s Europeanization process,”⁷⁴ and as a result successful implementation of EU reforms lead for opening the accession negotiations in 2005.

Through Europeanization process, role of military’s in decision making started to diminish; “EU has pressed Turkey to align civilian control of the military with the practice in EU member states, mainly through reforms in the composition and policy-shaping role of the National Security Council (NSC).”⁷⁵ Military had leading role in Turkish politics through several military interventions in the past and EU reforms aimed change this and transfer the control of the foreign and domestic policy to civilians.

İbrahim Kalın, Erdoğan’s chief advisor, emphasized that in 12 June 2011 elections “noted that while AKP won only half of the country’s votes, polls showed the 65 percent to 70 percent of the population approved of its foreign policy”.⁷⁶ AKP succeeded to stay in power since 2002 and in each election it achieved to get higher votes. “It was the third (consecutive) time the AKP had won the general election, increasing its share of the vote steadily over elections.”⁷⁷ Turkey under AKP administration followed more proactive foreign policy and general elections results show that Turkish population support AKP’s new foreign policy principles.

⁷⁴Meltem Müftüler-Bac, “Turkey’s Political Reforms and the Impact of the European Union”, *South European Society and Politics*, Vol. 10, No.1 (March 2005) p. 4.

⁷⁵Mustafa Aydın and Sinem A. Açıkmeşe, “Europeanization through EU Conditionality: Understanding the New Era in Turkish Foreign Policy”, *Journal of Southern Europe and the Balkans*, Vol. 9, No. 3 (December 2007) p. 269.

⁷⁶ Ben Birnbaum, “Turkish Policy Advisor: Turkey is Shaping the Arab World,” *The Washington Times*, 23 June 2011.

⁷⁷ Roman K. Castillo, “A New Status quo under Turkey’s AKP,” 15 July 2011, <http://globalaffairsmag.com/2011/07/a-new-status-quo-under-turkeys-akp/> (17 July 2011).

Chapter 3

THE “AXIS SHIFT” AND NEW FUNDAMENTAL FOREIGN POLICY PRINCIPLES OF AKP ADMINISTRATION

This chapter analyzes the perception of “axis shift”, as well as strategic depth and neo-Ottomanism concepts. In addition, it explains and analyzes new fundamental Turkish foreign policy principles under AKP administration. Case studies are also provided to illustrate these principles.

3.1 What Does “Axis Shift” Mean in Turkish Foreign Policy?

There is a significant and visible change in Turkish foreign policy after AKP came to power and Ahmet Davutoğlu responsible from current proactive Turkish foreign policy. When AKP came to power, it brought the “axis shift” debates to the agenda but what does “axis shift” mean? Beril Dedeoğlu states that “the term “axis shift” is used for countries that are supposedly changing their overall political positions, meaning that they abandon their current system of security and values to replace them

with a new system.”⁷⁸ So if there is complete departure from state previous political position to completely new system it can be seen as an “axis shift.”

Svante Cornell argues that main reason for this debate is Turkey’s rapprochement with Islamist regimes in the Middle East.⁷⁹ But there are some other developments which show that there is a remarkable change in policy behaviors such as Turkey’s attitude to the conflict between Israel and Palestinians, Turkey’s emerging facilitator and mediator role in regional conflicts and 2003 Iraq war.⁸⁰ When we look at the more recent events two current incidents had an impact on foreign policy behaviors; first, Turkey’s rapprochement with Iran and its opposition to “UN security council resolution which adopted new and tougher sanctions against Iran.”⁸¹ Second incident is “Israel’s attack against the flotilla, carrying a humanitarian aid to Gaza and Turkey’s reaction to the incident.”⁸²

These two developments accelerate debate on Turkey’s new proactive foreign policy issue. After all these incidents; “the main question is whether Turkey has changed its axis from West to East.”⁸³ So transformation of Turkey’s foreign policy and perception of “axis shift” gained importance during the AKP administration.

⁷⁸ Beril Dedeoğlu, “The Axis Shift (2),” *Today’s Zaman*, 13 November 2010. http://www.todayszaman.com/columnist-227077-the-axis-shift-2.html?&lang=en_us&output=json (accessed 12 June 2011)

⁷⁹ Cornell, “Axis Shift,” p. 3.

⁸⁰ Süleyman Özeren, “Axis And Turkey: What Should Change?” *International Strategic Research Organization*, 17 June 2010, <http://www.usak.org.tr/EN/makale.asp?id=1537> (accessed 15 July 2011).

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ Ibid.

On the other hand Ziya Öniş argues that “EU is providing main axis for foreign policy”⁸⁴ in early years of AKP. He also points out that another important element in main axis shift is Turkey-US relations in the post 9/11 era. “Indeed, this represents a fundamental shift from the basic foreign policy orientation of the 1990s, in the context of which relations with the United States and Israel constituted the primary axis of Turkish foreign policy.”⁸⁵ So he notes that Turkey’s new foreign policy direction has changed since late 1990s before AKP administration but with AKP it becomes more significant.

In order to bring an explanation to “axis shift” debate Davutoğlu questions the axis in Turkish foreign policy by explaining Turkey’s strategic and historical position. He claims that “Turkey cannot change its history and geography and other developments are variables.”⁸⁶ Thus he believes that Turkish foreign policy is based on changes in the international system and “axis shift” perception is not the reality of Turkish foreign policy.

Foreign policy analysts are divided into two on “axis shift” debate but both sides agree that under there is transformation of foreign policy behaviors under AKP

⁸⁴Ziya Öniş, “The New Wave of Foreign Policy Activism in Turkey: Drifting Away from Europeanization?,” *Danish Institute for International Studies*, 2009:5, p. 4. http://www.diis.dk/graphics/Publications/Reports2009/DIIS_report_2009-05_New_wave_of_foreign_policy_activism_in_Turkey_web.pdf (accessed 10 July 2011)

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 14.

⁸⁶Ahmet Davutoğlu interviewed by Nuh Yılmaz , “Principles of Turkish Foreign Policy,” SETA Foundation’s Washington D.C. Branch, (8 December 2009) p. 3 http://www.setadc.org/multimedia/texts/202-unofficial-transcript-of-foreign-minister-ahmed-?&lang=en_us&output=json (accessed 22 June 2011)

administration.⁸⁷ While one side argues that Turkish foreign policy started to shift to another way (to the East) especially when AKP administration came to power and started to implement new fundamental foreign policy principles.⁸⁸ On the other hand other, other side “argues that Turkey’s relations with the West are sound and axis shift is out of question.”⁸⁹ Thus, the AKP and its supporters believe that there is not “axis shift” in Turkish foreign policy and Turkey is still the ally of the U.S. So ruling AKP administration rejects the “axis shift” argument. Davutoğlu states that “Turkey is becoming a normal country and adjusting its foreign policy.”⁹⁰ At the same time, Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan made similar statements and said that “there is no axis shift of Turkey. We are standing where we have been standing at the beginning of our political power.”⁹¹ In addition, President Abdullah Gül claims that Turkey is not moving to only one way and it “is moving simultaneously in every direction, towards East and West, North and South.”⁹²

The “axis shift” debate becomes an important issue because it brought the question of “Is Turkey leaving the West and turning to the Middle East?”⁹³ Due to the

⁸⁷ Hasan Öztürk, “Turkish Foreign Policy Normalizes,” (25 January 2010), www.bilgesam.org, p. 2 http://www.bilgesam.org/en/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=226:turkish-foreign-&lang=en_us&output=json (accessed 08 July 2011)

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁹¹ Cengiz Çandar, “Turkey’s ‘Soft Power’ Strategy: A New Vision for a Multi-Polar World,” *SETA Policy Brief*, No: 38 (December 2009) p. 4. http://setad.org/pdfs/SETA_Policy_Brief_No_38_Turkeys_Soft_Power_Strategy_Candar.pdf?&lang=en_us&output=json (accessed 15 July 2011)

⁹² Ibid., p. 5.

⁹³ Kılıç Buğra Kanat, “AK Party’s Foreign Policy: Is Turkey Turning away from the West?” *Insight Turkey*, Vol. 12, No. 1 (2010) p. 205.

Turkey's rapprochement with several the Middle East countries which U.S has problems such as Syria and Iran, this question put forwarded in Turkish political agenda. However AKP administration does not accept those claims and believes that it is not possible to change Turkey's history and geography and rapprochement with Middle Eastern states is a part of new policy objectives, not the result of divergence from the Western Alliance. Davutoğlu insists that "by all means, the axis of our foreign policy is toward NATO, the EU and the transatlantic process."⁹⁴ So in general AKP administration claims that Turkey does not leave the West. Birol Bashan agrees with Davutoğlu and "he suggested that the perception of an "axis shift" away from the West and towards the East, in strengthening relations with Iran, Syria and other Arab countries, was misleading."⁹⁵ In addition to this, "Cengiz Çandar and Graham Fuller express that in resolving Iraqi issue, in Middle East peace process, to influence Syria, Iran and Arab-Muslim world, to moderate Islamic movements, to prevent proliferation of the WMDs to Iran and Iraq, to spread democracy, the US needs Turkey."⁹⁶ Thus, Turkey plays important role in these problems and U.S needs Turkey to solve them. Thus, Turkey's rapprochement with the Arab world and its role increasing in those regions actually serves U.S interest so Turkey is not diverging from the U.S but

⁹⁴ 'Davutoğlu Rules out Shift from Transatlantic Axis', *Todays Zaman*, 23 March 2009. http://www.todayszaman.com/newsDetail_getNewsById.action?load=detay&link=170388&bolum=100 (11 June 2011)

⁹⁵ "Turkey's New Regional Diplomacy: Ambitions and Constraints," 21 February 2011 http://www.brookings.edu/events/2011/0220_turkey.aspx (accessed 24 June 2011)

⁹⁶ Cengiz Çandar and Graham Fuller, "Grand Geopolitics for a New Turkey", *Mediterranean Quarterly* (Winter 2001) pp. 29-37 excerpt from Hüseyin Bağcı, "Changing Geopolitics and Turkish Foreign Policy," *Internationales Institut für Liberale Politik Wien* (2009) p. 5 www.iilp.at/index.php?download=140.pdf (accessed 2 June 2011)

building a bridge between the Western and the Eastern states by exploiting its historical and geographical depth especially in the Middle East.

Gün Kut also believes that there is not “axis shift” in Turkish foreign policy and he points out that “Turkey has endorsed a multi-directional policy in the post-Cold War period and consecutive governments, including the AKP, have on the whole been loyal to this general line, without introducing radical changes.”⁹⁷ So he believes that AKP follows same policy without any significant change but he also claims that there is divergence between the West and Turkey and the West is responsible for that because AKP government adopted required reforms but the EU keep postponing Turkey’s full membership and alienates Turkey.⁹⁸ He believes that there are some changes in foreign policy but he also insists that AKP’s new formulated policy is the continuation of previous policy since WWII.⁹⁹

Since WWII Turkey had good relations with the U.S and when the Cold War was over Turkey attempted to establish good relations with its neighbors which is something that could not happen during the Cold War. Hasan Öztürk states that main reason of alienation of those regions is because “Western states asked Turkey not to build friendly relations with these Middle Eastern states because they were enemies of the West,”¹⁰⁰ and “Turkey did ignore its Middle Eastern neighbors for decades, and now

⁹⁷ Barçın Yinanc, “AKP has not Altered Turkey’s Essential Foreign Policy, Experts Argues,” *Hurriyet Daily News*, 10 June 2011. <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/n.php?n=akp-did-not-alter-turkeys-foreign-policy-say-expert-2011-06-10> (accessed 17 July 2011)

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰ Hasan Öztürk, “Turkish Foreign Policy Normalizes,” 25 January 2010, http://www.bilgesam.org/en/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=226:turkish-foreign-&lang=en_us&output=json (accessed 08 July 2011)

it wants to recover.”¹⁰¹ Davutoğlu gives an example of NATO in order to explain changing international system and Turkey’s adaptation of these changes; he states that during the Cold War “Turkey would have been considered a wing partner of NATO. The strategic concept of NATO has changed”¹⁰² and “NATO is changing, the EU is changing, and Turkey is changing.”¹⁰³ So Turkey followed the changing dynamics of the international system and established a vision based proactive foreign policy according to dynamic variables of the international system. He emphasizes that in order to have successful foreign policy it is important to follow changing variables of the international system. He strongly emphasizes that changes in foreign policy is not “axis shift”, but “change of the main focus of foreign policy. And which can be identified as change of adaptation.”¹⁰⁴

On the other hand Ariel Cohen stated that the U.S is concerned about future of the U.S-Turkey relations because he believes that under the AKP administration Turkey follows a different foreign policy and as a result of this both states interests are clashing. He states that there were important developments that alarmed U.S and these are; AKP’s rapprochement with Hamas and Sudan, problems with Armenia, deterioration of

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

¹⁰² Yılmaz, “Principles of Turkish Foreign Policy,” p. 4, <http://www.setav.org/ups/dosya/14808.pdf> (accessed 22 June 2011)

¹⁰³ Ibid.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

relations with Israel and cancellation of the Anatolian Eagle air force maneuvers with the U.S.¹⁰⁵

But the real question is “is there really axis shift in Turkish foreign policy or are these changes are only an evolution of Turkish foreign policy as an outcome of a dynamic international system?” Özdem Sanberk claims that “foreign policy is something that has constantly to be revised and re-adapted in the light of changing conditions.”¹⁰⁶ So it can be argued that Turkish foreign policy under AKP administration aimed to adapt changing conditions of international system instead of applying new foreign policy vision. Davutoğlu concludes his argument by saying that “what we are having today is a restoration. This concept is important. Restoration, not paradigm shift. Not revolution, but a restoration of Turkish society, economics, politics, and foreign policy.”¹⁰⁷

In conclusion under AKP administration there is significant changes in foreign policy decisions but these changes do not mean that Turkey’s departure from the West because Turkish decision makers aimed to adopt new international system in post 9/11 and post financial crisis era and claims that Turkey still has strong Western ally. Thus, there is not “axis shift” in Turkish foreign policy but adaptation of dynamic international system.

¹⁰⁵ Ariel Cohen, “Washington Concerned as Turkey Leaving the West,” *Turkish Policy Quarterly*, Vol. 9, No. 3 (December 2010) p. 26.

¹⁰⁶ Özdem Sanberk, “Transformation of Turkish Foreign Policy,” *Wise Man Center for Strategic Studies*, Report No. 21 (2010), p. 2 <http://www.bilgesam.org/en/images/stories/documents/trforeignpolicy.pdf> (accessed 01 July 2011).

¹⁰⁷ “Perspectives on Turkish Foreign Policy,” 29 November 2010 http://www.brookings.edu/~media/Files/events/2010/1129_turkey/20101129_turkey.pdf p. 4 (accessed 24 June 2011)

3.2 Strategic Depth Doctrine

The doctrine is based on the Davutoğlu's *Strategic Depth* book. The strategic depth refer that Turkey's unique location and experience of the Ottoman past make it uniquely suited for exercising soft power on neighboring states.¹⁰⁸ So geographically "control of Bosphorus geographically and legacy of the Ottoman Empire"¹⁰⁹ historically creates strategic advantage for Turkey. Suat Kınıklıoğlu, an AKP foreign policy spokesman, also supports Davutoğlu's arguments on geographical depth issue. He wrote that "Turkey today is a Janus-like geography that offers gates and doorways to the East and West."¹¹⁰ In mythology Janus refers to god of gates and like Janus Turkey controls gates of the Bosphorus which is an opening gate both to the Eastern and the Western world.

In addition to Turkey's historical and geographical depth, there are other important elements which shape Turkish foreign policy; "such as soft power, conflict resolution and promotion of 'win-win' solutions."¹¹¹ Thus, in the light of this doctrine Turkey becomes more proactive in international arena and Davutoğlu has some predictions about future aim of Turkey and he believes that Turkey's strategic depth will help to achieve these goals , he claimed that AKP administration aims;

¹⁰⁸ Ömer Taşpınar, "Turkey's Middle East Policies Between Neo-Ottomanism and Kemalism" *Carnegie Papers, Carnegie Middle East Center*, No. 10 (September 2008) http://carnegieendowment.org/files/cmec10_taspinar_final.pdf (accessed 26 June 2011)

¹⁰⁹ Joshua Walker, "Learning Strategic Depth: Implications of Turkey's new foreign policy doctrine," *Insight Turkey* (July 2007) http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_7057/is_3_9/ai_n28498505/ (accessed 06 September 2011)

¹¹⁰ Suat Kınıklıoğlu, "Neo-Ottoman' Turkey?," *Project Syndicate* (3 December 2009) <http://www.project-syndicate.org/commentary/kiniklioglu2/English> (accessed 11 July 2011)

¹¹¹ Grigoriadis, p. 4.

“By 2023 when the country will commemorate the 100th anniversary of the foundation of the republic, I envision a Turkey which is a full member of the EU after having completed all the necessary requirements, living in full peace with its neighbors, integrated with neighboring basins in economic terms and for a common security vision, an effective player in setting orders in regions where our national interests lie, and active in all global affairs and among the top 10 economies in the world.”¹¹²

Davutoğlu believes that Turkey’s ‘strategic depth’ which is mainly based on historical experience and geographical position will make Turkey a global actor by 2023. Turkey’s position will give Turkey all it needs to achieve its national interests. Davutoğlu points out that new foreign policy activism follow new vision which is “based on mutual respect, stability, peace and prosperity.”¹¹³ This means that Turkey aims to establish its relations through peace and use of soft power in order to preserve stability in its neighborhoods. He also believes that negative critics about AKP’s foreign policy attitudes toward EU and U.S and perception of “axis shift” are misperceptions.¹¹⁴ In this new vision, Turkey needs combination of following policies; “being conscious of Turkey’s soft power generated by its history, reconciliation with its Muslim identity while preserving secular regime, solving frozen conflicts with neighbors, creating new reliable, honest and peaceful image of the country in order to gain more respects.”¹¹⁵

¹¹² Abdullah Bozkurt, "Davutoğlu Sees Turkey among Top 10 World Players by 2023," *Today's Zaman*, 5 January 2010. http://www.todayszaman.com/news-197582-102-davutoglu-sees-turkey-among-top-10-world-players-by-2023.html?&lang=en_us&output=json (accessed 13 June 2011)

¹¹³ Yılmaz, “Principles of Turkish Foreign Policy,” p. 6 <http://www.setav.org/ups/dosya/14808.pdf> (accessed 22 June 2011)

¹¹⁴ Hasan Öztürk, “Turkish Foreign Policy Normalizes,” (25 January 2010), [www.bilgesam.org](http://www.bilgesam.org/en/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=226:turkish-foreign-&lang=en_us&output=json), http://www.bilgesam.org/en/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=226:turkish-foreign-&lang=en_us&output=json (accessed 08 July 2011)

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

Thus, AKP administration assertive that in near future Turkey's role will be no longer a bridge between states instead it will be a global player through its historical and geographical uniqueness. The new set of foreign policy principles of the AKP administration is also part of this strategic depth doctrine.

3.3 Concept of Neo-Ottomanism

Many definitions exist for the neo-Ottomanism¹¹⁶ and one of them is: “return to a notion of a Turkey exerting power over its traditional Ottoman sphere of influence; those who use the term mean to imply that the new foreign policy involves the revival of imperial ambitions.”¹¹⁷ The concept is perceived as criticism of Davutoğlu's strategic depth and Arda Baykal claims that AKP's new foreign policy line is “continuation of imperial aims.”¹¹⁸

On the other hand, İnan Rüma argues that AKP government “is re-engaging with territories once ruled by the sultans, from the Balkans to Baghdad, in a drive to return Turkey to a place among the leadership of the Muslim world and the top ranks of international diplomacy.”¹¹⁹ On the other side, Soner Çağaptay brought different point of views to this debate. He made comparison of AKP and Ottoman era. He states that “sultan Abdulhamid II (who ruled between 1876 and 1909) did seek to reassert the

¹¹⁶ The neo-Ottomanism is not a new debate; it was started in former President Turgut Özal's period due to his policies. It refers to the promotion of Turkey's involvement or engagement with former Ottoman Empire territories.

¹¹⁷ Nimet Şeker, “Turkey's Strategic Depth.” *Qantara*, 7 August 2009, http://en.qantara.de/wcsite.php?wc_c=6894 (accessed 12 June 2011)

¹¹⁸ Arda Baykal, “Where are Turkey's new international relations taking it?” *International Affairs of Defense Section* (February 2010) p. 8. <http://www.parliament.uk/briefing-papers/SN05348.pdf> (20 June 2011)

¹¹⁹ İnan Rüma, “Turkish Foreign Policy Towards the Balkans: New Activism, Neo-Ottomanism or/so What?” *Turkish Policy Quarterly*, Vol. 9, No. 4, p. 138.

legitimacy of imperial rule on the basis of Islam. However, while Abdulhamid's pan-Islamism focused on all Muslims, the AKP's focus seems to be the Arab world."¹²⁰

Davutoğlu refused to see new foreign policy principles as the neo-Ottomanism because of its imperialist impression. He emphasizes that Turkey's new neighborhood policy is not based on the Ottoman legacy and is built on "zero-problem with neighbors" principle. He points out that Turkey's engagement with its neighbors does not mean revival of imperialism "but due to inescapable factors of geography and history."¹²¹ Because it is impossible to change Turkey's geographical position and past so new Turkish foreign policy cannot be linked with legacy of the Ottoman Empire.

3.4 New Fundamental Foreign Policy Principles

Since 2002 under the AKP administration Turkey has set new principles by exploiting "its geographical position and historical assets."¹²² AKP administration asserted five fundamental foreign policy principles.

In addition to new fundamental foreign policy principles there are three methodological principles and Davutoğlu states that those are "visionary approach, consistent systemic framework and soft power."¹²³ The visionary approach is not based

¹²⁰ Soner Çağaptay. "The AKP's Foreign Policy: The Misnomer of "Neo-Ottomanism" 24 April 2009, <http://changingturkey.com/2009/12/15/the-akps-foreign-policy-the-misnomer-of-neo-ottomanism-by-dr-soner-cagaptay/> (accessed 29 June 2011)

¹²¹ Zeyno Baran., "Torn Country: Turkey between Secularism and Islamism," 19 July 2010, p. 117 http://media.hoover.org/sites/default/files/documents/Torn-Country_Ch5.pdf (accessed 29 June 2011)

¹²² Davutoğlu, "Turkey's Foreign Policy Vision: An Assessment of 2007," p. 79.

¹²³ For further details check Ahmet Davutoğlu, interviewed by Nuh Yılmaz, *Principles of Turkish Foreign Policy*, SETA Foundation's Washington D.C. Branch, (8 December 2009) <http://www.setav.org/ups/dosya/14808.pdf> (accessed 22 June 2011)

on crisis based foreign policy during the Cold War but a vision based on mutual respect, stability, peace and prosperity in all regions. Second methodological systemic framework explains that “vision to one region should not contrast with other regions which is based on continuity.”¹²⁴ “The third methodological principle, is trying to have a new style, in the sense of political rhetoric and tools; an instrument.”¹²⁵ This new style is soft power; Turkey’s new foreign policy aimed to adapt use of soft power which was influenced by the European Union. “Joseph Nye defines “soft power” as “the ability to get what you want through attraction rather than coercion or payments” arising from a countries culture, political ideas and policies, whereas ‘hard power’ is “the ability to coerce” based on a countries military and economic might.”¹²⁶

3.4.1 Balance between Freedom and Security

This principle is one of the important principles of AKP administration and also new international system which means that; “legitimacy of any political regime comes from its ability to provide security to its citizens; this security should not be at the expense of freedoms and human rights in the country.”¹²⁷ In post-Cold War era freedom of states became a mainstream through EU norms and values but 9/11 terrorist attacks in the U.S changed this situation and after this incident states started to bring restrictions to citizens’ freedom in order to increase their national security and protect their citizens against possible terrorist attacks. However Davutoğlu points out that

¹²⁴ Ibid., p. 7.

¹²⁵ Ibid.

¹²⁶ Joseph S. Nye, “Soft Power and American Foreign Policy,” *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol. 119, No.2, (2004) p. 256.

¹²⁷ Davutoğlu, “Turkey’s Foreign Policy Vision: An Assessment of 2007,” p. 79.

“administrations that substantially restrict liberties in order to provide security are or soon become authoritarian regimes.”¹²⁸ So states should establish a balance between national security and freedom of their citizens.

In case of Turkey, since 2002, AKP administration aimed to fulfill Copenhagen political criteria as a candidate state. In addition to this many reforms were adopted for minority rights especially for Kurdish people. Thus, as a result of successful adaptation of reform packages Turkey met EU requirements and accession negotiations started. While Turkey adopted several reform packages it continued to fight with terrorist attacks by PKK in several provinces.¹²⁹ Davutoğlu states that Turkey established a successful balance between freedom and security because while operations took place in several parts of Turkey against terrorism, people do not have any restrictions in their everyday life. In addition to this, during the struggle with PKK “Turkish authorities did not declare state of emergency, elections were not postponed, and the election results did not influence the process in a negative way.”¹³⁰

Today’s Turkish domestic system shows that Turkey did not sacrifice citizen’s freedom in order to increase its security. Davutoğlu said “that they have been able to balance freedom and security so as not to lead to anarchy or autocracy.”¹³¹ Because In today’s world “it is now widely accepted that security without freedom leads to

¹²⁸ Ibid.

¹²⁹ Ibid., p. 80.

¹³⁰ Ibid.

¹³¹ “Turkish Foreign Minister Delivers Inaugural School of Global Affairs and Public Policy Lecture,” 4 March 2010. <http://www.aucegypt.edu/newsatauc/Pages/story.aspx?eid=427> (accessed 22 June 2011)

authoritarianism, and freedom without security invites chaos and instability.”¹³² So Turkey balanced freedom and security because there is not any authoritarian regime or chaos. On the other hand İbrahim Kalın also points out that “Turkey has expanded civil liberties and democratic rights.”¹³³ But “yet it is also true that the fragile balance between security and democracy still needs improvement.”¹³⁴ So in order to establish stronger equilibrium Turkey still needs to improve its democracy and civilian freedoms in order to fully implement this principle.

3.4.2. Zero Problems with Neighbors

Under AKP administration Turkey aimed to improve its relations with all neighbors where Turkey had problems during the previous administrations. Davutoğlu claims that Turkey needed for political and economic restorations because in case of the instability in the region Turkey will pay the price.¹³⁵ When establishing good relations with neighbors through diplomatic and economic ways so it will be easy to preserve stability in all regions. In order to achieve zero problems there is also need for multi-dimensional foreign policy so through trade Turkish economy will be developed and level of conflicts will be settled down. This also means that new fundamental foreign policy principles go hand in hand.

The AKP administration believes that outcome of the successful implementation of this principle is important. In addition to its positive outcomes, Turkey’s good

¹³² Kalın, “Foreign Policy: Continuity and Change,” p. 54.

¹³³ Ibid.

¹³⁴ Ibid.

¹³⁵ “Perspectives on Turkish Foreign Policy.” http://www.brookings.edu/~media/Files/events/2010/1129_turkey/20101129_turkey.pdf (accessed 12 July 2011)

relations with neighbor states will make Turkey a central state. İnan Rûma reminds that having zero problems with neighbors is not a new principle because there was famous phrase describes new early years of republic's policy which is called "peace at home, peace abroad."¹³⁶

With this foreign policy principle Turkey started to play pro-active role in regional problems as a mediator "such as between United States and Iran, Iraq and Syria, Israel and Syria, and Israel and the Palestinians."¹³⁷ This means that Turkey is actively involving in all regions. Moreover, through involving in these regions with this policy Turkey finds a way to normalize or improve its existing relations with all neighbors especially with Arab states.

During 1990s, Turkey spent most of its resources for fighting with terrorist groups; Kurdish Workers Party¹³⁸. Turkish policy makers accused Syria of supporting the Kurdish rebels and hosting PKK leader Abdullah Öcalan in its territory.¹³⁹ in addition to that, following U.S invasion in Iraq, Kurdish problem emerged as a common problem in the region, in 2004 Syrian leader's visit to Ankara was resulted with "a joint statement on the need to protect the territorial integrity of Iraq and the restoration of the stability in the country."¹⁴⁰ Turkey-Syria rapprochement started in 2003 when high level

¹³⁶ Rûma, p. 137.

¹³⁷ Efraim Inbar, "Turkey's strategic partnership with Israel jeopardized," *The Daily Star*, 28 October 2009.

¹³⁸ *Partiya Karkerên Kurdistan or PKK*.

¹³⁹ Christopher Phillips, "Turkey and Syria," 16 June 2011, p. 34 <http://www.tasam.org/en/content/3595/turkey-and-syria.html> (accessed 22 June 2011)

¹⁴⁰ Nikolaos Raptopoulos, "Rediscovering its Arab Neighbors?" The AKP Imprint on Turkish Foreign Policy in the Middle, *Les Cahiers du RMES*, n°1 Juillet (2004) p. 8, <http://www.rmes.be/1-NR1.pdf> (accessed 12 June 2011)

visits started and in early years of the AKP, and relations began to normalize and both states established a relationship which is based on trade and anti-terrorism. From Turkey's perspective, having zero problems with Syria is important because Turkey shares the longest border with Syria.¹⁴¹ At the same time "Syrian border is the opening gate to the Arab world and the Arab world is one of the most prominent export areas of the Turkish trade."¹⁴² Trade partnership grew rapidly between two states, Syria's export to Turkey rose from \$187m in 2006 to \$662m in 2010.¹⁴³

In case of Iran, Turkey and Iran had two important problems even before the AKP administration; there was concern in Turkey that there was an aim to establish a regime to the one similar in Iran which was seen as violation of Turkey's internal affairs. Second problem with Iran was Iran's support for terrorist organizations, Turkey "accused Iran of providing transportation facilities and shelter for the PKK."¹⁴⁴ Turkey and Iran relations started to be improved in 2003 which later turned to economic and educational cooperation. In education cooperation "paved the way for the two countries to share curricula and provided for reciprocal scholarships."¹⁴⁵ in addition to this, Turkey played mediator role with Brazil on Iran's nuclear issue and as a result of this in

¹⁴¹ Ali Semin, "'Road Map' for Turkey's Syria Policy," 5 September 2011, http://www.bilgesam.org/en/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=380:road-map-for-turkeys-syria-policy&catid=77:ortadogu-analizler&Itemid=147 (accessed 12 September 2011)

¹⁴² "Syrian Revolt and Turkey," May 10, 2011. <http://www.sde.org.tr/en/news/1496/syrian-revolt-and-turkey.aspx> (accessed 28 June 2011)

¹⁴³ Phillips, p. 38. <http://www.tasam.org/en/content/3595/turkey-and-syria.html> (accessed 22 June 2011)

¹⁴⁴ Gencer Özcan, "Turkey's Changing Neighborhood Policy," *FES Briefing Paper* (September 2004) p. 9. <http://library.fes.de/pdf-files/iez/50027.pdf> (accessed 10 July 2011)

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

6335th meeting of the UNSC both state voted against Resolution 1929(2010) for implementation of the economic sanctions on Iran.¹⁴⁶

There is significant improvement in relations with Syria and Iran. However with some other states, it has become difficult for Turkey to achieve “zero problems” due to regional conflicts.¹⁴⁷In spite of developing relations with most of the neighbors Turkey was unable to develop its relations with Armenia. Turkey did not have any diplomatic relations with Armenia but relations started to worsen when Armenia started to make pressure on international community to recognize 1915 event as “genocide.” So it becomes difficult for Turkey to implement zero problem policy with Armenia. The “football diplomacy”¹⁴⁸was the first attempt of the normalization of relations it “brought a breakthrough in September 2008 when President Sargsyan of Armenia invited President Gul of Turkey to watch the two countries play a World Cup qualifying match in Yerevan, the capital.”¹⁴⁹As a result of this attempt, Turkey stop isolate Armenia, second important development on Turkey-Armenia relation is; both state agreed to establish diplomatic and economic relations by opening the borders through two agreements in 2009.¹⁵⁰However, normalization attempt of relations interrupted with

¹⁴⁶ “Security Council Imposes Additional Sanctions on Iran,” The Security Council 6335th Meeting, at the United Nations web site <http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2010/sc9948.doc.htm> (accessed 06 September 2011)

¹⁴⁷ Zaur Shiriyev, “Changing Realities and Turkish Realpolitik in the South Caucasus,” March 2011 <http://www.thewashingtonreview.org/articles/changing-realities-and-turkish-realpolitik-in-the-south-caucasus.html> (accessed 26 June 2011)

¹⁴⁸ Tony Halpin, “Last Remnant of the Iron Curtain Set to Fall in Victory for Football Diplomacy”, *The Times*, 14 April 2009.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid.

¹⁵⁰ Arda Baykal “Where are Turkey’s new international relations taking it?” *International Affair of Defense Section*, 2010, p. 9.

Nagorno-Karabakh crisis. These positive developments between Turkey-Armenia relations affect Turkey-Azerbaijan relations but Erdoğan “promised that the border between Turkey and Armenia would not be opened until the end of the occupation of Azeri territories.”¹⁵¹

However, Turkey’s role in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict was criticized by Azerbaijan. According to Samuel Huntington Turkey is perceived as the “torn country”¹⁵² so Turkey suppose to support Azerbaijan against Armenia, for this reason Turkey’s mediator role in Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict threatens Turkey-Azerbaijan relations. In response to Turkey’s mediator role, “Azerbaijan implied that it was no longer prepared to provide Turkey with gas at a discounted price.”¹⁵³ As a result Turkey’s aim to play mediator role and improve its relations with Armenia might expense deterioration of its relations with Azerbaijan. Thereby, if Turkey wants to normalize its relations with Armenia there is need for solving the genocide issue and Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict.

The conflict between Turkey and Israel create instability in the region. In other words, “clashing visions for the region have put the two countries in a position where

¹⁵¹ Mesut Özcan and Ali Resul Usul, “Understanding the “New” Turkish Foreign Policy: Changes within Continuity Is Turkey Departing from the West?” *International Law and Politics*, Vol. 6, No. 21 (2010) p. 132.

¹⁵² Samuel P. Huntington, “The Clash of Civilizations?” *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 72, No. 3, (Summer 1993) p. 42.

¹⁵³ Gareth Winrow, “Turkey, Russia and the Caucasus: Common and Diverging Interests”, *Chatham House*, November (2009) p. 12
<http://www.chathamhouse.org/sites/default/files/public/Research/Europe/bp1109turkey.pdf> (accessed 12 July 2011)

diplomatic crises are almost unavoidable.”¹⁵⁴ Turkey and Israel relations started to crack down during last months of the previous administration; “during Israeli occupations of West Bank towns in April 2002, the firmly secular late Prime Minister Bülent Ecevit characterised Israeli actions as “genocide””.¹⁵⁵ So Turkey-Israeli relations started to decline before AKP administration but Turkey and Israel relations reached to an impasse in last few years of AKP administration, and relations of two former allies started to deteriorate through series of unfortunate events. Escalation of stalemate started with Israel offensive to Gaza, and then it was followed by Davos crisis when Prime Minister Erdoğan left the stage in World Economic Forum, on December 2009. The tension between two allies reached to the peak with the flotilla crisis in May 2010. After the flotilla crisis both state prepared their own inquiry reports which contradicts with each other. So instead of attempting to repair damaged relations both state continue to fight over their inquiry reports which shows that tension between two former allies is not going to settle down soon.

There is also a critic for zero problem policy for being pan-Islamist, moreover claiming that “zero problems” policy was used as mask to cover their Islamic agenda and Turkish foreign policy is drifting from the West to the East. However, Davutoğlu refused pan-Islamist accusations and stated that “Turkey has 12 indirect countries, and only four neighbors are Muslim: Iraq, Syria, Iran and Azerbaijan. The rest are non-

¹⁵⁴ Ufuk Ulutas, “Turkey and Israel in the Aftermath of the Flotilla Crisis.” *Seta Policy Brief*, Brief No. 43, (June 2010) p. 10. <http://www.setav.org/public/HaberDetay.aspx?Dil=tr&hid=32958&q=turkey-and-israel-in-the-aftermath-of-the-flotilla-crisis> (20 June 2011)

¹⁵⁵ “Turkey and the Middle East: Ambitions and Constraints.” *Crisis Group Europe Report*, No. 203, (7 April 2010) p. 7, [http://www.crisisgroup.org/~media/Files/europe/turkey-cyprus/turkey/203%20Turkey%20and%20the%20Middle%20East%20-%20Ambitions%20and%20Constraints.ashx](http://www.crisisgroup.org/~/media/Files/europe/turkey-cyprus/turkey/203%20Turkey%20and%20the%20Middle%20East%20-%20Ambitions%20and%20Constraints.ashx) (20 June 2011)

Muslim, Georgia, Armenia, Russia, Romania, Ukraine, Bulgaria and Greece.”¹⁵⁶ But Soner Çağaptay indicated that “between November 2002 and April 2009, the Turkish foreign minister made at least eight visits to Iran and Syria, while paying only one visit to Azerbaijan.”¹⁵⁷ He also claims that “similarly, between November 2002 and April 2009, the Turkish prime minister made at least seven visits to Qatar and Saudi Arabia, while paying only two to Greece and Bulgaria, Turkey’s two immediate European and Balkan neighbors.”¹⁵⁸ SO he believes that Turkey endeavored to improve its relations with some countries more than other especially Middle Eastern and Muslim countries. In addition, zero problem policy; “goal was clearly very hard to achieve if the neighbors were in conflict with one another,”¹⁵⁹ such as Israel’s conflict with Arab states and territorial dispute between Armenia and Azerbaijan. Thus, due to regional ongoing conflicts Turkey had difficulties to improve its relations with Armenia and former ally Israel.

3.4.3. A New Diplomatic Discourse

This new principle aims “to develop relations with the neighboring regions and beyond”¹⁶⁰ which means to establish peace through diplomacy beyond neighbors and all over the world. So Turkey’s new proactive and vision based foreign policy is valid for

¹⁵⁶Yılmaz, “Principles of Turkish Foreign Policy,” p. 9, <http://www.setav.org/ups/dosya/14808.pdf> (accessed 22 June 2011)

¹⁵⁷ Çağaptay. “The AKP’s Foreign Policy: The Misnomer of “Neo-Ottomanism,” <http://changingturkey.com/2009/12/15/the-akps-foreign-policy-the-misnomer-of-neo-ottomanism-by-dr-soner-cagaptay> (29 June 2011)

¹⁵⁸ Ibid.

¹⁵⁹ William Hale, “Turkey and the Middle East in the ‘New Era’”, *Insight Turkey*, Vol. 11, No. 3 (2009) pp. 156.

¹⁶⁰ Davutoğlu, “Turkey’s Foreign Policy Vision: An Assessment of 2007,” p. 81.

all regions from Caucasus to Balkans, including the Middle East and its vision in any of these regions do not compete with each other. Turkey-EU relations had an impact on Turkey's security focused foreign policy through EU norms, values and reform process. Ahmet Sözen argues that Turkey's shift to soft power can be seen in Cyprus issue, because AKP administration changes its policy to the problem. He describes AKP's shifting policy; ““no solution is the solution in Cyprus” and “status quo in Cyprus is the solution” policies would not be acceptable. Instead, the AKP promised to solve the Cyprus problem by following a less confrontational strategy.”¹⁶¹ Thus Turkish foreign policy shifts to more moderate policy which is based on solution oriented and AKP's new “Cyprus policy was based on a “win-win” strategy.”¹⁶²

One of the other examples for this principle is Turkey's attitude to Sunni-Shia division in Iraq. Turkey got involved in peace talks “but did not take sides in this dangerous division.”¹⁶³ So at the end Turkey developed its relations with both groups. Another example is Turkey's mediator role in Syria-Israel peace talks until Israel's attack to Gaza on December 27, 2008. Davutoğlu emphasizes that “when I say proactive, I also mean preventative, at the same time. If there is a crisis, we shouldn't wait until the tension becomes a high level and even war.”¹⁶⁴ So Turkey impartially involved in conflict resolution process but Turkey's facilitator role failed in Syria-Israel peace track when Israel launched offensive to Gaza without informing Turkey.

¹⁶¹ Sözen, “A Paradigm Shift in Turkish Foreign Policy: Transition and Challenges,” p. 117.

¹⁶² Ibid.

¹⁶³ Ibid.

¹⁶⁴ Yılmaz, “Principles of Turkish Foreign Policy,” p. 11, <http://www.setav.org/ups/dosya/14808.pdf> (accessed 22 June 2011)

Increasing role of Turkey on its neighborhood and world arena by using soft power in conflict resolution is significant. Moreover, use of soft power is important to maintain states national security. Bülent Aras points out Turkey's increasing role in the world;

Turkish politicians promise to contribute security, stability and prosperity in a wide range of territories that go beyond Turkey's immediate neighbourhood, namely Asia and Africa. Turkey's newfound interest in these territories is the result of putting its home affairs in order, gaining self-confidence in international relations, developing a universal vision of foreign policy and seeking a leadership role in world politics.¹⁶⁵

So Turkey's emerging role and involvement beyond its borders aims to make Turkey a global actor. Davutoğlu argues that by spreading all over the world "from Chile to Indonesia, from Africa to Central Asia, and from the EU to the OIC will be part of a holistic approach to foreign policy."¹⁶⁶

3.4.4. Multi-dimensional and Multi-track Policies.

Multi dimensional principle is one of the important principles and based on changing variable of the world politics because as Davutoğlu stated, it is important to follow and adapt changing variables. During the Cold War Turkey felt that it was surrounded by enemies in the region because of the Sèvres syndrome so Turkey's foreign policy making basically based on security issues and the national interest.¹⁶⁷ In addition to this even after the Cold War foreign policy formulations were dominated by national security concerns but in the new millennium this perception started to change.

¹⁶⁵ Aras, "Turkey's Rise in the Greater Middle East: Peace-Building in the Periphery," p. 34. <http://www.bulentaras.com/fp/files/jbnes1.pdf> (accessed 20 July 2011)

¹⁶⁶ Davutoğlu, "Turkey's Foreign Policy Vision: An Assessment of 2007," p. 96.

¹⁶⁷ Kemal Kirişçi, "Turkey's Foreign Policy in Turbulent Times," *Institute for Security Studies-EU*. Chaillot paper No. 92, (September 2006) p. 32 <http://www.iss.europa.eu/uploads/media/cp092.pdf> (accessed 14 July 2011)

The early twenty-first century brought economical and cultural harmonization and rapprochement with neighboring countries.

Fuat Keyman argues that multi dimensional foreign policy is a “link economic dynamism, cultural affinities and geopolitical security together in a way to increase Turkey’s sphere of influence regionally, as well as in world politics.”¹⁶⁸ During the AKP administration security based decision making has changed. As Ziya Öniş and Şuhnaz Yılmaz point out “foreign policy is no longer perceived as a series of bilateral relations or foreign policy moves but as a series of mutually reinforcing and interlocking processes.”¹⁶⁹ When the Cold War was over the international system moved from bipolar to multi-polar system so Turkey aimed to develop its relations with all states such as former enemy Russia which became a new friend through this policy. Consequently, for Turkey Russia became an important trade partners and both states signed several bilateral agreements. Bülent Aras describes developing relations between Turkey and Russia in economical level; “include trade and investments by Turkish and Russian businesspeople, tourism, natural gas purchases, joint pipeline projects, and Russian arms sales.”¹⁷⁰

In addition, AKP administration came to power a year after the global financial crisis and when second financial crisis broke out in 2008, Turkey was affected less than

¹⁶⁸E. Fuat Keyman, “Turkish Foreign Policy in the Era of Global Turmoil: In Search of a Viable and Sustainable Turkish Foreign Policy” *Today’s Zaman*, 3 February 2010 http://www.todayszaman.com/news-200472-159-realistic-proactivism-in-the-era-of-global-turmoil-in-search-of-a-viable-and-sustainable-turkish-foreign-policy.html?&lang=en_us&output=json (accessed 15 July 2011)

¹⁶⁹ Ziya Öniş and Şuhnaz Yılmaz, “Between Europeanization and Euro-Asianism: Foreign Policy Activism in Turkey During the AKP Era,” *Turkish Studies*, Vol. 10. No. 1, 7-24 (March 2009) p. 9.

¹⁷⁰ Bülent Aras, “Turkey and the Russian Federation: An Emerging Multidimensional Partnership”, *SETA Policy Brief*, Brief No. 35, (2009) p. 7.

European countries. AKP administration believes that Turkey's increasing trade agreements with Middle Eastern countries is the most significant factor in this sense. Because the "EU is part of the global economy, therefore the demand from EU to Turkey commodities declined dramatically, it did not decline between Turkey and Egypt and Iran, and Syria."¹⁷¹ Therefore Turkey's new multi dimensional policy is not only based on security but also an economic and political developments and Turkey's economic relations with the MENA through multi-dimensional policy improves its economy.

On the other hand, the involvement of big business companies in other countries in economical level is another striking change in Turkish foreign policy which is called multi-track policy. Business companies wanted to benefit from European market so they made pressure on government which returned on positively with opening accession negotiations between Turkey and EU.¹⁷² These new transnational actors also help to improve Turkey's economic relations with other states. "Business organizations, civil society, intellectuals, think-tanks, and other actors now provide input into the foreign policymaking process."¹⁷³ During AKP era this new policy encourages business companies to participate in political decision. "Foreign policy is no longer monopolized by a limited number of state actors"¹⁷⁴ instead NGO's gain importance and started to

¹⁷¹ Yılmaz, "Principles of Turkish Foreign Policy," p. 15 <http://www.setav.org/ups/dosya/14808.pdf> (accessed 22 June 2011)

¹⁷² Sözen, "A Paradigm Shift in Turkish Foreign Policy: Transition and Challenges," p. 117.

¹⁷³ Bülent Aras, "The Davutoğlu Era in Turkish Foreign Policy," *Insight Turkey*, Vol.11, No. 3, (2009).

¹⁷⁴ Ziya Öniş, "Recent Foreign Policy Attitudes in Turkey: How to Reverse the Gradual Shift away from Europeanization?" *DISS Brief* (November 2008) p. 2 <http://www.diis.dk/graphics/Publications/Briefs2008/Recent%20Foreign%20Policy%20Attitudes%20in%20Turkey.pdf> (accessed 12 July 2011)

play active role in decision making “like TÜSİAD (Turkish Industrialists ‘and Businessmen’s Association).”¹⁷⁵ In addition to that, some of the other business companies such as “ENKA and Alarko are involved in enormous construction projects in former Soviet states.”¹⁷⁶

3.4.5. Rhythmic Diplomacy

This new foreign policy principle can be described as; an “active involvement in all global and international issues, in all international organizations.”¹⁷⁷ When AKP administration came to power it was busy with several domestic and external problems such as post-financial crisis, Cyprus problem, and Iraq dilemma but despite of all these crisis situations Turkey visited several countries and also there were many official visits to Turkey. So uncertainties in Turkey’s internal affairs and crisis situation did not stop AKP administration aim to integrate Turkey with rest of the world and administration made several official visits in many countries. Bülent Aras lists Turkey’s involvement in world politics as following;

Turkey hosts major summits of international organizations ranging from the Water Forum and the Least Developed Countries to the Caribbean Community. Turkey also hosts direct and indirect talks between the sides of disputes from the Middle East to the Eurasian steppes. Recent examples include the indirect talks between Israel and Syria and the direct negotiations between Afghanistan and Pakistan. Turkey also has acquired a non-permanent seat in UN Security Council, and an observer status in the African Union, the Arab League, the Association of Caribbean States (ACS) and the Organization of the American States (OAS). Turkey’s development assistance exceeded 700 million USD in 2008 and Turkey is emerging as a donor country in the United Nations.”¹⁷⁸

¹⁷⁵ Sözen, “A Paradigm Shift in Turkish Foreign Policy: Transition and Challenges,” p. 117.

¹⁷⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷⁷ Yılmaz, “Principles of Turkish Foreign Policy,” p. 12, <http://www.setav.org/ups/dosya/14808.pdf> (accessed 22 June 2011)

¹⁷⁸ Aras, “The Davutoğlu Era in Turkish Foreign Policy,” http://www.stratim.org.tr/files/downloads/reports/rapor_setav.pdf (accessed 27 June 2011)

Davutoğlu emphasizes that all these developments are the result of the Turkey's proactive diplomacy and fruit of new foreign policy principles. In addition to this, relations with Africa did not remain in the level of bureaucracy; it started in societal level and cooperation started between different business companies. Turkey's involvement in Africa is "one of Turkey's business confederations, TUSKON (Confederation of Businessman and Industrialists of Turkey), in conformity with the new Africa policy, has taken the initiative to organize the Africa summit, bringing high numbers of African ministers to Turkey."¹⁷⁹ So Turkey under AKP administration gained influence on international organizations. Sometimes it involved actively (non-permanent UNSC membership) and sometimes in observer status (such as its observer status in African Union and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation). In addition to high level visits Turkey is also involved in global issues and proved its global awareness. The success of this principle is important for continuation of Turkish foreign policy and Davutoğlu emphasizes that "Turkey's aim is to intervene consistently in global issues using international platforms, which signifies a transformation for Turkey from a central country to a global power."¹⁸⁰

¹⁷⁹ Davutoğlu, "Turkey's Foreign Policy Vision: An Assessment of 2007," p. 83.

¹⁸⁰ Ibid.

Chapter 4

EXTERNAL AND DOMESTIC CHALLENGES AGAINST NEW FOREIGN POLICY PRINCIPLES

This chapter examines domestic and external challenges against the new foreign policy principles of AKP administration since 2002. The fundamental question in this chapter is addressing how domestic and external challenges have prevented and are still preventing successful implementation of these principles to become ingrained in Turkish political system. While trying to implement new foreign policy principles Turkey also has to deal with domestic and external challenges. These challenges might prevent AKP administration goal to make Turkey a global actor by 2023. Third term of AKP administration will be more difficult than first two because of the tension in the Middle East, EU membership, the Kurdish issue, civil-military relations, as well as drafting a new constitution in general.

4.1 External Challenges

The international system plays a vital role in foreign policy decisions. So Turkey's relationship with the rest of the world is important. There are crucial external challenges against Turkey's new foreign policy principles and their successful implementation. This part examines two of these challenges. First one is; some of the EU member states' opposition to Turkey's full membership and second one is; the

ongoing uprisings in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA). These two external challenges are important because first challenge prevent Turkey's integration with European countries on the other hand ongoing uprisings directly challenge Turkey's security and its economic and diplomatic relations in the region.

4.1.1 New Dynamics in Turkey-EU Relations: Some of the EU Member States' Oppositions to Turkey's Membership

Europeanization process started in Turkey with political reforms, constitutional amendments and domestic changes as a response to the requirement for the EU accession. During the reform process nine reform packages were adopted which were required amendments in different laws. All these processes lead to the beginning of the accession negotiations. Ironically, in 2005 AKP government lost its enthusiasm about EU membership when some of EU member states blocked some of the negotiation chapter such as France, Germany and Cyprus, and as a result "political reform has basically stopped"¹⁸¹ in Turkey.

One of the important reasons of this loss of the enthusiasm is opposition of some of the EU member states to Turkey's membership. Ziya Öniş argues that the EU treatment to Turkey is unfair because unlike other candidate states the EU aimed to impose "permanent safeguards on full labor mobility following Turkey's accession to the EU as a full member."¹⁸² On the other hand, there is "temporary safeguard on labor mobility, such as the seven year transition period on the new Eastern European

¹⁸¹ Katinka Barysch, "Can Turkey combine EU accession and regional leadership?" *Centre for European Reform, Policy Brief* (January 2010) p. 4. http://www.turquie-news.fr/IMG/pdf/turkey_25jan10.pdf (accessed 14 July 2011)

¹⁸² Öniş, "Turkey-EU Relations: Beyond the Current Stalemate," p. 41.

members.”¹⁸³ This means that labor mobility issue has become one of the main concerns of EU member states which in return created opposition to EU membership in Turkey. In addition to labor mobility issue, because of the financial crisis during 2008 and 2009 EU member states are concerned that Turkey’s accession will lead to further unemployment due to increased Turkish immigration. Moreover, Europe is also skeptical about Turkey and they have concerns and fears, “these fears are based on the expectation that Turkish accession will serve to fragment Europe and jeopardize its further cohesion and governability.”¹⁸⁴

In addition to this, other reason behind failure of the reforms is related with Kurdish minority rights because large part of the public opinion in Turkey opposes to reforms for Kurdish people. There is “strong resistance from the nationalist circles which tended to view such reforms as an existentialist threat to the unity of the Turkish state.”¹⁸⁵ Under EU conditionality many reforms took place in Kurdish issue; “as regards cultural rights, the Regulation on the Radio and Television Supreme Council (RTUK) was amended in November, removing all restrictions on broadcasting in Kurdish and other languages by private and public channels at local level.”¹⁸⁶ These reforms were followed by Kurdish opening in 2009 but it was slowed down because of the negative public reactions and increasing terrorist activities. Thus, EU conditionality and further

¹⁸³ Ibid.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid., p. 45

¹⁸⁵ Ibid., p. 39.

¹⁸⁶ Turkey 2010 Progress Report, Commission staff working document, SEC(2010) 1327, EN, COM(2010) 660, p. 32, http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key_documents/2010/package/tr_rapport_2010_en.pdf (accessed 6 September 2011)

reforms cause division in society against Kurdish reforms under the minority reform process.

French President Nicolas Sarkozy openly stated that France is against Turkey's full membership and his visits in early 2011 as president of G-20 increased tension between Turkey and France. Nicolas Sarkozy visited Turkey on February 2011 only for couple of hours, not as president of France but as G-20 president.¹⁸⁷ Şule Kulu Yılmaz points out that Sarkozy "has avoided visiting Turkey since his election as the president of France in 2007."¹⁸⁸ Şebnem Arsu and Steven Erlanger state Sarkozy's special offer to Turkey; "between accession and partnership, which Turkey says it does not accept, there is a path of equilibrium that we can find"¹⁸⁹ so he clearly claims that France might accept only special partnership with Turkey but not full membership.

There are many important reasons behind worsening Turkey-EU relations but in here three of them were analyzed. First factor is Turkey's domestic politics. In domestic politics the main reason lies on suspicion on secret coup plans against democratically elected AKP government. A series of arrests took place against military officers, academics, authors...etc. in the light of Ergenekon case by accusing them to make plans to overthrow government. These developments affected Turkey-EU relations because it is perceived by EU as sign of instability in domestic politics.

¹⁸⁷ Şule Kulu Yılmaz, "Sarkozy's Low Profile Visit to Turkey," *Today's Zaman*, 26 February 2011.) <http://www.todayszaman.com/columnist-236659-sarkozys-low-profile-visit-to-turkey.html> (accessed 13 July 2011)

¹⁸⁸ Ibid.

¹⁸⁹ Şebnem Arsu and Steven Erlanger, "Sarkozy is criticized on a visit to Turkey," *The New York Times*, 25 February 2011. <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/02/26/world/europe/26turkey.html> (accessed 10 June 2011)

“Second factor is about the EU itself and has created backlash in Turkish public opinion.”¹⁹⁰ Some of the EU member states oppositions, because although Turkey fulfills Copenhagen criteria some EU members do not want to accept Turkey as a full member, so this situation created negative impact on Turkish public opinion. In Turkey, public opinion turned against EU membership especially in the second term of the AKP general elections, it was clear that almost half of the Turkish population supported AKP’s policy retarding the EU process. In addition to this, “Nicholas Sarkozy even took it further and said that Turkey cannot be an EU member even though it meets all the requirements.”¹⁹¹

As documented by the German Marshall Fund’s 2010 Transatlantic Trends survey, majority of Turkish population do not believe that Turkey will join the EU. According to 2011 GMF survey result in 2010 only 38 percent believes that Turkey will join EU.¹⁹² Ziya Öniş underlined that “the AKP government has been reacting to the changing nature of public opinion.”¹⁹³ Otherwise it becomes more difficult to establish assertive foreign policy towards EU while public opinion declines towards EU membership.

“France and Germany in the very core of the EU, has helped to create a serious nationalistic backlash in Turkey and strengthened the hands of anti-EU, anti-reform

¹⁹⁰Öztürk, p. 2.
http://www.bilgesam.org/en/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=226:turkish-foreign-&lang=en_us&output=json (accessed 08 July 2011)

¹⁹¹Ibid.

¹⁹² Ersin Kalaycıoğlu, “Turkey’s view of the European Union in 2011,” The German Marshall Fund of the United States (21 September 2011) p. 1
http://www.gmfus.org/galleries/ct_publication_attachments/Kalaycioglu_TT2011Results_Sept11.pdf (accessed 23 September 2011)

¹⁹³Öniş, “Multiple Faces,” p. 54.

groups both within the state and society at large.”¹⁹⁴The voting weight in European Union related with countries population and France and Germany are the most populous countries and both countries have important impact on decision making in EU politics. So strong oppositions from France and Germany had negative impact on Turkish public opinion and this situation affects formulation of Turkey’s foreign policy decisions.

Germany Chancellor Angela Merkel agrees with French president about Turkey’s special partnership and she said that Turkey should receive “privileged partnership”¹⁹⁵ instead of full membership. The AKP administration criticizes France and Germany’s reaction and strongly opposed this kind of offer for EU membership.

Third obstacle in Turkey’s EU membership is the Cyprus problem. Due to the Cyprus conflict five of the negotiations chapter were blocked by the Republic of Cyprus including; energy chapter and the Justice, Freedom and Security chapter. Egemen Bağış, Turkey’s Minister for EU Affairs, claims that justice, freedom and security “chapter is a barrier in taking action against illegal immigration which is a common problem experienced by all the EU countries.”¹⁹⁶On the other hand, Davutoğlu clearly states that “if Greek Cypriot side takes on the EU presidency in 2012 before finding comprehensive solution for Cyprus conflict Turkey-EU relations would freeze.”¹⁹⁷As Ahmet Sözen pointed out in Cyprus conflict inter-communal talks between Greek and

¹⁹⁴ Öniş, “Recent Foreign Policy Attitudes in Turkey,” p. 3.

¹⁹⁵ Ian Traynor, “Angela Merkel’s Ankara Visit Tense after Claims of Hatred towards Turks,” *The Guardian*, 29 March 2010.

¹⁹⁶ Egemen Bağış, “Turkey’s EU Membership Process: Prospects and Challenges,” Bruges: College of Europe, EU Diplomacy Papers (May 2010) p. 4. http://aei.pitt.edu/13212/1/EDP_5_2010_Bagis.pdf (accessed 12 July 2011)

¹⁹⁷ “Turkey may freeze EU ties,” *Hurriyet Daily News*, 13 July 2011. <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/n.php?n=turkey-may-freeze-eu-ties-2011-07-13> (accessed 15 July 2011)

Turkish side had significant progress on some negotiated dossiers but real responsibility is on the shoulder of the Prime Minister Erdoğan. He claims that Erdoğan is the key person in solution and finding a comprehensive solution in Cyprus, if Turkey reaches solution before 2012 it will strengthen AKP's hand in internal and external politics.¹⁹⁸

To sum up, some of the EU member states' strong opposition to Turkey's EU membership weakened implementation of foreign policy principles such as "multi-dimensional" and "zero problems" policies. The loss of inspiration for EU membership also affected Turkey's economic relations with European states because anti-Europeanism in Turkey affects Turkish companies so they prefer to trade and invest in other countries such as Middle Eastern states instead of the EU member states. Therefore AKP administration "multi-dimensional and multi-track policies" could not implemented successfully in Europe. On the other hand lack of comprehensive solution on Cyprus issue affects Turkey's EU membership and make impossible to reach zero problem with Republic of Cyprus. These obstacles also prevent Turkey to integrate with Europe and its aims to be a global player.

4.1.2 Popular Uprisings in the Middle East and North Africa

The popular Uprisings started in Tunisia and spread to other authoritarian regimes in Arab world such as Egypt, Libya, Yemen and Syria. There are many reasons behind these uprisings Timo Behr and Mika Aaltola state that main reason of these uprisings are "deteriorating living standards and growing inequality (an economic deficit), a lack of political freedoms and public accountability (a political deficit), and

¹⁹⁸ Şahin Alpay, "Çözerse Başbakan Erdoğan Çözer," *Zaman*, 16 July 2011. <http://www.zaman.com.tr/yazar.do?yazino=1158786> (accessed 22 July 2011)

the alienation of the demographically dominant age cohorts from the political order (a dignity deficit).”¹⁹⁹

So these ongoing uprisings created unexpected threat to Turkey’s security and also political and economic relations in Arab neighborhood in which Turkey had good political and economic relations through its foreign policy principles. Herewith, deep political and economic relations put Turkey in a difficult position and Turkey had difficulties to respond to these uprisings. Meliha Benli Altunışık underlined that “Turkey’s response becomes more complex as Turkey’s interests are at stake.”²⁰⁰ Turkey developed its relations with neighboring states in the light of its new foreign policy principles such as multi-dimensional policy and zero problem policy which are based on Turkey’s national interest. Thus, Turkey’s economic ties through multi-dimensional policy and good diplomatic relations in the MENA were challenged by unexpected uprisings.

Turkey established successful economic and diplomatic relations with elites in Arab world. Ben Birnbaum argues that Arab spring is a test for Turkish foreign policy because until uprisings Turkey used to work with these authoritarian regimes in the Arab world.²⁰¹

¹⁹⁹ Timo Behr and Mika Aaltola, “The Arab Uprising: Causes, Prospects and Implications,” *FIIA Briefing Paper*, No. 76 (March 2011) p. 2. www.fiaa.fi/assets/publications/bp76.pdf (accessed 12 July 2011)

²⁰⁰ Meliha Benli Altunışık, “Challenges to Turkey’s “Soft Power” in the Middle East,” *Turkish Economic and Social Studies Foundation (TESEV) Publications*, (June 2011) p. 3 http://www.tesev.org.tr/UD_OBJS/PDF/DPT/OD/YYN/Meliha_Altunisik_FINAL.pdf?&lang=en_us&output=json (accessed on 10 July 2011)

²⁰¹ Ben Birnbaum, “Turkish Policy Advisor: Turkey is Shaping the Arab World,” *The Washington Times*, 23 June 2011.

AKP's new neighborhood foreign policy was based on good economic ties, as Henry Barkey underlined: "expanding export markets has always been at the forefront of its opening to the Middle East."²⁰²In addition to that, Meliha Benli Altunışık points out that Libya is important country for Turkish economy because of its "source of crude oil as well as for the construction contracts of Turkish businesses which amounted to approximately 20 billion USD."²⁰³Ongoing uprising in Libya costs Turkey billions of dollars and risked Turkey's investments and future economic relations with Libya.

Fatma Demirelli underlines that "situation is even more complicated as the wave of unrest hit Libya, a country home to 25,000 Turkish citizens, some of whom run business projects worth \$15 billion."²⁰⁴Libyan leader Qaddafi's use of force against its own civilian population created dilemma in Turkish foreign policy because there is strong trade partnership with Libya and losing this relation will be more costly. "Thus, Ankara opposed the imposition of a no fly-zone-even after the Arab league, the Organization of Islamic Conference, the Gulf Cooperation Council, and much of regional public opinion declared their support for it."²⁰⁵On the other hand, Turkey got stuck between national interest and international responsibility, which put Turkey in a

²⁰²Henry J. Barkey, "Winners and Losers in Turkey's Election," 13 June 2011, <http://carnegieendowment.org/2011/06/13/winners-and-losers-in-turkey-s-election/29g> (accessed 02 July 2011)

²⁰³Altunışık, "Challenges to Turkey's "Soft Power" in the Middle East," http://www.tesev.org.tr/UD_OBJS/PDF/DPT/OD/YYN/Meliha_Altunisik_FINAL.pdf?&lang=en_us&output=json (accessed on 10 July 2011)

²⁰⁴ Fatma Demirelli, "Turkey in Minefield as Popular Uprisings Engulf Arab World," *Today's Zaman*, 21 February 2011 http://www.globalrights.it/world/africa/1192-turkey-in-minefield-as-popular-uprisings-engulf-arab-world-.html?&lang=en_us&output=json (accessed 27 June 2011)

²⁰⁵ Paul Salem, "Turkey's Image in the Arab World," *Turkish Economic and Social Studies Foundation (TESEV) Publications* (May 2011) http://www.tesev.org.tr/UD_OBJS/PDF/DPT/OD/YYN/Paul_Salem_FINAL.pdf?&lang=en_us&output=json (accessed 20 July 2011)

very difficult position because either supporting the regime or opposing international organization's impositions will be costly for Turkey.

On the other hand, uprising in Syria did not challenge Turkey only economically but created risk of refugee flow from Syria to Turkey. Due to successful foreign policy implementations Syria and Turkey relations normalized during the AKP administration and "bilateral trade has more than tripled, reaching \$2.5 billion in 2010, and the two countries have introduced a visa-free travel regime for their citizens."²⁰⁶ Ömer Taşpınar states that "thousands of Syrian refugees are crossing the border with Turkey, this situation is putting a lot of pressure on Turkey's shoulders."²⁰⁷ AKP administration called Syria to stop use of force on its citizens and take reforms. "The response of the Syrian regime so far has been unhelpful and disappointing, prompting PM Erdogan to call recent attacks by Syrian forces "savagery" and "inhumane."²⁰⁸ In case of Syria Turkey is in the edge of most difficult decision because;

The current Syrian uprising brought this burgeoning strategic partnership to a screeching halt. Predominantly Sunni Turkey, especially because of the conservative and Islamist pedigree of the AKP, could not stand idly by as al-Assad, who heads a minority Alawite regime, massacred fellow Sunnis. Turkey also has to contend with the possibility that lasting chaos in northwest Syria would allow Kurdish militants to use the region as a base of operations against it. Such developments not only pose a serious security threat along Turkey's

²⁰⁶ Sibel Utku Bila, "Turkey to ratchet up pressure on Assad for reforms," *The Daily Star*, 28 April 2011, http://www.dailystar.com.lb/Apr/28/Turkey-to-ratchet-up-pressure-on-Assad-for-reforms.ashx?&lang=en_us&output=json#axzz1ZY0sTHtv (accessed 12 July 2011)

²⁰⁷ Ömer Taşpınar, "Third One is the Charm: Will AKP's Victory Finally Lead to a New Constitution in Turkey?" (16 June 2011) http://www.brookings.edu/papers/2011/0616_turkey_taspinar.aspx?&lang=en_us&output=json (accessed 2 July 2011)

²⁰⁸ İbrahim Kalın, "A Triumph for Turkish Democracy," *Aljazeera*, 13 June 2011 http://english.aljazeera.net/indepth/opinion/2011/06/201161310911608762.html?&lang=en_us&output=json (accessed 25 June 2011)

borders, but potentially undercut the AKP's domestic standing ahead of a general election.²⁰⁹

Protests and uprisings in Syria is pushing Turkey to take difficult decisions and it seems like Turkey is going to be the losing side in both decision. Turkey's first option is supporting to repress Syrian regime but even if Assad stays in power "Turkey would still have lost face in the eyes of the international community as its efforts to convince Assad to meet some of the protesters' demands were rebuffed, revealing that Turkey has no real influence over the Assad regime."²¹⁰ On the other hand if it chooses to take side on international community and overthrow Assad regime that might give opportunity for PKK to use Syrian territories for their attacks and also might end Turkey-Syria diplomatic and economic relations.

At the same time, Arab uprisings bring another question to the agenda; Turkish model for Arab countries. Before the uprisings Marco Vicenzino wrote that Turkey could be an inspiration for Arab states but not a model because "Turkey is still evolving democratically."²¹¹ On the other hand, after the uprisings İbrahim Kalın underlined in Turkish Economic and Social Studies Foundation (TESEV) survey on Turkey's role in the MENA. "Turkey is perceived as a positive actor and a rising power among the

²⁰⁹ Firas Maksad and Soner Çağaptay, "Uncomfortable Ottomans," *Hurriyet Daily News*, 9 June 2011. http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/n.php?n=uncomfortable-ottomans-2011-06-09&lang=en_us&output=json (accessed 15 June 2011)

²¹⁰ Simon A. Waldman, "Turkey and the Arab Spring: Strategic Depth Becomes Strategic Abyss," *Hurriyet Daily News*, 18 May 2011.

²¹¹ Marco Vicenzino, "Can Turkey Show Arab States the Way to a Brighter Future," *The Guardian*, 12 December 2010. <http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2010/dec/12/turkey-arab-states-guidance-middle-east> (accessed 17 July 2011)

peoples of the Middle East.”²¹² So results shows that Turkey as a secular country which is also Muslim and democratic has successful diplomacy with its neighbors in the MENA in recent years and these qualifications make Turkey popular in the region as role model. “Moreover, 66 percent believe that Turkey can be a model for other countries, and the main reason mentioned (again 66 percent) is that Turkey has been able to reconcile Islam and democracy.”²¹³

To sum up, popular uprising in MENA caused important security concerns in Turkey because unlike other NATO member states, who involve missions in these uprisings, “Turkey has to take extra measures to guard its border with Syria against an influx of illegal immigrants and refugees and more importantly against infiltration of terrorists and suicide bombers.”²¹⁴ So Turkey had to pay higher costs than the other NATO members for the Arab uprisings both in terms of economy and security. Altunışık underlines that “peaceful and controlled transition is the best option for Turkey.”²¹⁵ In addition to this “the future of the Middle East is not certain. This

²¹² İbrahim Kalın, “Is Turkey a Model for Arab World,” 11 February 2011, http://www.turkishpress.com/news.asp?r=98.6043248919561&svr=2&lang=en_us&id=364066&output=json (accessed 12 July 2011)

²¹³ Ibid.

²¹⁴ Sema Kalaycıoğlu, “Turkey will stay the course, whoever wins in the Arab revolts,” *The Daily Star*, 13 June 2011 http://www.dailystar.com.lb/Opinion/Commentary/2011/Jun-13/Turkey-will-stay-the-course-whoever-wins-in-the-Arab-revolts.ashx?&lang=en_us&output=json#axzz1ZY0sTHtv (accessed 2 July 2011).

²¹⁵ Altunışık, “Challenges to Turkey’s “Soft Power” in the Middle East,” http://www.tesev.org.tr/UD_OBJS/PDF/DPT/OD/YYN/Meliha_Altunisik_FINAL.pdf?&lang=en_us&output=json (accessed on 10 July 2011)

uncertainty presents difficulties for Turkey and yet requires more active involvement preferably by engaging other actors.”²¹⁶

4.2 Domestic Challenges

In states, domestic problems or developments whether cultural or economic, have impact on shaping foreign policy. Elisabetta Brighi and Christopher Hill point out that there are two important components for successful domestic politics.

To begin with, implementation presupposes not only the capacity to pursue goals with effective means but more generally the ability of governments to extract and mobilize resources from their audiences...Secondly, but relatedly, at least in democratic societies the 'domestic' enters the picture of implementation in the form of the *consensus*...if consensus breaks down entirely, a crisis can erupt to threaten not only the foreign policy in action, but the survival of the government itself.²¹⁷

What is happening within the state is important because due to domestic problems state might fail to focus on foreign policy priorities and this limits its ability to implement successful policies. The public opinion and consensus any of political parties is also important because if ruling party has serious problems with opposition parties it becomes difficult to achieve consensus almost in all issues. In case of Turkey, this is one of the important problems especially for drafting a new constitution.

Fuat Keyman underlines that in order to implement successful proactive and multidimensional foreign policy there is need for stability in domestic politics. Thus, civil-military relation and Kurdish question increased political and social instability in Turkey. The “key issue here is that of democratic consolidation, and its lack in Turkish

²¹⁶Altunışık, “Challenges to Turkey’s “Soft Power” in the Middle East,” http://www.tesev.org.tr/UD_OBJS/PDF/DPT/OD/YYN/Meliha_Altunisik_FINAL.pdf?&lang=en_us&output=json (accessed on 10 July 2011)

²¹⁷ Elisabetta Brighi and Christopher Hill, “Implementation and Behavior,” Chapter 7, p. 125 http://cursos.puc.cl/icp5422-1/almacen/1300473287_plombare_sec3_pos0.PDF (accessed 02 July 2011)

politics.”²¹⁸ There are many domestic challenges against AKP’s new foreign policy principles. Here, domestic challenges can be categorized under two main arguments. First one is normalization of civil-military relations in Turkish politics which also points out growing distance between secular and Islamist part in Turkish society. This part questions the role of the military, the Ergenekon case and new constitution in the light of civil-military relations and its impacts on foreign policy decisions.

Second challenge is Kurdish problem where I question whether the AKP administration is able to draft a new constitution and solve the Kurdish issue democratically. These two challenges create instability and lack of cohesion in domestic politics so without solving these problems it will be difficult for AKP administration to focus and follow successful foreign policy vision.

4.2.1 Normalization of Civil-Military Relations in Turkish Politics

The Republic of Turkey was established by a military general, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, so “the military sees itself as the defender of the secular legacy of Mustafa Kemal Ataturk.”²¹⁹ İlhan Uzgel argues that since 1960 a “series of military interventions have determined the progress of the Turkish political system and have had significant implications for the civil-military relations and the role of the military as decision-makers in domestic and foreign policy.”²²⁰ Military interventions took place in

²¹⁸E. Fuat Keyman, “Turkish Foreign Policy in the Era of Global Turmoil: In Search of a Viable and Sustainable Turkish Foreign Policy” *Today’s Zaman*, 3 February 2010 http://www.todayszaman.com/news-200472-159-realistic-proactivism-in-the-era-of-global-turmoil-in-search-of-a-viable-and-sustainable-turkish-foreign-policy.html?&lang=en_us&output=json (accessed 15 July 2011)

²¹⁹ Sabrina Tavernise, “Turkish presidential candidate withdraws, as voting stalls again,” *The New York Times*, 7 May 2007.

²²⁰ İlhan Uzgel, “Between Praetorianism and Democracy: The Role of the Military in Turkish Foreign Policy,” *The Turkish Yearbook*, Vol. 34 (2003) p. 181.

1960, semi-coup in 1971, 1980 and post-modern coup in 1997. “During AKP administration, the military has shown signs of retreat from politics due to a combination of domestic and international developments.”²²¹

In post-Cold war period, military’s role became more active especially after First Gulf War because of the threat perceptions such as Kurdish and Islamist threats. Kurdish threat started to increase as a result of the First Gulf War crisis on Turkey’s border. On the other hand, Islamist threat to the secular Turkish Republic emerged with rise of the Islamist Welfare Party (*Refah Partisi*). Military increased its role in that periods to prevent Kurdish and Islamist threat because as İlhan Uzgel argues that military intervened in domestic instabilities reason behind this was inability of the “civilian politicians to cope with the political and economic crises and political corruption in this period.”²²²

However, the role of the military started to be challenged by EU in 1999 when Turkey declared as candidate state. The EU conditionality and necessary criteria started to challenge military’s role in Turkish politics. Çağrı Yıldırım states that “although the democratizing of civil-military relations are not directly mentioned in the Copenhagen criteria, the military as an institution should be subordinate to the political criteria.”²²³ So there was a need for taking democratic control of military under

²²¹ Uzgel, p. 178.

²²² For Further details see İlhan Uzgel, “Between Praetorianism and Democracy: The Role of the Military in Turkish Foreign Policy,” *The Turkish Yearbook*, Vol. 34 (2003) p. 184.

²²³ Çağrı Yıldırım, “The Role of the Military in Turkish Politics and European Union Membership Negotiations,” December 2, 2010 http://www.balkananalysis.com/turkey/2010/12/02/the-role-of-the-military-in-turkish-politics-and-european-union-membership-negotiations/?lang=en_us&output=json (accessed 1 June 2011)

civilians' authority. Because taking military under civilian control matters for democracy and in this way decisions will be taken by civilians who are elected by people rather than military leaders. In the EU reforms "civil-military relations can be divided into four parts; "the transformation of the role and composition of the National Security Council; the transparency of the defense budget; the removal of the military representatives from the civilian boards; and an amendment concerning military courts."²²⁴ Under the EU criteria many reforms in civil-military issue took place in order to decrease the power of the military from Turkish political system. Through harmonization packages reforms are adopted in the military and most of the amendments aim to reduce military's role from politics.

"The EU harmonization packages aimed to diminish the NSC's influence on the education and art and broadcasting policies,"²²⁵ In addition, many restrictions are imposed on military and defense policy budgets. Moreover, a military intervention's legal justification has changed with EU reforms because before the reform; "Article 35 of the TSK's Internal Service Law, which gives the military a self-imposed role of defending the secular republic in this overwhelmingly Muslim nation, is used by the military as justification for staging coups."²²⁶ On the other hand after EU reform on military issues "military and civil reforms made as part of Turkey's bid to become a

²²⁴ Ibid.

²²⁵ Ayşe Nilufer Narli, "Aligning Civil-Military Relations in Turkey: Transparency Building in Defense Sector and the EU Reforms," p. 167 (6 October 2004) http://www.bmlv.gv.at/pdf_pool/publikationen/10_wg9_taf_110.pdf (accessed 05 July 2011)

²²⁶ Lale Sarıbrahimoğlu, "Turkey's civil-military relations continue to remain under strain," *Today's Zaman*, 26 April 2009. http://www.todayszaman.com/newsDetail_getNewsById.action?load=detay&link=173533&lang=en_us&output=json (accessed 26 July 2011)

member of the European Union have diminished the military's de facto basis for staging coups”²²⁷

In AKP's third term new constitution will be on the agenda because Turkey still uses 1982 constitution which was written right after the coup d'état by military personnel and it was amended many times. “Since the establishment of the Turkish Republic, four constitutions have been adopted (1921, 1924, 1961, and 1982).”²²⁸“The last two constitutions were drafted in the aftermath of military interventions, and none of them have been produced out of negotiation, bargaining or a compromise process.”²²⁹

İbrahim Kalın argues that in the current constitution individuals suffer from lack of democracy and civil liberties and amendments on the constitution was not enough “and cannot meet the demands of Turkey in the 21st century.”²³⁰So writing a new constitution aims to cover all these deficits and take military under the civilian control.

On the other hand difficulties occurred in achieving a new constitution for AKP administration because in order to write a new constitution without consulting other parties because AKP failed to get enough seats to draft constitution without consulting other parties.

Richard Falk and Hilal Elver underline that issue and claim that “the AKP will not be able to produce a constitution without the cooperation of the other parties

²²⁷ Ibid.

²²⁸ Selin M. Bölme and Taha Özhan, “Constitutional Referendum in Turkey,” SETA Policy Brief, Brief No. 47 (August 2010) p. 3, <http://www.setav.org/Ups/dosya/44512.pdf> (accessed 15 July 2011)

²²⁹ Ibid.

²³⁰ Kalin, “A Triumph for Turkish Democracy” http://english.aljazeera.net/indepth/opinion/2011/06/201161310911608762.html?&lang=en_us&output=ison (accessed 25 June 2011)

represented in the parliament, especially the CHP.”²³¹ Since the AKP came to power there was tension with opposition party CHP which sometimes was labeled as secularism vs. Islamism because while AKP generally represents religious part of the society CHP represents secularist and Kemalist part. This issue will create vital obstacles for AKP for drafting the new constitution because in order to reach an agreement with CHP, the ruling party needs to resolve domestic division in Turkish society. The problem between “Islamist and the secularist segments of Turkish society has reached unprecedented proportions since the 2007 presidential election crisis and threatened social cohesion and the functionality of the state.”²³²

Many protests took place in Turkey to prevent Abdullah Gül’s presidency. Soundly secular President Necdet Sezer “has warned the country's secular system faces its greatest threat since the founding of the republic in 1923.”²³³ “The military tried to change the AKP's decision to present the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Abdullah Gül, as its presidential candidate”²³⁴ because military started to be concerned about future of the armed forces and secular identity of republic. “Former Chief of General staff Yaşar Büyükanıt remarked that the presidential elections are directly related to military concerns because the president is the Commander in Chief of the Turkish Armed

²³¹ Richard Falk and Hilal Elver, “Celebrating the AKP Victory,” Aljazeera, 14 June 2011. <http://english.aljazeera.net/indepth/opinion/2011/06/20116138190522760.html> (accessed 17 July 2011)

²³² Grigoriadis, p. 5

²³³ Sarah Rainsord, “Turkey’s secularism ‘threatened’” *BBC News*, 13 April 2007. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/6554099.stm> (accessed 16 June 2011)

²³⁴ Şule Toktaş and Ümit Kurt, “The Impact of EU Reform Process on Civil-Military Relations in Turkey,” *Seta Policy Brief*, Brief No. 26, (December 2008) p. 3 <http://www.setav.org/ups/dosya/7460.pdf> (accessed 12 July 2011)

Forces.”²³⁵ On 27 April 2007 military issued an e-statement and with this statement “military used the internet to influence the government and public opinion to give warning that the Turkish Armed Forces were watching the process and could take action as defenders of secularism.”²³⁶ So military’s reaction was a kind of threat to AKP administration because a president who has Islamic background is seen as a threat to Turkey’s secularist principle and future of the military so military choose warn the AKP government on this issue.

So civil-military relations reached to impasse with Abdullah Gül’s candidacy, meanwhile Ergenekon investigation broke out and increased the tension. “In March 2007, the weekly journal *Nokta* published the diaries of retired Navy Commander Admiral Özden Örnek. The diaries revealed that in 2004, some top Turkish commanders were plotting a coup d’état.”²³⁷ With Ergenekon case, military’s role is challenged and many military officers including retired generals and civilian have been arrested. On the other hand, “civil society organizations, the media, and business circles alike gave significant support to the ruling AKP in its standoff with the military.”²³⁸ Thus, “the Ergenekon case was symbolic of the long-standing

²³⁵ Ibid.

²³⁶ Ibid.

²³⁷ Ersel Aydınli, “Ergenekon, New Pacts, and the Decline of the Turkish “Inner State”,” *Turkish Studies*, Vol. 12, No. 2 (2011) p. 232 http://www.bilkent.edu.tr/~ersel/Makaleler/ergenekon_new_pacts_and_the_decline_of_%20the_turkish_inner_state.pdf (accessed 05 July 2011)

²³⁸ Toktaş and Kurt, p. 6, <http://www.setav.org/ups/dosya/7460.pdf> (accessed 12 July 2011)

disagreement between the military and the democratic government in Turkish politics.”²³⁹

AKP and military tension and Ergenekon trial create military coup possibility because until AKP administration military had large effect on domestic and foreign policy decisions and made several interventions to different administrations. In general reasons behind these interventions was violation of secular identity, domestic and economic instability or inefficient control of governments. However through EU reforms role of military was reduced but still not completely under civilian control and if AKP administration wants to adapt EU reforms fully and establish domestic stability without coup risks it should take military under the civilian control. Until today military does not respond negatively to any of the EU reforms and adopted several reforms but ongoing Ergenekon case and AKP administration religious reforms “such as allowing female students to wear the headscarf in the universities,”²⁴⁰ as well as possible Islamist-secularist confrontation carries greater risks in Turkish domestic politics.

4.2.2 Kurdish Problem and Drafting a New Constitution

Pro-Kurdish BDP MP Aysel Tuğluk states “that the solution to the Kurdish problem could only be solved if Kurds are recognized as a nation based on equal

²³⁹ “Dynamisms and Disfunctions of Turkey’s Civil-Military Relations After Ergenekon: Why Do They Matter?” Southeast Europe Project, 5 October 2009 http://www.wilsoncenter.org/index.cfm?topic_id=109941&fuseaction=topics.event_summary&event_id=553502 (accessed 06 July 2011)

²⁴⁰ Ziya Öniş and Şuhnaz Yılmaz, “Between Europeanization and Euro-Asianism: Foreign Policy Activism in Turkey During the AKP Era,” *Turkish Studies*, Vol. 10. No. 1, 7-24 (March 2009) p. 16.

status.”²⁴¹ Declaration came just after the bloody fight between the military and PKK so it increased a tension in Turkey.

Kurdish problem is a domestic challenge to Turkish politics and Turkey’s territorial integrity. In addition to this, “the Kurdish issue has cost Turkey more than forty thousand lives and hundreds of billions of dollars, shaping Turkey’s national security perception since the mid-1980s.”²⁴² While Turkey is spending most of its resources for fighting against PKK, it is clear that this situation prevents development of Turkey because Turkey had to spend considerable chunk of its budget for fighting with PKK which “prevented economic development in large parts of eastern and southeastern Turkey.”²⁴³

Kurdish problem is still an ongoing problem in Turkey; AKP administration took a series of steps in order to settle down arm conflicts between the army and PKK. In addition to that, many reforms took place in order to upgrade Kurdish rights. But it still remains a challenge to Turkey’s foreign and domestic policy. The Kurdish problem is mainly a domestic problem and threat to the territorial integrity of the Turkey. İlhan Uzgel underlined that Kurdish problem has not been only internal problem but also a problem for foreign policy because it has affected Turkey’s relations with its neighbors

²⁴¹ “Kurdish Group Declares Democratic Autonomy within Turkey’s Borders,” *AZG Daily*, 16 July 2011. http://www.azg.am/EN/2011071605?&lang=en_us&output=json (accessed 17 July 2011)

²⁴² Kalin, “A Triumph for Turkish Democracy” http://english.aljazeera.net/indepth/opinion/2011/06/201161310911608762.html?&lang=en_us&output=json (accessed 25 June 2011)

²⁴³ Grigoriadis, p. 5.

and rest of the world.²⁴⁴ This means that domestic Kurdish issue affected Turkey's relations with EU and its relations with its neighbors.

Most political analysts and “political parties agree that Turkey's Kurdish question and other issues related to good governance and democratization can no longer be addressed by the 1982 Constitution, which was drafted under military rule.”²⁴⁵ But solving Kurdish problem with new constitution is one of the other most important challenges for AKP administration.

According to the New Constitution Roundtable Series report 1982 constitution was found problematic from many perspectives so the new constitution will aim to focus on freedom of individuals rather than state which is ideologically neutral. Equality, justice and freedom will be main values of the constitution.²⁴⁶

In order to write a new constitution and expand civil rights AKP needs to cooperate with opposition parties where they do not agree on almost anything. Yavuz Baydar argues that “the MHP is already known to be opposed to a new constitution and the strengthened BDP may continue to be confrontational and maximalist.”²⁴⁷

²⁴⁴ Uzgel, p. 205.

²⁴⁵ Taşpınar, “Third One is the Charm,” http://www.brookings.edu/papers/2011/0616_turkey_taspinar.aspx?&lang=en_us&output=json (accessed 2 July 2011)

²⁴⁶ For more details see “Yeni Anayasa Yuvarlak Masa Toplantıları Dizisi: Yeni anayasanın Beş Temel Boyutu,” Yayın NO: TÜSİAD-T/513 (Mart 2011) http://www.tusiad.org/_rsc/shared/file/YENI-ANAYASA-YUVARLAK-MASA.pdf (accessed 18 July 2011)

²⁴⁷ Yavuz Baydar, “What If There are Less Than 330 Seats?” *Today's Zaman*, 09 June 2011. http://www.todayszaman.com/columnist-246810-what-if-there-are-less-than-330-seats.html?&lang=en_us&output=json (7 July 2011)

Kurdish population almost reached 20 percent of population in Turkey²⁴⁸ so they demand more rights than what were given to them in 1982 constitution. New Kurdish generation expects more liberal rights and ethnic recognition in Turkish democratic system. AKP administration adopted several reforms in order to fulfill Copenhagen political criteria so there are many reforms about Kurdish rights. During EU harmonization process AKP adopted many reforms and some of them regards cultural rights of Kurdish people; “the Regulation on the Radio and Television Supreme Council (RTUK) was amended in November, removing all restrictions on broadcasting in Kurdish and other languages by private and public channels at local level.”²⁴⁹

In addition to those steps, “right to learn the Kurdish language and the right to name children in Kurdish, which were also subsequently implemented; human rights reforms in general have also had a significant impact on the lives of the Kurds in the country.”²⁵⁰

In addition, PM Erdoğan took more concrete step towards Kurdish problem and in 2009 started ““Kurdish opening (Kürt açılımı)” –later dubbed as “democratic opening (demokratik açılım)”– was the return of a group of 34 PKK militants from northern Iraq to Turkey on 19 October 2009.”²⁵¹

²⁴⁸Sam Dagher, “Kurds,” *The New York Times*, 3 May 2011. <http://topics.nytimes.com/top/reference/timestopics/subjects/k/kurds/index.html> (19 June 2011)

²⁴⁹ “Turkey 2010 Progress Report: Enlargement Strategy and Main Challenges 2010-2011,” *Commission Staff Working Document*, SEC(2010) 1327, p. 32. http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key_documents/2010/package/tr_rapport_2010_en.pdf (22 June 2011)

²⁵⁰ Senem Aydin and Ali Carkoglu, “EU Conditionality and Democratic Rule of Law in Turkey,” (2006) http://iisdb.stanford.edu/pubs/21244/EU_Conditionality_Rule_of_Law_in_Turkey.pdf?&lang=en_us&output=json, (accessed 28 June 2011), p. 61.

²⁵¹ Grigoriadis, p. 6.

On the other side MHP's response to Kurdish initiative was aggressive; MHP leader Devlet Bahçeli argued "against the constitutional changes by maintaining that Recep Tayyip Erdoğan was betraying the country and actively dividing it with his Kurdish initiative."²⁵² Because of the strong opposition from nationalist circles AKP government decided to slow down Kurdish opening especially when clashes between the army and the PKK was renewed.²⁵³ Also there was concern about losing votes for elections in June 2011. Moreover, AKP's Kurdish opening resulted in demonstrations of families who lost members of their families in fighting with PKK and existing tension in society increased especially "when a group of PKK members were greeted by large crowds of PKK supporters upon their arrival in Turkey as part of the government's initiative."²⁵⁴

"The Democratic Initiative, launched to address the issue, is comprised of three components: democratic rights, economic development and the disarmament of the PKK."²⁵⁵ There are attempts to progress in democratic right and economic development issue but disarmament of the PKK is still an ongoing problem and this situation prevents both sides to find a political solution.

²⁵² Semih Idiz, "Erdoğan's Misguided Approach to the Kurdish Question," *Hurriyet Daily News*, 19 May 2011.

²⁵³ "Erdoğan's Landslide," *The Economist*, 16 June 2011. <http://www.economist.com/node/18836098> (19 July 2011)

²⁵⁴ Mustafa Yüksel and Ismail Efe, "Nationalist groups to hold protest against Kurdish initiative," *Today's Zaman*, 02 November 2009. http://www.todayszaman.com/newsDetail_getNewsById.action?load=detay&link=191754 (12 July 2011)

²⁵⁵ Kalin, "A Triumph for Turkish Democracy" http://english.aljazeera.net/indepth/opinion/2011/06/201161310911608762.html?&lang=en_us&output=json (accessed 25 June 2011)

In addition to CHP and MHP's reactions to Kurdish opening, promising new constitution and more right for Kurdish people in this constitution increased tension in the Turkish society. Because the new constitution is going to include "removing ethnic attributes from Turkish citizenship"²⁵⁶ and also "making Turkish "the official" and not "the only recognized" language of Turkey."²⁵⁷

Sebahat Tuncel, Kurdish politician, clearly states that AKP administration has two choices for Kurdish problem, one is solving Kurdish problem democratically with new constitution and second is continuing to fight with them.²⁵⁸ So if AKP fails to provide consensus for new constitution "Turkey could enter a more intense period of conflict than ever before."²⁵⁹

Cengiz Çandar points out in the report of the Turkish Economic and Social Studies Foundation (TESEV) that military option cannot solve the Kurdish problem. He claims that Kurdish issue and PKK problem are the same and without addressing Kurdish problem it is not possible to disarm PKK.²⁶⁰ Amberin Zaman agrees with Cengiz Çandar but she also underlines that "the PKK is an outcome and not the source

²⁵⁶Taşpınar, "Third One is the Charm," http://www.brookings.edu/papers/2011/0616_turkey_taspinar.aspx?&lang=en_us&output=json (accessed 2 July 2011)

²⁵⁷ Ibid.

²⁵⁸Sebahat Tuncel, "Arab Spring, Kurdish Summer," *The New York Times*, 17 June 2011 <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/06/18/opinion/18tuncel.html> (18 July 2011)

²⁵⁹Ibid.

²⁶⁰ Yonca Poyraz Doğan, "TESEV Report: Current Paradigms not Valid in Solving Kurdish Problem," *Today's Zaman*, 24 June 2011 <http://www.todayszaman.com/news-248493-tesev-report-current-paradigms-not-valid-in-solving-kurdish-problem.html> (16 July 2011)

of Turkey's Kurdish problem."²⁶¹ Based on Cengiz Çandar's researches and interviews with forty people; including government officials, PKK executives and Öcalan's lawyers, he offers recommendations for the solution of the issue.²⁶² According to his report first step should be based on mutual trust between the government and PKK; second step is disarmament; third is allowing Kurdish representation in the Parliament so they might choose to come down from mountain and disarm.²⁶³ In addition, interviewees also agreed on gradual implementation of amnesty for the PKK members. However in order to implement all these steps there is need for a new constitution in Turkey which includes definition of new citizenship.²⁶⁴

International community pays attention to Turkey's Kurdish problem and ways of solving this problem is important in the light of respect for human and minority rights. So if Turkey fails to find any democratic solution for Kurdish issue, the continuation of arm conflict will be unavoidable which already weakened Turkey domestically and externally. In domestic issues it continues to cost large amounts of Turkey's budget and loss of lives in clashes in several parts of the country. On the other hand externally Kurdish issue is perceived as violations of the minority rights in Turkey. But, Turkish public opinion on Kurdish issue creates an obstacle for implementation of EU reforms on minority rights.

²⁶¹ Amberin Zaman, "Turkey's Kurdish Gambit: The Road to Peace," *Today's Zaman*, 15 November 2009. <http://www.todayszaman.com/news-192969-turkeys-kurdish-gambit-the-road-to-peace.html> (20 June 2011)

²⁶² Yonca Poyraz Doğan, "TESEV Report: Current Paradigms not Valid in Solving Kurdish Problem," *Today's Zaman*, 24 June 2011 <http://www.todayszaman.com/news-248493-tesev-report-current-paradigms-not-valid-in-solving-kurdish-problem.html> (16 July 2011)

²⁶³ Ibid.

²⁶⁴ Ibid.

Chapter 5

CONCLUSION: EVALUATION AND FUTURE PROSPECTS OF TURKISH FOREIGN POLICY

Since 1923 Turkish Foreign policy has affected from changes in the international system. The Turkish foreign policy remained as neutral until Second World War and successfully protected its territorial integrity. But due to the end of the WWII and changes in the international system Turkey left its neutrality and joined the Western powers against Soviet Union. During the Cold War three military interventions in Turkish politics weakened administrations and increased the military's role in domestic and foreign policy. Disintegration of the Soviet Union reduced the role of NATO and automatically geo-strategic importance of the Turkey as an ally of the West. In 1990s the Kurdish problem and rise of Islam in political system re-emerged as threat to the territorial integrity and secular identity of the Turkish Republic.

On the other hand, when Turkey declared as candidate country Turkish foreign policy started to change and with arrive of the AKP this transformation becomes clearer, Under Ahmet Davutoğlu leadership AKP administration formulated new sets of foreign policy but these new proactive foreign policy created perception of “axis shift” in foreign policy. There is irrefutable changes in Turkish foreign policy but it does not mean completely new foreign policy line instead it is a vision based line which aims to

have strong ties with the U.S and also develop its relations with rest of the world. Through new set of foreign principles Turkey actively involved in the world affairs but “axis shift” debate does not reflect the reality of Turkish policy because AKP confirms that Turkey still has strong ties with the U.S so all these accusation of shifting from the West to the East are invalid.

In general, AKP’s new foreign policy principles are implemented successful but some of them still need improvements. The “rhythmic diplomacy” which refers to involvement in global issues and during AKP administration Turkey’s involvement in global issues increased. Thus, this policy was used affectively; it increased Turkey’s global awareness and also its role in world politics. On the other hand “balance between freedom and security” policy has progressed but not fully exercised because Turkey is not under authoritarian regime but it still needs to improve its democracy and respect to the human rights.

On the other hand, achieving “zero problems” with all neighbors is very difficult, especially in the MENA where regional conflicts are usual. However Turkey improved its relations with Iran and Syria through this policy. In addition, Turkey still has problems with Armenia but it made some attempts to normalize its relation. But a relation with Israel is still problematic because Turkey-Israel relations decline through series incidents such as Davos and flotilla crisis. So it can be argued that it is not possible to implement this policy successful in all regions. On the other hand “new diplomatic discourse” policy which is based on developing of relations beyond neighbors, carried out successfully because Turkey played a mediator role in many conflicts but avoided to take side any of these conflicts. Therefore, Turkey is emerging

soft power and using this successfully in conflict resolutions beyond its borders. At the same time both “multi-dimensional” and “multi-track” policies are implemented successfully too and help Turkey to adapt changing variables of the international system. So with multi-dimensional Turkey left its previous approaches to the global powers and started to have good economic and cultural relations with them. In “multi-track” policy state-centered perception is changed and NGOs and business companies started to involve in decision making process. In generally speaking these asserted foreign policy principles become successful but AKP administration needs to solve its external and domestic problems in order to focus on improvement of these principles.

In last two terms AKP administration successfully implement its foreign policy objectives but the upcoming third term will be more difficult than the previous terms because this time expectations are higher from the AKP who got half of the country’s vote and this put important responsibility on its shoulders. So AKP administration needs to solve domestic and external challenges which prevent successful implementation of asserted foreign policy principles.

If AKP administration desires to make Turkey a global actor it should follow successful domestic and foreign policy line. Some of the EU member states’ opposition is one of the main external challenges to Turkish foreign policy. The opposition of EU member states such as France, Germany and Republic of Cyprus reversed Turkish public opinion on EU membership in Turkey. Another important challenge is the unexpected uprisings in the MENA. The uprisings in Syria and Libya had costly economic and security effects on Turkey. Therefore AKP’s set of principles are under threat by these external dynamics. In addition to this, without finding democratic

solution to Kurdish problem and overcoming civil-military relations by taking military under civilian control and solving secularist and Islamist division domestically will be difficult to determine successful foreign policy vision. Thus, it will be difficult for AKP administration to implement successful foreign policy vision in the following terms without solving these challenges.

Military receives remarkable share from country's budget and spends most of its resources for fighting with PKK but still unable to solve Kurdish problem. The latest research shows that in order to disarm PKK, AKP needs to draft new constitution and solve Kurdish problem democratically by giving Kurdish people more rights.

Therefore, main challenge in domestic issues is the new constitution because in 12 June 2011 election AKP failed to reach enough votes to draft constitution without consulting coalition parties. But in these conditions it is not possible to draft it anytime soon. Only if AKP achieves to have consensus and draft the new constitution it might solve Turkey's Kurdish problem radically. Solving Kurdish problem democratically is also important externally because in this way Turkey is going to fulfill the desire to respect for human rights and democracy because Turkey's fight with PKK was perceived as violation of the human and minority rights by the rest of the world especially the EU.

In addition to this, new constitution should aim to take military under civilian control in order to dispose any military intervention in governance. There should be strong civilian control and military should pay attention only on country's defense. In case of the Turkey military goes further and intervenes in the decision making process. In addition, in time of crisis between military and government military might coup in

order to achieve its goals so coup risk is unavoidable with uncontrolled military. Taking military under civilian control with the new constitution also respects rule of law norm of the European Union and in this way military operates under law and civilian control. Taking military under civilian control means that state's decision makings are depend on the civilian leaders' rather than military officers. In this way, military implements decisions instead of taking them and right of the use of military forces remains under civilian control which is more democratic.

On the other hand, there is undeniable economic growth in Turkey especially after 2001 financial crisis and Turkish economy became one of the economies which were not affected from 2008-2009 financial crises. During AKP administration through successful foreign policy implementations and successful trade relations with other states Turkish economy grew rapidly and AKP administration is assertive on Turkish economy to make Turkey one of the top economies in worldwide. However it can be argued that despite all these successes in economic growth, Turkey might faces a serious unequal income distribution in the future. Because any disparity in income distribution might create lack of cohesion in community and challenge Turkish foreign policy in the future. One of the main concerns on this issue is that it could lead to more conflict and crime in the society which might affect social cohesion and economic growth. So this can be argued that this issue could be one of the domestic challenges for the AKP or other administration in the future terms because it might affect electoral process which makes an impact on policy makers' domestic and foreign policy decision making process.

To sum up, in order to set out strong stance AKP has to solve domestic and external problems radically and strive to develop itself with the purpose of achieving its goals in the targeted time.

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