

ROLE AND POSITION OF TURKEY IN THE BLACK SEA REGION DURING THE PERIOD FROM 1946 TO 2012

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ABSTRACT

The Black Sea Region is one of the most significant regions since the security had been largely preserved during the period from 1918 till the last crisis in Ukraine. During the Cold War era and the post-Cold War years, policy makers in Ankara and in Moscow, played a crucial role in creating order and preserving stability and status-quo in the Region. Policies of these two actors towards the Black Sea Region are assumed to be one of the most important factors in preserving the relatively secure situation of the Region. Therefore, this essay attempts to explore policies of Turkey in order to display how Turkey's policies have overlapped with Russian policy in the Region and to understand how these policies towards the regional countries under the limitations of her relations with the USA have had a contributing effect to the security of the Black Sea Region.

Keywords: Turkey, the Russian Federation, the Black Sea Region, regional security, preservation of status-quo

ÖZET

Karadeniz Bölgesi 1918'den Ukrayna'da yaşanan son krize kadar güvenliğin göreceli olarak korunduğu nadir bölgelerden birisidir. Soğuk Savaş yıllarında ve Soğuk Savaş'tan sonra Ankara ve Moskova'daki yöneticiler bu bölgede istikrar ve statükonun korunmasında hayati önemde politikalar izlediler. Bu iki ülkenin statüko yanlısı politikaları bölgedeki göreceli güvenliğin korunmasında temel etken olarak kabul edilmektedir. Bu sebeple, bu çalışmada Türkiye'nin politikaları incelenmektedir. Türkiye'nin çıkarlarının nasıl Rusya'ninkilerle örtüştüğü ve ABD ile ilişkilerinin gerektirdiği sınırlar içerisinde bölge ülkeleri olan ilişkilerinin Karadeniz Bölgesi güvenliğine yaptığı katkı irdelenecektir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Türkiye, Rusya Federasyonu, Karadeniz Bölgesi, bölgesel güvenlik, statükonun korunması

The Black Sea Region (BSR/the Region, here after) is one of the most significant regions since the security had been largely preserved during the

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period from 1918 till the last crisis in Ukraine (in 2013/2014) which has a potential of creating tremendous instability in the Region. While the regional countries, except Turkey, were involved in the WWII, security was re-established in the new context of bipolar international system; and then after the Cold War a regional order was re-produced and has been sustained. Although instabilities have occurred from time to time following the system and regime change in the Region, these have not led to a major war with the capacity to destroy the existing security situation in the BSR. These instabilities have not been solved, but they, including the crises in 2008 and partly, the conflict in 2014 have been largely frozen.

During the Cold War era and the post-Cold War years, policy makers in Ankara and in Moscow, whether as the Soviet Union or as the Russian Federation, played a crucial role in creating order and preserving stability and status-quo in the Region. Policies of these two actors towards the BSR are assumed to be one of the most important factors, among others in preserving the relatively secure situation of the Region, as expressed above. To answer the question of how security is sustained in the Region, policies of these two countries should be explained. Therefore, this essay attempts to explore policies of Turkey, one of these two countries; due to page limitation and to understand how Turkey's policy has had a contributing effect to the security of the BSR.

For any region, security is related to the absence of aggression and military conflict. There may be instability in a region but to assess a region as secure, there should at least not be any on-going military conflict between the actors. There have not been any large scale military conflicts in the Black Sea Region despite the occurrence of intra-state wars in Georgia and Russia and the last crises in 2008 and 2013. How Turkey's policies on eve of these crises have had an effect on security of the BSR should be looked into.

In a region, even if there is no on-going military conflict, it is important to maintain or establish order, preserving the balance-of-interest in the region in order to sustain security. The security of a region may be destroyed in the event that regional states pursue revisionist policies and try to change all balances or a new great power may emerge and interfere with regional politics in a revisionist way. Upon this kind of development, efforts of regional countries to maintain the balance and status-quo are very important. Russia is one of the leading states which attach importance to preserving the status-quo and her policies have overlapped with Turkey's policies in the Region. At this point, why Turkey respected the regional order constituted by Russian superior relations with regional countries, whether or not there have been eras that Turkey challenges to the superior position of the Russian Federation and how she pursued a balancing policy among her traditional ally the USA and the new partner the Russian Federation after the end of the Cold War, are important issues related to the position and effect of Turkey, which will be answered in this study.

Given the focus of research and the arguments above, the following sections will present review of Turkey's policies towards the Region and regional countries since the end of the WWII with a special attention to the questions above. At the conclusion, effect of the Turkish foreign policy towards the BSR on security will be evaluated and conclusions will be drawn by consulting to the article of Randall Schweller (1994) which evaluates aim and efforts of the great powers to sustain or to change status-quo and its effect on security in a broader international system.

Role and Position of Turkey during the Cold War - Bloc Policy with the West

The role of Turkey during the Cold War should be examined in three parts in order to display her pro-status-quo foreign policy and her contribution to the enhancement of security in the Black Sea Region: her relations with the Soviet Union, her relations with Romania and Bulgaria, as these states were littoral states of the Black Sea Region and her position vis-à-vis the USA and the effects of their relationship.

At the end of WWII, Soviet-Turkish relations were shaped by the Soviet demands regarding the revision of the Moutreux Convention and territorial claims. Due to various reasons, such as Turkish strict resistance and the so-called Western support, the Soviet Union changed her policy and gave up her demands. According to Tellal, with this policy, the Soviet Union almost destroyed bilateral relations (2001a, 508). Because of Soviet demands, Turkish policymakers preferred to align with the Western Bloc within the bipolar international system, creating a discourse of "Soviet threat", which overlapped the containment policy of the USA (Türkeş 2004, 382-383). This process began with the announcement of the Truman Doctrine (1947) and the Marshal Plan (1948) and was completed in 1952 with Turkey's NATO membership.

After the end of the Stalin period in the Soviet Union, Khrushchev wanted to establish good relations with neighbours of the USSR and announced that they would totally give up their demands for the Turkish Straits and territory. However, relations did not improve because of Turkey's pro-Western policies such as allowing American bases in her land and taking part in joint exercises (1947-49), her role in establishing the Balkan Pact (1953) and the Baghdad Pact (1955), the Syria Crisis (1952) and Iraqi crisis (1958) and Jupiter missiles (1959-1963) and the U-2 issues (1960) while economic relations increased considerably.

During the period from 1960 to 1980, according to Baskın Oran, Turkish policy makers decided to make a change their firm pro-American line on account of the Cyprus issue, Johnson's letter of 1964 and a more proper

international environment (for pursuing an autonomous foreign policy).¹ The US arms embargo against Turkey from 1975 to 1978 intensified this process. During the Cyprus issue, leaders in Cyprus (the Greek Cypriot Administration) tried to establish relations with the Soviet Union. On this occasion, Turkey's minister of foreign affairs visited Moscow and persuaded Soviet leadership not to provide military equipment to the Makarios administration (Tellal 2001b, 776).

During the detente period, the Soviet-Turkish relations began to intensify while American-Turkish relations deteriorated because of the arms embargo. In the 15 year period following the Minister of Foreign Affairs Feridun Cemal Erkin's visit in 1964, 14 high level visits² took place between Turkey and the Soviet Union (Tellal 2001b, 776-783). During the same period, important agreements and documents were signed: the Economic and Technical Cooperation Agreement in March 1967, the Declaration of Principle of Good Neighbourhood in 1972, the second Economic and Technical Cooperation Agreement in 1975, the establishment of the Inter-governmental Joint Commission in 1976, the 1978 Agreement between the Republic of Turkey and the USSR concerning the delimitation of the continental shelf in the Black Sea and the Economic Agreement for supplying aids and credit to Turkey in 1979 (Tellal 2001b, 778-783).

During this period, economic and political relations significantly improved; however, there occurred four developments that affected relations negatively: the 1968 Soviet intervention in Czechoslovakia, Turkey's intervention in Cyprus in 1974 (the Soviet Union did not support the second intervention), the re-opening of American bases in Turkey and Soviet intervention in Afghanistan in 1979 (which Turkey strictly condemned since this invasion forced Turkey to accept thousands of refugees) (Tellal 2001b, 781).

In 1984, Turkey and the Soviet Union signed the Natural Gas agreement which was, according to Tellal, a turning point in their relations because this agreement provided new opportunities in trade and contractor services (2001c, 163-164). In the same year, Turkey and the Soviet Union agreed on a ten year Long Term Program for Promoting Economic Commercial Scientific and Technical Cooperation; the Agreement for Exchange of Goods for the period from 1986 to 1990 and the Cultural and Scientific Exchange Program (Tellal 2001c, 165). In 1988, they solved the 20 year problem by identifying the Black Sea FIR (Flight Information Region) line

¹ According to Oran, from 1960 to 1980, the Western countries were dealing with the oil crisis, the non-aligned movement was founded in 1961, and detente in Europe formed a more positive international environment for Turkey to pursue more autonomous foreign policy. (Oran 2001, p. 677).

² January 1965, May 1965, August 1965, December 1966, March 1967, September 1967, July 1968, November 1969, April 1972, December 1972, December 1975, in April 1976, March 1977 and June 1978 (Tellal 2001b, 776-783).

and the Soviet Union ripped the SS-20 missiles in accordance with the INF agreement (Tellal 2001c, 165). The last agreement that Turkey and the Soviet Union signed was the Treaty on Friendship, Good Neighbourhood and Cooperation in March 1991 (Tellal 2001c, 166).

Regarding her policies towards the Balkans, it could be claimed that during the Cold War, Turkey pursued pro-status-quo policies and supported stability and cooperation there. As a staunch ally of the US at the beginning of the Cold War, she became member of the Balkan Pact in 1953 and signed the Treaty on Cooperation and Friendship with Greece and Yugoslavia in 1954. While Turkey developed her relations with Greece and Yugoslavia, during the same period Bulgaria forced its Turkish minority to immigrate to Turkey in 1951 (Uzgel 2001a, 172).

From 1960s, Turkey tried to pursue a multi-dimensional foreign policy and to improve her relations with the Balkan countries, except Greece (Uzgel 2001a, 174). In 1978, the Bülent Ecevit government devised a new "National Security and Foreign Policy" doctrine (Uzgel 2001b, 674), according to which having good relations with all neighbours was prioritised in order to reduce military expenditures but at the same time enhance security (Uzgel 2001a, 175).

The real crisis and threat that Turkey faced in this Region was the name-changing campaign in Bulgaria (from 1984 to 1989). During that time, Bulgarian authorities argued that the Turks had, in fact, been Slav-Bulgarians who were forcibly converted to Islam during the Ottoman Empire (Demirtaş Çoşkun 2001, 27). During the campaign, people who insisted on speaking Turkish were punished, newspapers and publications in Turkish were banned and the cemeteries in Turkish villages were destroyed (Uzgel 2001a, 179). To deal with the issue, Turkey offered to sign an emigration agreement with Bulgaria, but they refused it. At the same time, she tried to internationalize the problem and attract other countries' interest in this problem. Neither Turkey's pressure nor isolation nor the possibility of losing the work force in agriculture sector (Armaoğlu 1983, 1152) changed these policies till the end of the Jivkov regime in 1989. Meanwhile, 350,000 people were deported from Bulgaria, (Demirtaş Çoşkun 2001, 28) later on 154,000 of them returned back. During this period, according to Türkeş, Turkey did not use this crisis to destabilize Bulgaria; instead she prevented its escalation which might lead to a regional destabilization (2004, 199). Additionally, Turkey underlined that she was not interested in territorial revision and pursued cautious policies in order to keep the balance established during and after the Lausanne Treaty of 1923 (Türkeş 2004, 199).

In the Black Sea Region, Turkey was the only country from the Western Bloc. During the Cold War period, it should be noted that Turkey had near to hierarchic relations with the US that is similar to the one between the Soviet Union and the states in her sphere of influence. It is claimed because after Turkey's entry into NATO, various NATO bases (25 bases) were con-

structed in the Turkish territory, there were different numbers of US military personnel in Turkey from 1950 to 1991. (Military Personnel Historical Report, Military Personnel Statistics) Turkey received military assistance from the USA (US Overseas Loans and Grants) and the USA was the leading military equipment supplier to Turkey (SIPRI, Generate Importer/exporter TIV Tables). From 1951 to 1980, Turkey signed both military agreements within the framework of NATO membership (Soysal 2000, vii) and bilateral military treaties. (US Treaties in Force) Besides military relations, the US gave economic assistance to Turkey, it also supported a certain type of development. To receive financial aid, Turkey signed the Economic Cooperation Agreement with the US and the ECA (Economic Cooperation Authority) Mission was opened in Turkey (The Economic Cooperation Authority). Turkey became a member of the IMF in March 1947 and signed her first agreement with the IMF in 1958.

Under US tutelage, Turkey pursued policies in compliance with Western Bloc politics and became a member of American-initiated regional organizations. Turkey could not refrain from opposing the Soviet Union in global terms within the framework of Bloc politics and the effect of her relations with the USA; however, she managed to keep the Region free from tension by not challenging the Soviet sphere in the Region or Soviet policies towards the regional countries. Indeed, Turkey refrained because the interference of the extra-regional actors in regional politics might destroy the existing status-quo. It was the main factor that led Turkey to cooperate with the USSR in the Region.

As seen in the survey of Turkish relations with her northern neighbors, interests of these regional countries were conflicting and they faced severe tension from time to time however Turkey always respected the territorial integrity of these countries and did not try to use the Turkish minority in Bulgaria or Greece and Turkic people in Caucasus as leverage for getting involved in the internal affairs of these countries. No effort was made to pursue revisionist policies or change the structure, which was also in harmony with Western Bloc policies because during that period the Western countries and the US challenged the supremacy of the Soviet Union and the expansion of the Communist ideology in many regions from the Middle East to the Far East, except the Eastern European countries which were accepted as the countries in the Soviet sphere of influence.

Turkey in the First Decade after the Cold War- Competition and Cooperation

Following the end of the Cold War, while the Russian Federation and the Trans-Caucasian countries were dealing with on-going instabilities, Turkey was attempting to establish a sphere of influence over those countries with which she had ethnic, linguistic, historical and religious ties. Until 1993, the Turkish president Turgut Özal and the prime minister Süleyman Demirel

dreamed of a Turkish world from the Adriatic to the Great Wall of China (Baran 2004, 269). Demirel, at that time, in his speeches expressed his vision of Turkey being transformed from a flank country during the Cold War into a core country located at the heart of a wide geography-Eurasia from Atlantic to Pacific and remarked that geography and history provided Turkey a golden opportunity (Turgut 2002, 87). According to Ali Faik Demir, Turkey was trying to gain influence in the Region with an aim of being a regional actor during the period from 1990 to 1993 (2006, 118). Turkey recognized the independence of these countries and set up embassies and initiated many aid and cooperation programs towards these countries. During the same period, relations between Azerbaijan and Turkey were intensified under the influence of President of Azerbaijan, Ebulfez Elchibey. It is years during which Turkey initiated to establish the Black Sea Economic Cooperation to ensure a platform to increase interaction and dialogue among twelve member states (Black Sea Economic Cooperation Web-site). The leaders of Central Asia countries and Azerbaijan met to discuss cooperation with Turkey concerning security, economy and energy transit issues and Turkic language summits were held in 1994 (Donaldson and Noguee 2005, 311). Turkey signed friendship and cooperation agreements with the Central Asian countries and military education, scientific and technical cooperation agreements with Azerbaijan, Georgia and Kazakhstan (Aydın 2001a, 387). Therefore, Russia was worried about Turkey's active foreign policy in her Near Abroad because Turkey had a capacity to affect states in the Caucasus through their ethnic and religious ties. Since Turkey had also been a NATO member country and a staunch ally of the USA, western influence might be extended to her Near Abroad countries via Turkey.

After this first period, according to Demir, Turkey started to follow a more realistic and balanced foreign policy during the 1993-1995 period (2006, 120-121). During this term, it can be noted that more actors (including the Russian Federation, Western countries, China, Korea and Iran) were attempting to be influential in the Region (Aydın 2001b, 393). Secondly, Turkey could not sustain her active policy. Therefore, the period after 1995 was defined by Demir as a competition in the Caucasus (2006, 122). In the end, Russia was able to reconstitute its dominant position within these countries.

This first period (1991-1993) can be defined as the years during which Turkey attempted to change the on-going situation in the Black Sea Region and challenged Russian supremacy over the post-Soviet countries. However, from 1992 onwards Russia began to consolidate its dominance over the post-Soviet states by signing the 1992 Treaty on Collective Security and initiating peace-keeping operations inside the CIS countries. In February 1993, Yeltsin used the "Near Abroad" term and claimed that post-Soviet republics were a special area of interest that located within the responsibility of Russia. In the 1993 Military Doctrine, Russia announced that she

would base her troops outside Russia in order to enhance security in the CIS countries (Tellal 2001d, 542). This was a clear message to Turkey, other regional players and the Western world to prevent any peace-keeping or humanitarian intervention in her sphere of influence.

After that date (1993), Russian anxiety regarding Turkey reduced as she had solved her domestic and external issues. According to Donaldson and Noguee, this was parallel to the intensification of her economic and security relations with Turkey (2005, 311). Her trade relations and military sales increased. Donaldson and Noguee also underlined the importance of military sales by Russia to Turkey (noting that the first ever Russian arms sale to a NATO member country) and a cooperation agreement on the development of defence industries in 1994 (2005, 311). While Duygu Bazoğlu Sezer was noting improvement in Russian Turkish relations, she attached importance to three high level visits and developments between two countries – the Turkish prime minister Süleyman Demirel’s visit to Moscow in 1992 (during which a Friendship and Cooperation Agreement was signed), the Russian prime minister Victor Chernomyrdin’s visit in 1997 and signing of the Blue Stream agreement and the Turkish prime minister Bülent Ecevit’s in 1999 and his demand for cooperation on counter-terrorism, following which Russian leaders refused to shelter the PKK leader and ousted him from Russia in 1998 (Bazoğlu Sezer 2002, 240-44).

However, during this term, an important contradiction emerged on the issue of Turkish regulations regarding the Straits. Upon the emergence of threats against the safety of Straits traffic originating from oil tanker passage from Russia, Turkey issued first the 1994 Regulations and then the 1998 Regulations to bring an order to the traffic. The 1994 Regulation included some limitations on many issues such as speed and the following distance for ships while they were passing through the Straits (Özersay 2001, 588). With this regulation, Turkey announced that in some emergency situations, she hereafter might temporarily stop the traffic flow in the Straits (Özersay 2001, 589). For large vessels, Turkey imposed an obligation to provide preliminary information and in some occasions, Turkey held her right to refuse passage (Özersay 2001, 589). For the nuclear-powered vessels or vessels carrying nuclear cargo or waste, Turkey ordered that they must take permission from the Under-Secretariat for Maritime Affairs or the Ministry of Environment to pass the Straits at the planning stage (Maritime Traffic Regulations for the Turkish Straits and the Marmara Region, 10). According to Article 42, *“When a large vessel with hazardous cargo enters the [İstanbul] Strait, a similar vessel may not enter the Strait until the previous vessel has exited”* and Article 52 specified a similar arrangement for the Çanakkale Straits: *“When a large vessel with hazardous cargo enters the Strait, a similar vessel approaching from the opposite direction may not enter the Strait until the previous vessel has*

exited." (Maritime Traffic Regulations for the Turkish Straits and the Marmara Region, 16).

The littoral states, led by the Russian Federation were strongly opposed to the application of these regulations and claimed that they were contradictory to the articles of the Moutreux Convention. According to the Russian leadership, Turkey's aim in issuing this Regulation was to prevent the transportation of Central Asian and Caspian petroleum by tankers through Straits. However, in this situation, Russia did not use her right to demand a conference to revise the Moutreux Convention. According to Article 28, any contracting partner had the right to denounce the Convention and thus demand a conference to conclude a new Convention (Soysal 1983, 519). Russia did not prefer this because the Moutreux Convention gave the littoral states a more advantageous position, especially regarding passage of war vessels. In the new regulations, it might not be possible to hold the military force of the Western countries out of the Black Sea.

In 1998, Turkey issued a new regulation, softened some limitations and hardened other provisions. Firstly, large vessels were redefined as follows: "*Large Vessel means a vessel having a length overall of 200 meters or more*" ("Maritime Traffic Regulations for the Turkish Straits", 3) instead of "150 meters or more" in the 1994 Regulations. Article 42 of the 1994 Regulation was softened and transformed into a new one (Article 25-d) foreseeing that "When a southbound vessel with dangerous cargo as prescribed in this Regulation enters from the north of Istanbul Strait, no northbound vessel is permitted with the same particulars until the southbound reaches the Istanbul Bogazi Bridge. When a northbound vessel with dangerous cargo as prescribed in this Regulation enters from the south of Istanbul Strait no southbound vessel is permitted with the same particulars, until the southbound reaches to the line joining Hamsi Burnu and Fil Burnu points. When a vessel with dangerous cargo enters the Çanakkale Straits, no vessel is permitted with the same particulars until the former one leaves the Nara Burnu point." ("Maritime Traffic Regulations for the Turkish Straits", 11).

On the other hand, the 1998 regulation made some passages harder. For example, according to Article 36, passage under restricted visibility may be suspended by Turkey for only one direction or both directions ("Maritime Traffic Regulations for the Turkish Straits", 14) and Article 43 foresaw that "*when the main current exceeds 6 knots, all vessels which are carrying hazardous cargo, large and deep draft, regardless of their speed, shall wait until the current speed drops to less than 6 knots.*" ("Maritime Traffic Regulations for the Turkish Straits", 16). The 1998 Regulation also exempted vessels of war, auxiliary vessels and state owned vessels from some articles ("Maritime Traffic Regulations for the Turkish Straits", 19). Regarding these regulations, it can be claimed that Turkey succeed to take Russian consent, by persuading Russia and other littoral countries that these changes were

not aimed at preventing oil transport but environmental disasters and their fatal effects in and around the Straits.

The second initiative by Turkey which challenged Russian supremacy concerned transit issue of Azerbaijani oil. After the Trans-Caucasus countries gained independence, they wanted to sell their petroleum over the Baku-Novorossisk or the Baku-Supsa pipeline and then they were brought to the world market with tankers via the İstanbul and Çanakkale straits. After deciding to construct a main export pipeline, Turkey demanded that this pipeline extend from Azerbaijan via Georgia to the Turkish port Ceyhan, bypassing Russia and the Straits. However, Russia rejected this plan and advised the Baku-Novorossisk pipeline; however, in the 1999 OSCE Istanbul Summit, Russia dropped its objection against the Baku-Ceyhan pipeline project (Yanık 2007, 354). During this summit, with Clinton's support and testimony, the leaders of Azerbaijan, Georgia, Turkey and Kazakhstan signed the Istanbul declaration on the construction of the pipeline (Baku Tbilisi Ceyhan Projesi [Project]). In 2002, BTC Co. and BTC Invest were established for its construction and finance, and no Russian company had even a symbolic share in these companies.³

Regarding Turkish-Georgian relations, Turkey recognized her independence in December 1991, and then the two countries signed the Friendship and Cooperation Agreement in July 1992 (Aydın 2001b, 416). After that, Turkey tried to help Georgia in her struggle to preserve territorial integrity under a multilateral framework such as sending five observers to the UNMIG (Aydın 2001b, 418). Turkish-Georgian trade also increased during these years. Additionally, Turkey gave military aid under the PfP Program and signed a military agreement in 1997 (Aydın 2001b, 420). They also cooperated on the transit issue of Caspian base natural resources. Turkey supported the Baku-Supsa pipeline and Georgia supported the BTC (Aydın 2001b, 421).

Concerning Turkey's relations with the North-western neighbour countries, in the previous term (1985-1991) the most important development was the Bulgarian political pressure campaign against the Turkish minority and great flow of immigrants from Bulgaria to Turkey. However, after the regime change, Bulgarian leader Mladenov stated that Bulgaria would respect the rights of the Muslim minority (Cumhuriyet, 16 December 1989 cited by Demirtaş Çoşkun, 2010, 115). After the transition to a democratic system, radical changes were seen in the rights of Turkish minorities and they were given the opportunity to establish a political party (Movement for Rights and Freedom) and enter political life in Bulgaria.

³ Shareholders of BTC co. are BP (UK) 30.10%, SOCAR (Azerbaijan) 25.00%, CHEVRON (USA) 8.90%, STATOIL (Netherlands) 8.71%, TPAO (Turkey) 6.53%, ENI (Italy) 5.00%, TOTAL (France) 5.00%, ITOCHU (Japan) 3.40%, INPEX (Japan) 2.50%, CONOCOPHILLIPS (USA) 2.50% and AMERADA HESS (USA) 2.36%. (BTC Projesi", Bakü-Tiflis-Ceyhan HPBH Proje Direktörlüğü web-page, <http://www.btc.com.tr/proje.html>, (accessed on 05.02.2013)

During Zhelev's presidency, Turkey and Bulgaria normalized their relations. In June 1990, Bulgaria and Turkey signed an agreement on confidence building measures (Demirtaş Çoşkun 2010, 116). The leaders of the two countries signed the Sofia Pact in 1991 and the Treaty of Friendship, Good Neighbourhood and Security in 1992 (Uzgel 2002, 101). Turkey also supported Bulgarian and Romanian NATO membership. On a parallel with political relations, Turkish economic and trade relations with Bulgaria and Romania also improved. Despite improvements in economic and political relations, issues of PKK activities in Bulgaria and Romania and the fact that PKK members used these two countries as for transit to Europe were on Turkey's agenda. Bulgaria and Turkey signed an agreement on counter terrorism in 2001 (Demirtaş Çoşkun 2010, 120), but Bulgaria did not put the PKK on her terrorist organization list during the 1990s. In May 1998, Romania accepted the PKK as a terrorist organization (Uzgel 2001b, 507). Turkey's relations with these countries also intensified after the 1997 tri-lateral cooperation initiatives (Uzgel 2001b, 507).

Regarding Turkey's relations with the Balkan countries, it should be noted that Turkey also had important ties with them as with the Central Asian and Caucasian countries. There were also Turkish minorities in these countries, not only in Bulgaria. However, according to Türkeş, Turkey never used this population to destabilize these countries or in any way to intervene in these countries' domestic policies (2004, 199). Instead, Turkey encouraged them to integrate into their home country while keeping their cultural, linguistic and religious identities (Türkeş 2004, 199). Upon conflicts in Yugoslavia, Turkey did not use this instability to become a regional hegemonic power but tried to prevent any other single regional power from gaining this position (Türkeş 2004, 208) and was committed to multilateral action and legality, thus followed a legal-realistic policy despite strong domestic pressures (Türkeş 2004, 197 and 203).

After the end of the Cold War, Turkey was no longer the only US ally in the Region. After the collapse of the USSR, every country in the Region was trying to establish relations with the West. However, the US supremacy over Turkey was sustained because Turkey did not follow a policy which challenged the US supremacy. Within the context of important changes in the international system after the Cold War, despite the existence of divergence of interests of two countries on some issues such as Cyprus and human rights issues, bilateral relations between the US and Turkey remained strong (Sayari 2004, 92). According to Uzgel, alliance relations were transformed into an enhanced strategic partnership after the end of the Cold War (2001c, 253). Within this framework, the Turkish-American cooperation continued in many regional issues such as maintaining regional stability and operations in Bosnia Herzegovina and Kosovo in the Balkans, resolving the transit issue of Caspian energy resources, reducing the influence of Iran

in the Caucasus and Central Asia and indirectly controlling Russian influence in the post-Soviet area.

This term, for Turkey has been a period during which she re-produced her regional pro-status-quo policies within a new post-Cold War framework. Regarding her position in the Balkans and regional countries, Turkey kept her pro-status-quo line and supported Romanian and Bulgarian integration efforts into the Western system. In the Balkans, the Middle East and Caucasus Turkey cooperated with the US, who supported Turkey's active policy towards the Caucasus and Central Asia, her "Turkish model" discourse and the BTC pipeline initiative while she was pursuing the Russia-first policy. While Turkey insisted to pursue a pro-status-quo policy on security related issues for these nine years (1991-1999), she followed a challenging policy towards the Russian Federation by establishing close and partly dominant relations with the Caucasus and Central Asian countries until 1993. After that, Turkey preferred to cooperate with the Russian Federation, tried to pursue a balancing policy between her Western allies and Russia, such as engaging simultaneously in the Blue Stream pipeline and the Baku Tbilisi Ceyhan pipeline and she did not challenge her dominant position over the post-Soviet countries in the Region. Therefore, Turkey has had a contributing effect in sustaining structure, accordingly enhancing stability and security.

Turkey in the Second Decade after the Cold War - Cooperation instead of Competition

Turkey-Russian relations were shaped by discourses of "strategic partnership" and "cooperation instead of competition" during this period (Çelikpala 2013, 532). Improvements in relations started in 1999 with Turkish Prime Minister Bülent Ecevit's visit to Moscow, as noted in the previous section. In October 2000, Russian Prime Minister Mikhail Kasyanov visited Ankara. In November 2001, the ministers of Foreign Affairs (İsmail Cem and Igor Ivanov) signed the document called "Joint Action Plan for Cooperation in Eurasia from Bilateral Cooperation towards Multidimensional Partnership" and it was decided to expand cooperation in the Eurasian geography and a Joint Working Group was established (Ministry of Foreign Affairs Republic of Turkey, 2011). These high level official visits continued when Abdullah Gül (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs) visited in February 2004 and the ministers of foreign affairs of two countries signed the "2004-2005 Consultations Programme between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Turkey and Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation" (Ministry of Foreign Affairs Republic of Turkey, 2011a). The President of the Russian Federation Putin paid an official visit to Turkey in December 2004, which was the "*first Presidential visit in the history of Turkish-Russian relations after that of the Chairman of the Presidium, Podgorny, in 1972.*" (Ministry of Foreign Affairs Republic of Turkey,

2011a). The Joint Declaration on the Intensification of Friendship and Multi-dimensional Partnership was signed by the Presidents of both countries (Ministry of Foreign Affairs Republic of Turkey, 2011a). After that, twelve high level visits took place during the period from 2005 to 2012 (Ministry of Foreign Affairs Republic of Turkey, 2011a).

The major focal points of the negotiations held during these visits were economic cooperation, trade, energy investment projects and consultations on regional developments. Within this framework, the usage of roubles and Turkish liras in bilateral trade was decided on (Çelikpala 2013, 540) and that invigorated trade volume between the two countries. The High Level Cooperation Council was established (2010), visa requirements for citizens of the two countries during their journeys of a month or less were lifted (2010), a cooperation agreement on the construction and operation of the Akkuyu Nuclear Power Plant was signed in 2010 and its construction process was started in 2010 by Rosatom's Akkuyu Power Plant *Electric Production* Company (Çelikpala 2013, 541 and 551). The Blue Stream Pipeline started to operate in November 2005, Turkey and Russia reached an agreement with Italy on the construction of an additional Samsun-Ceyhan pipeline in 2009 for oil transportation, but Transneft froze its implementation because of its economical ineffectiveness (Hale 2013, 209). Instead, Russia offered the South Stream pipeline from Russia to Eastern Europe, bypassing Ukraine and passing through Turkey's exclusive offshore economic zone (Hale 2013, 209). Turkey lifted its objection to this construction and gave approval with an agreement signed on 28 December 2011 (Gazprom Export Gas Market News, 2011) while she also signed the NABUCCO agreement in 2009 and a memorandum of understanding on Trans Anatolia Natural Gas Pipeline in 2011 (Çelikpala 2013, 547). In return for her approval of the South Stream pipeline, Turkey and Russia started to negotiate the price of natural gas but could not agree, then the 1984 contract was terminated after June 2012 (Çelikpala 2013, 547). In the same year, with the liberalization efforts of the Turkish government, BOTAŞ agreed to transfer part of her rights to import gas to private companies, and the Turkish Energy Market Regulatory Authority (EPDK) gave a license for this. Gazprom agreed and signed a contract with the Akfel Gaz, Bosphorus Gas, Kibar Enerji and Bati Hatti companies (Gazprom Export Gas Market News, 2012).

Besides the invigoration of economic and business relations between the two countries, Turkey and Russia had a similar position on some regional developments. Turkey's position during the Iraqi War in 2003 and the policy she pursued during the 2008 August war increased her prestige in Russia. As Trenin argued, during these two events Russia appreciated Turkey's rejection of US demands, especially in 2003, because the Russians do not like countries that let themselves be used by the US as a platform (Interview with Dmitry Trenin, Moscow, 6 September 2012). According to Bülent Aras, Ankara avoided taking sides in any "Russia versus West"

struggle, but instead suggested the establishment of a platform for regional problems such as the Caucasus Stability Platform (Aras 2009, 12). Sergey Markedonov and Natalya Ulchenko also reiterated Turkey's neutral position by stating that *"Turkey has pursued its own policies with regard to the disputed Abkhazia region in Georgia. (...) and distanced itself from a sharply critical campaign launched against Russia by other NATO allies and partners"* (2011). After the war, the US showed her support of Georgia and wanted to send humanitarian aid to Georgia via warships, but Turkey did not allow the passage of large American warships through the Straits, reasoning that the tonnage of these US warships (US war/hospital ships are over 70,000 tons) exceeded limitations designed by the Moutreux Convention for warships of the non-littoral states (Article 18-limitation was 30,000).⁴ Then the US administration sent three US warships – the guided missile destroyer USS McFaul (8,915 tons), the US Coast Guard cutter Dallas (3,250 tons) and the USS Mount Whitney (18,400 tons) – the aggregate tonnage of these warships slightly exceeding the 30,000 limitation (Morrison, 2008). According to the Convention, Turkey should inform other Black Sea countries about the passage of these warships and other countries, including Russia did not oppose their passage (Özersay 2013, 822). The US would have to obey the time limitation of the Convention (21 days)⁵ and the US sent these warships to the Black Sea, rotatory.

Turkey and Russia also had a common position when discourse about the need for change in the Moutreux Convention arose. According to the United States, neither the naval forces of the littoral states nor the mechanisms among these countries such as Blackseafor or Black Sea Harmony were efficient enough to provide security. The NATO forces needed to be based in the Black Sea and Operation Active Endeavour would be extended towards the Black Sea. Romania and Georgia supported the US presence in the Sea. However, Russia and Turkey developed a common position, arguing that the existing military mechanism was enough to operate OAE's mission on the Black Sea and insisted on preserving the Moutreux Convention, especially its limitation on non-Black Sea power military forces on the Sea. Indeed, neither Turkey nor Russia wanted to see NATO military forces on the Black Sea.

During this period, Turkish-Russian relations faced problems as well. They had preserved their different position on issues such as the independence of Kosovo, the Cyprus issue, the Karabakh dispute, the Arab Spring and possible military intervention into Syria and the basing of Patriot missiles

⁴ "Except as provided in the paragraph (b) below, the aggregate tonnage of the said [non-Black Sea] Powers shall not exceed 30,000 tons", (The Convention Regarding Regime of Straits, 20 July 1936, 6)

⁵ "Vessels of war belonging to non-Black Sea Powers shall not remain in the Black Sea more than twenty-one days, whatever be the object of their presence there." (Convention Regarding Regime of Straits, 20 July 1936, p. 7).

on Turkish territory in 2013. However, Trenin assessed these tensions as issues testing the depth and strength of the Russo-Turkish reconciliation, and he stated that *“so far, despite the occasional tensions, the new relationship has largely withstood those tests”* (Trenin 2013, 41).

Regarding relations with Georgia, Turkey continued to pursue a cautious and pro-status-quo policy. After Saakashvili came to power, he abolished the autonomous status of Ajaria. Although Article 6 of the 1921 Kars Agreement foresaw administrative autonomy for the Batumi region (Ivra) (Soysal 1983, 43), Turkey did not intervene in this issue and accepted that as an internal matter of Georgia (Aydın 2013, 487). As Hasan Karasar pointed out, at that time Turkey considered the reduced number of Muslim population in Adjara and Georgia to be more important than the autonomous status of that Region (Interview with Hasan Karasar, Ankara, 14 December 2012). On the Abkhazia issue, despite the existence of an Abkhaz population of nearly 300,000, Turkey again preferred to remain silent and did not establish direct relations with Abkhazia (Aydın 2013, 488). In addition, she tried to intensify her commercial, economic and political relations with Georgia and signed a visa-free agreement for touristic travels and started operating the Batumi Airport jointly in 2007 (Ministry of Foreign Affairs Republic of Turkey, 2011b). Agreements were signed for defence cooperation and the modernization of the Marneuli airbase in Tbilisi was completed in 2001 (Glogowska 2012). However, Turkey did not support Georgian NATO membership in Bucharest and the Sofia Summit and preferred to take Russian hesitation and reaction into consideration.

Relations between Bulgaria and Turkey, according to Demirtaş Çoşkun, improved rapidly after the end of the Cold War and they managed to solve their bilateral problem in a relatively short period of time despite the two countries having had different stances on the status of the Black Sea and the Straits and some potential problematic issues such as the issuance of transit visas for Turkish trucks by Bulgarian authorities (that was solved by signing new visa treaty), increasing Bulgarian nationalism and an increase in votes of extreme right-wing parties which had had anti-Turk discourse in the 2009 and 2013 elections, proposals on the recognition of the so-called Armenian genocide and their different stances during the Iraqi war in 2003 (Demirtaş Çoşkun 2010, 120-125).

Regarding Turkey's relations with the Western countries, their strong relations continued in the same form although Turkey was conflicting with US and EU interest on many occasions during this period, such as her position on the Cyprus issue, her deteriorating relations with Israel, her policy during the Iraqi war in 2003 and her autonomous position in the 2008 August war but these should be assessed as frictions rather than a split, a challenge or change of axis.

In the Region, within her relations with the West, Turkey continued to pursue her pro-status-quo foreign policy, did not challenge the Russian

position over the post-Soviet countries and cooperated with this country on the preservation of the Moutreux Convention. She gave importance to keeping non-littoral armed forces out of the Black Sea within the framework of the principle of regional ownership (Private Interview with a representative from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Republic of Turkey, Ankara, 22 January 2013). According to Turkey, regional conflicts should be resolved with this understanding and within this framework Turkey was attempting to establish security mechanisms encompassing all littoral countries for maritime security. She tried to conduct a balancing policy between the USA and the Russian Federation, as well. Therefore, it can be argued that Turkey has had a contributing effect in enhancing stability and security.

Conclusion

In the Region, Turkey did not pursue revisionist policies or attempt to change the structure, which was also in harmony with Western Bloc policies during the Cold War. After the end of the Cold War, Turkey at the beginning followed a challenging policy towards the Russian Federation by establishing close relations with the Caucasus and Central Asian countries until 1993. After that, Turkey preferred to cooperate with the Russian Federation and tried to pursue a balancing policy between her Western allies and Russia during the last twenty years. Thus, Turkey contributed to the reproduction of security of regional status-quo, particularly insisting on preservation of the Moutreux Convention.

While assessing effect of Turkey's role on security situation of the BSR, Randall Schweller's revision of balance of power theory is to be consulted. Schweller points out that the basic incentive behind alliances is "the compatibility of political goals, not imbalances of power or threat." (1994, 88). If a state is satisfied with the status-quo, she adopts a balance of power policy, while a state dissatisfied with the status-quo will bandwagon with a revisionist state even if she is powerful. While balancing is a costly choice, bandwagoning may offer benefits. Therefore, Schweller asserts that bandwagoning is more common (1994, 93). There are many states which are not satisfied with the status-quo and would like to expand. Therefore, he extends Neorealism by including revisionist states without excluding pro-status-quo ones.

After underlining the commonality and diversity of bandwagoning, Schweller proposes a new concept of "balance of interest." (1994, 99) At the unit level, "*balance of interest theory refers to costs [a state] is willing to pay to defend its values relative to the costs it is willing to pay to extend its values*" (Schweller 1994, 99). Thus, if the value of things that a state would like to get is more than what she already has – that is, if she is not satisfied with the status-quo – she has interest in bandwagoning. At the systemic level, as a result of balance of interest, Schweller points out determiner of safety of

international system, noting that “Distribution of capabilities, by itself, does not determine the stability of the system. (...) stability of the system depends on the balance of revisionist and conservative forces. When status-quo states are far more powerful than revisionist states, the system will be stable. When a revisionist state or coalition is stronger than the defenders of status-quo, the system will eventually undergo change; only the question of when, how and to whose advantage remain undecided” (Schweller, 1994, 104).

In the BSR, both the Russian Federation and Turkey are the pro-status-quo powers and security maximizers who pursue defensive policies when facing threats (Schweller 1994, 100-101). They are satisfied with what they have already had, that is status-quo. On regional level, stability and security of the regional system in the BSR could be preserved because as a status-quo powers, Russian Federation and Turkey are more powerful than dissatisfied groups of states and they cooperated on prevention of the interference of the extra-regional actors in regional politics. In the crises in 2008 and in 2013/2014 dissatisfied groups of states, demanding revision found a strong support by the USA and the EU to change the existing status-quo, however Russia did not allow this change, pursuing very extreme policies-recognizing break-away region and invading part of territory of another country. In 2008, expressed above, Turkey kept her silence and did not join the critical campaign launched against Russia by other NATO allies and partners. In the last Ukraine crisis, Turkey only announced that she did not recognize the independence of Crimea and its joining to the Russian Federation but did not join sanction and embargo due to overlapping of her interest with Russian ones. Indeed, this has been a historical policy pattern of Russia and Turkey to keep the Black Sea under their control, trying to prevent the effect of international dynamics, originating from non-littoral states if it is conflicting with their interest.

The Black Sea Region witnessed both a terminating and an enhancing effect of a great power on regional security such as Russian Federation policies in 2008 and 2013/2014; however Turkey has always supported to the preservation of security and stability there, even if she followed different policies towards the other regions due to the fact that she has not perceived a particular threat from the Region and has been highly satisfied with the regional order which provided supremacy and power of control over the Black Sea.

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