

**TURKEY'S RELATIONS WITH THE US SINCE THE
INVASION OF IRAQ, 2003-2010**

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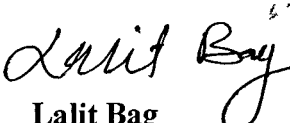
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DECLARATION


I declare that the dissertation entitled "TURKEY'S RELATIONS WITH THE U.S. SINCE THE INVASION OF IRAQ", submitted by me in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the degree of **MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY** of this University is my own work and has not been previously submitted for any other degree of this or any other University.



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We recommend that the dissertation be placed before the examiners for evaluation.


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TO

MAA AND BAPA

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Abbreviations

AID	Agency for International Development
AKP	Justice and Development Party
AWACS	Airborne Warning and Control System
CENTO	Central Treaty Organisation
CINCAFMEO	Commander-in Chief-Allied Forces Mediterranean
CINCSOUTH	Commander-in Chief-Allied Forces Southern Europe
CNN	Cable News Network
DECA	Defence and the Economic Cooperation Agreement
EU	European Union
FAO	Foreign Operation Administration
GDP	Gross Domestic Production
HADEP	People's Democratic Party
ICA	International Cooperation Administration
IFOR	Implementation Force
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IRBMs	Immediate Ballistic Range Missile
KDP	Kurdistan Democratic Party
KRG	Kurdistan Regional Government
MAP	Military Assistance Programme
MEDO	Middle East Defence Organisation
MEPI	Middle East Partnership Initiative

MSA	Mutual Security Agency
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NED	National Endowment for Democracy
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organisation
NSCO	National Security Council
OECD	Organisation for cooperation and Development
OEEC	Organisation for European Economic Cooperation
OPC	Operation Provide Comfort
OPEC	Organisation of the Petroleum Exporting Countries
PKK	Kurdish Worker's Party
PUC	Patriotic Union of Kurdistan
RP	Rafah Party
SACEUR	Supreme Allied Commander Europe
SALT	Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty
SODEP	Social Democratic Party
TPP	True Path Party
UNOSOM	United Nations Operation in Somalia
UNPROFOR	United Nations Protection Force
UN	United Nations
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
US	United States
WMD	Weapon of Mass Destruction

CHAPTER-I

INTRODUCTION

The Turkish-US relationship had its origins in the Cold War period and was developed especially by their cooperation against the Soviet expansion. Turkey became an important strategic ally of the US after its admission to the NATO in 1952 and functioned as the linchpin of NATO's southeastern flank until the end of the Cold war. Although disappearance of the Soviet threat diminished Turkey's strategic value, developments in the Gulf following the Iraqi invasion Kuwait and the emergence of a new constellation of states in Central Asia and the Caucasus underlined its vital relevance to the US. As a result, Turkish-US relations were transformed into strategic partnership at the end of the 1990s. Reflective of this, Turkey enjoyed the US backing not only in its bid for regional role in post-Soviet Central Asia, especially its efforts to build "east-west energy corridor", but also for an pro-active foreign policy in West Asia including its security ties with Israel. Topping them all, the US played an important part in the December 1999 EU decision to accept Turkey's candidacy for the EU membership. On the whole, a growing convergence of interests in the greater West Asian region ensured the continuation, even intensification of Turkey-US ties in the immediate aftermath of the 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks on the US. Reaffirming its alliance, Turkish government decided to send troops to Afghanistan to assist the US in its global war on terror.

However, the special relationship that the US had shared with Turkey for more than half a century was badly shaken by a series of developments in the run-up to the 2003 Iraq war. It began with the US decision to use force to overthrow Iraqi President Saddam Hussein, which stirred Turkey's concerns about the territorial integrity of Iraq and its fall-out on regional stability and security. At the same time, public opinion inside Turkey was overwhelmingly against the war, which partly accounted for the Turkish Parliament's refusal on March 1, 2003 to the American request for the passage of 62,000 US troops to northern Iraq through its territory. Although the government position remained ambiguous throughout the crisis, Parliament's negative attitude cost Turkey a great deal in its relationship with the US. Not only did the US withdraw its offer of partnership with Turkey even after the Turkish Parliament had agreed in October 2003 to deploy peace-keepers in Iraq, its forces also increased their cooperation with the Iraqi Kurdish groups at the cost of Turkey's security concerns.

Turkey-US Relations During the cold war period

The beginning of Turkey-US relations can be traced back to the 19th century. Although, there was a trade agreement dated 1830 between the two countries, relations in the 19th century and even in the early 20th century was largely confined to the activities of US missionaries in Turkey and to limited trade activities.. Even during the First World War, not then considered to be important to US national interests. There was a ten year break in diplomatic relations between the two countries from 1917 to 1927¹. Relations were resumed in 1927, but interaction between the two countries remained minimal until the post World War II periods. Turkey remained neutral during the Second World War joining the Allies only when the war was drawing to a close in order to meet the deadline for joining the victorious powers in founding the United Nations.²

The second World War, while it did not immediately change the level of United States involvement in Turkey, set the stage for intimate relations between the two countries in the post war era due to several factors: The course of Turkey-US relations was largely determined by the developments in the relations between Turkey and Soviet Union in the period after the second World War. The war marked a watershed in relations between the Soviet Union and Turkey. The Nazi-Soviet pact of 1939 proved to the Turkish that the Soviets Union had not abandoned the traditional Russian desire to control the Balkans sea Straits.³ The Soviet Union was also angered by Turkey's decision to allow German merchant ships to enter the Black Sea during the War. Turkey's maintenance of diplomatic and commercial ties with the Nazis and the emergence of the Pan-Turanist Wing in Turkey which openly displayed sympathy

¹ "Turkish-us relations" at <http://www.mfa.gov.tr/printpageE2.asp.official> website of the ministry of foreign Affairs, Turkey, accessed on 12 August, 2010.

² Mustafa Aydin (2000), "Determinants of Turkish Foreign Policy: Changing Patterns and Conjectures during the Cold War," *Middle Eastern studies*: London, vol.36, no.1, January 2000, p.105.

During the Second World War, Turkey soon found that at the end of the war the situation could be dangerous for Turkey and its needs more careful diplomacy as Turkey had done in the past. Again throughout the war Turkey fears about the possible Soviet threat.

³ Bruce Kuniholm (1980), *The origins of the cold war in the Near East :great power, conflict and diplomacy in Iran, Turkey and Greece*, Prenceton University Press, New Jersey, P.19.

for Nazi aims to dismember the Soviet Union and Turkish operations in the Balkans also upset the Russians.⁴

Thus, by the end of the war, distrust had crept into Turkish –Soviet relations. Turkey's stringent condition that it would support the Allies only if the hopelessly outmoded Turkish army was reequipped totally, strained relations between Turkey and its principal ally, Great Britain. Consequently, to the Turks the US seemed to be the best alternative to Britain as it did not have a history of colonial domination like the other Western powers and was the only country then capable of lending money to the floundering Turkish economy. Moreover, the victory of the Allies was seen as the victory of democracy by the Turks. The US was seen as the defender of right, justice and humanity. On its part, the US did not pay too much importance to the relations with Turkey at this time as it considered Turkey to lie in the British sphere of interest. Meanwhile, in March 1945, the Soviets Union denounced the 1945 Treaty of Friendship and Non Aggression with Turkey. In June 1945 it demanded Soviets bases on the straits of Dardanelles in addition to territorial adjustments on the Soviet-Turkish border as the price for renewing the Treaty of Friendship and Non Aggression.⁵ When Turkey refused to give in to these demands, the Soviet Union began to exert heavy political pressure on Turkey. Turkey's effort to involve the US in defending it failed as the US at that time felt that meaningful cooperation with the Soviet Union was possible after the war. At The Potsdam conference it was agreed that the Montreux Convention would be revised.⁶

Meanwhile, the US attitude towards Turkey and the Soviets demands in general began to change gradually. Turkey's cause was further helped by the fundamental transformation that took place in the traditional foreign policy of the US between 1945 and 1950. For 150 years, from the days of the founding fathers to the end of the Second World War, that policy had rested firmly on George Washington's famous farewell admonition to his countrymen in 1796 to attend to their own affairs and avoid

⁴ George S. Harris (1972), *Troubled Alliance: Turkish-American Problems in Historical Perspective, 1945-1971*, Washington DC: American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research and Hoover Institution, p.13.

⁵ Kuniholm, "The Origin of Cold War in the Near East", p.16.

⁶ Ference A. Vali (1971), *Bridge Across the Bosphorus: The Foreign Policy of Turkey*, Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, p.190.

entangling alliances or involvements in the conflicts of Europe.⁷ Washington's warning was even in 1945 almost as sacred in American politics and foreign policy as the Constitution itself. But the events of the post World War II period propelled the US into abandonment of its traditional Isolationist inhibition.

Soviets actions elsewhere and its demands on Turkey started to appear to President Harry S. Truman as an indicator of its intention to invade Turkey and control the Straits of Dardanelles. Truman's letter dated January 5, 1946 addressed to the Secretary of State Brynes showed his concern about this:

*"There isn't any doubt in my mind that Russia intends an invasion of Turkey and the Seizure of the Mediterranean. Unless Russia is faced with an iron fist and strong language, another war is in the making. Only one language do they understand- "How many divisions have you?" I do not think we should play compromise any longer. I am tired of babying the Soviets."*⁸

From this point onwards, the focus of American policy shifted away from the pursuit of a Rooseveltian peace of Great Power understanding to the central problem of dealing with the Soviet threat to international security.⁹ Meanwhile, the Soviet Union presented a proposal which called for control of the Straits to be in the hands of Turkey and other Black Sea Powers, with Turkey and Soviets Union sharing joint defence of the waterways. With US and British backing, Turkey rejected these demands and in September 1946, the US announced its intention to maintain a permanent naval base in the Mediterranean, a clear sign of its readiness to protect Turkey.¹⁰ Though the Soviets repeated their demands once more in September, they dropped them after another refusal from Turkey backed by America and Britain.

Soviet Threat

The Soviets Union's actions alarmed Turkey which now stepped up efforts to get protection from the US by arguing that Turkey's geographical position made it the key to the West Asia, supposedly the final target of the Soviet Union. In 1947, in reaction to the communist activities in Greece and Britain's decision to withdraw

⁷ Don Cook (1989), *Forging the Alliance, NATO: 1945-1950* London: Secker and Warbury, p.ixy.

⁸ *ibid*, p.36.

⁹ *ibid*, p.37

¹⁰ .Aydin, "Determinants of Turkish Foreign Policy", p.108

from the area and its assertion that the freedom of Greece and Turkey from Soviet domination was absolutely essential to West European security and West Asian stability, the US became actively involved in the area. The result was the Truman doctrine which forged the initial bonds between the Turkey and US. In his 'Truman doctrine' speech to the Congress in March 1947, occasioned by fears that the Soviet Union would enter into the power vacuum created by Britain's withdrawal from Greece (where a civil war was raging between the Communists and their opponents) and Turkey, Truman portrayed a world faced with the choice of the two different ideologies—one based on the will of the majority and the other based upon the will of a minority forcibly imposed on the majority. Truman proclaimed that it would be the policy of the US to "help free people to maintain their institutions and their integrity against aggressive movements that seek to impose upon them totalitarian regimes."¹¹

With reference to Greece and Turkey, Truman said "should we fail to aid Greece and Turkey in this fateful hour, the effect will be far reaching to the West as well as the East. We must take immediate and resolute action."¹² Truman's speech provoked a sharp debate on foreign policy in the Congress. Some Congressmen opposed the Truman Doctrine because it appeared to be an open ended commitment; others, because they feared that aid to Greece and Turkey would move the US closer to the dreaded Third World war.¹³ However, most Congressmen were in favour of the Truman Doctrine and in May 1947, a bipartisan majority approved \$400 million of aid for Greece and Turkey. This was a historic step as it was for the first time in its history that the US had chosen to intervene in a period of general peace in the affairs of peoples outside North and South America.¹⁴ Thus began the alliance between the Turkey and US, alliances which gradually became part of the US 'global endeavour to consolidate support around the World against the challenge posed by the Soviet Union.

¹¹ Paul Kennedy (1989), *The Rise and fall of the Great Powers: Economic change and Military Conflict from 1500-2000*, London: Fontana press, p.479.

¹² Cook, *Forging the Alliance*, p.74

¹³ Harold Whiteman Bradley (1973), *The US from 1865*, New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, p .378.

¹⁴ .Stephen E. Ambrose (1971), *Rise to Globalism: American Foreign Policy Since 1983*, London: Allen Lane, The Penguin, press, p.152.

This alliance was further strengthened by the evolving doctrine of 'Containment', i.e. of the Soviet Union which had now become a prime object of American foreign policy. In an anonymous article in the July 1947 issue of *Foreign Affairs*, 'The Sources of Soviet conduct', George F. Kennan, a career diplomat, advocated a policy of "long term, patient but firm and vigilant containment "based on the "application of counter force" as the best means of dealing with Soviet pressures.¹⁵ Kennan felt that the cold war could be won if the US maintained its own strength and convinced the Soviet Union that aggression anywhere in the world would be resisted firmly by it. In his article he said that;

*The political personality of Soviet power as we know it today is the product of ideology and circumstances: ideology inherited by the present Soviet leaders from the movement in which they had their political origin, and circumstances of the power which they now have exercised for nearly three decades in Russia. There can be few tasks of psychological analysis more difficult than to try to trace the interaction of these two forces and the relative role of each in the determination of official Soviet conduct. Yet the attempt must be made if that conduct is to be understood and effectively countered.*¹⁶

Meanwhile, the economies of Europe were in a state of near paralysis due to the devastation caused by the war. European economic recovery had become a top priority for US. It was decided to provide aid to Europe, even to the Soviet Union. Europe would work out the technical details of the aid while America would provide the money, material and technical advice. This came to be known the Marshall Plan after the then Secretary of state, George Marshall. US policy makers proposed only a small role for the Marshall Plan in Turkey as it was felt that with the Truman Doctrine, Turkey's urgent needs had been met and Turkey's economy was basically sound.¹⁷ This disappointed Turkey for which US assistance was deemed essential. So, it sent a delegation to America pointing out its heavy defence burden as an outpost of the West against the Soviet Union.

¹⁵ John A. Garraty (1968), *The History of the US: A History of Men and Ideas*, London: Allen Lane, the Penguin press, p.783.

¹⁶ Quoted in George F.Kennan (1947), "The Sources of Soviet Conduct" *Foreign Affairs*, July 1947.

¹⁷ Senem Ustun (1997), Turkey and the Marshall Plan: Strive For Aid, *The Turkish Year Book*, p.33, also see, Harris, " *Troubled Alliance*", pp.11-12. Further Details, Kuniholm, *The origin of Cold war*, pp.419-420.

By March 1948, the US agreed to extend to Turkey \$10 million in credits, as the first instalment in a program of economic assistance which by 1971 would total nearly \$3 billion.¹⁸The Marshall Plan in Turkey concentrated on developing agriculture. Of the \$300 million aid provided between 1948 and 1952, almost sixty percent was invested in the agriculture sector and by 1953, Turkey became, if only briefly, one of the world's major wheat exporters.¹⁹The success of the Marshall Plan made the Turks increasingly resistance to US insistence that projects be based on economic criteria, thereby preparing the ground for the severe disputes over aid that marred relations with Turkey during the mid 1950s. Turkey also become a member of the Organisation for European Economic cooperation(OEEC) which later become the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development(OECD) in 1948 and a member of the Council of Europe in 1949 and between 1948 to 1950 it received around \$183 million in economic aid under the European Recovery program and around \$200 million in military aid.²⁰Three successive agencies, i.e. the Mutual Security Agency (MSA), Foreign Operation Administration (FAO) and the International Cooperation Administration (ICA) implemented the economic aid, both direct and indirect to Turkey. The Military Assistance Programme (MAP) to Turkey equipped the Turkish armed forces with modern weapons and equipment and improved their training and maintenance facilities.

Turkey's Accession to NATO

With the fall of non-communist government in Czechoslovakia and the Berlin Blockade, the cold war assumed definite shape in Europe and it was realised that containment required a long defence force and institutional structures. In March 1948, Britain, France, Netherlands, Belgium and Luxemburg signed the Brussels Treaty providing for economic collaboration and mutual self defence. In May 1948, the US senate passed the Vandenberg Resolution with bipartisan support. It stated the "determination" of the US "to exercise the right of individual or collective self

¹⁸ Harris, *Troubled Alliance*, p.32. The Marshall Aid Plan was extended to Turkey which had its impact on Turkey-US economic relations during the Cold War period and Turkey gets membership in different organizations to boost its economy.

¹⁹ Ibid, p.34.

²⁰ William Hale (2000), *Turkish Foreign Policy: 1774-2000*, London: Frank Cass, p.116.

defence.....should any armed attack occur affecting its national security.²¹ It called for an alliance system justified under UN charter. The Vandenberg Resolution becomes the basis for America to open up negotiations with Europe for its collective security to fight against the Communist threat. In November 1948, Turkey submitted an unsuccessful application for membership in any future Atlantic pact. The North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) came into being on April 4, 1949 with twelve founder member countries: Belgium, Luxembourg, Denmark, Netherlands, Canada, Britain, Portugal, Norway, US, France, Iceland and Italy.²² Turkey was left out despite the fact that many influential Senators like Senator Mundt of South Dakota and Senator Cain of Washington had supported its inclusion due to a variety of reasons.

Firstly, due to budgetary constraints, the US army preferred to concentrate its resources on Western Europe. Secondly; Britain wanted Turkey to take part in a British led West Asia defence system rather than NATO. Moreover, there were strategic and ideological objections from the members as Turkey was isolated from the rest of the NATO community and could only be supported with sea and air power. The fact that Turkey could in no way be called “Atlantic”²³ (although this objection was overlooked when Italy was granted membership) or “European” also led to objections from the members as Turkey’s admission would require a change in the wording of the original Treaty which specifically referred to Europe. The European countries also felt that membership for Turkey, non industrialized and Muslim country would weaken the unity of the European community and that efforts to upgrade Turkey’s military equipments up to the standards set for Europe would lead to a reduction in the arms that they were to receive from the US. The smaller countries in NATO also feared that the inclusion of Turkey would increase the danger of war and their involvement in it’s as Article V of the pact called for automatic action by all in case of an attack against one of the members. Moreover, Turkey’s inclusion, it was felt, might encourage requests from weaker nations which could cause embarrassment to the alliance.

²¹Garraty, *The History of the US*, p.785.

²² Joseph Smith (1990), (eds), *The origin of NATO*, University of Exeter Press, UK, pp.8-12, also see, Vali *Bridge Across the Bosphorus*: p.116.

²³ Vali (1971), *Bridge Across the Bosphorus*, p, 117, Here the author has argued that the Turkey was not considered because of Italy and fear of Europe’s small country.

In June 1950, the Korean War broke out. The analogy between Turkey's exclusion from NATO and the exclusion of the Korea from US defence perimeter in the Far East worried Turkey. As the Turkish Foreign Minister Koprulu pointed out, the event "proved that geographical areas not under contractual agreement permit free play in international greed and this may open the way to aggression."²⁴ Following the UN Security Council's call for support of South Korea, Turkey announced its decision to send a 4500 man unit to join US troops in Korea in a bid to show its value and commitment to the Western Camp. Immediately afterwards, Turkey put forward a formal request to join the alliance. Turkey's request was not granted but as a compromise, the NATO Council of Ministers invited Turkey to take part in NATO military planning for the Mediterranean area, which Turkey accepted. Mean time, Turkey as one of main anti-Soviet countries on the Southern flank was essential and could also help repel Bulgarian attack on Greece.

There was also concern that without a security commitment from the US, Turkey would drift towards neutrality as it had during World War 11. Turkey could also act as a deterrent against Soviet attack and as threat to the Soviet Union's Southern flank. Turkey's membership would force the Soviet Union to divert additional forces from Eastern Europe and Turkish air fields would also be available for the NATO allies.²⁵ Turkey would also act as a gateway to the Muslim world. At the same time, Turkey's non Arab profile was perceived by the US to be a useful tool to prevent the emergence of a monolithic Muslim world and counterbalance the Arab World. As a memorandum by the Joint Chiefs of Staff in November 1948 asserted, both Turkey and Greece could offer bases from which "the USSR could launch operations against the island of Crete, Rhodes and Cyprus and against communications in the Eastern

²⁴ Altemur Kilic (1959), *Turkey and the World*, Washington DC: Public Affairs Press, p.155.

The coming of Democratic party to power in Turkey in 1950 was no doubt rapid progress on Turkey-US relations in the political, military, and the economic areas. During this period Turkish Government decided to dispatch a strong military brigade to join the US-led United Nations forces in Korea. This decision positively affected Turkey's bid for NATO membership, and Turkey and Greece join NATO in 1952. The US was the prime backer of Turkey's admission to NATO and the backing was crucial in overcoming the opposition of Great Britain and other's Western European members of the Atlantic alliance. Significant amount of US economic and military aid to Turkey constituted yet another aspect of special relationship between Turkey and US during this period.

²⁵ Bruce Kuniholm (1987) "East or West? The Geopolitics of Turkey and its NATO Alliance" in Middle East, *Turkey and the Atlantic Alliance*, Foreign policy Institute ,Ankara, p.136

Mediterranean and to the West Asia. Turkey is strategically more important than Greece since in addition it dominates major air, land and sea routes from the Soviet to the Cairo-Suez area and to the West Asian oil fields.²⁶ During in May 1951, the US proposed to its NATO allies that Turkey be made a full member. The US succeeded in overcoming the objections to Turkey's membership from Britain and the Scandinavian countries and in September 1951, the council of ministers approved the proposals unanimously. It was decided that Turkey's ground forces would come under NATO's Southern Command. In February 1952, Turkey formally became a full member of NATO.

With Turkey's admission into NATO, the defence of the West Asia was integrated at least in part with the defence of Europe. Turkey's unique geopolitical position made it both a European and a Near Eastern country with an important role to play in the defence of both these regions. By the early 1950s, defence of the West Asia become interlocked with the defence of Europe, with Turkey as the linchpin and the post war policy of containment in the region was firmly established.²⁷ Turkey's infrastructure, military capabilities and its role in NATO continued to develop during the Cold War era, reaching its highest watermark in the first Reagan Administration.

The Fifties: The Honeymoon Period

With the entry of Turkey and Greece into NATO, the command structure of NATO extended into the Eastern Mediterrean and to the Eastern border of Turkey. Turkey maintained a permanent delegation at the NATO headquarters in Paris and after 1967, in Brussels. Turkey's territory was protected by European Command of NATO, which was headed by the Supreme Allied commander Europe (SACEUR).

²⁶ E.Athanassopoulo (1998), "Western Defence Developments and Turkey's search for Security in 1948", in Sylvia Kedourie (ed.), *Turkey: Identity, Democracy, Politics*, London: Frank Cass, 1998, p. 101. The geostrategic position of Turkey became the focus of attention of US and other European countries. The geopolitical importance of Turkey again play a vital role of the security and defence of both Europe and West Asian regions.

²⁷ Bruce Kuniholm (2001), "The Evolving Strategic Significance of Turkey's Relationship with NATO", in Gusstav Schmidt (ed.), *A History of NATO: The first fifty years*, vol.3, New York: Palgrave Publishers, 2001, p.347.

The land, air and sea areas of Turkey was divided between two commands: The Commander-in -chief Allied forces southern Europe (CINCSOUTH) in Naples, Italy with a subcommand (Commander Allied Forces South- Eastern Europe) in Izmir, Turkey, and the Commander-in Chief Allied Forces Mediterranean (CINCAFMED) IN Malta, with a subcommand (Commander Eastern Mediterranean) in Ankara.²⁸ Turkey assigned fifteen of her divisions to NATO, but these were to remain under the direct command of her military. Turkey's NATO membership made available to it further indirect US financial and logistical support through infrastructural aid. Turkey's thus become one of the cornerstones of the Atlantic Alliance.

Turkey now began to synchronize its foreign policy with that of the West, especially that of the US. Its voting patterns in the UN General Assembly And Security Council(when it was a member of the Council) followed Washington's lead. For thirty years till 1979, when Egypt did so, Turkey was the only Muslim country to recognize Israel. Due to this orientation in its foreign policy, Turkey become further isolated from the West Asia and Eastern Bloc avoiding even commercial ties with these countries through NATO countries had commercial relations with the Eastern Bloc. Soon, the US Strategic Air Command began to use the newly constructed Incirlik facility for the training and periodic exercises. The US also provided new equipment, training and techniques to the Turkish military and tried to bring the Turkish military establishment as close as possible to the US model.

Bilateral Agreement

The NATO agreements were complemented by bilateral understandings, secret as well as public, dealing with special facets of the military cooperation between the Turkey-US.²⁹ Secret accords and executive arrangements dealt with matters like deployment of weapons systems in Turkey and right of US personnel to carry on activities of a military or intelligent nature. The US began to station combat and reconnaissance aircraft in Turkey and set up a chain of electronic installations along the Black Sea Coast and deployed Immediate Ballistic Range Missiles (IRBMs) in Turkey after idea of a "missile gap" was raised by the successful Soviet satellite in

²⁸ Vali, *Bridge Across the Bosphorus*, p.119

²⁹ Aylin Guney (2005), "An anatomy of the Transformation of the US-Turkish Alliance: From cold war to War on Iraq", *Turkish Studies*, vol.6, no.3, September, 2005, p.342.

1957. Turkey also cooperated in maintaining the secrecy of the U-2 program of high altitude over flights of the Soviet Union from the Incirlik air base. In 1953, after Stalin's death, the Soviet Union renounced all territorial claims on Turkey in a bid to establish friendly ties with it. Turkey however spurned this olive branch.

Following Yugoslavia's break with the Soviet Union in 1948, the US became perturbed by the possibility of a Soviet invasion of the country. With US encouragement, Turkey and Greece began negotiations with the Yugoslavia government, which resulted in the signing of an agreement on Friendship and Cooperation on February 28, 1953.³⁰ This agreement developed into an alliance in 1954 when the Balkan defence Pact was signed in Bled, Yugoslavia between the three countries. It declared like the NATO pact that an attack on one would be taken as an attack on all. The pact if it had succeeded would have brought Yugoslavia under the NATO umbrella without making it an official member of the alliance. But the alliance failed as the Soviet Union made peace with Yugoslavia removing the pact's main *raison d'être*. Moreover, the Cyprus dispute made it difficult for Greece to follow a cooperative policy with Turkey.

The West was anxious to create a barrier against Soviet advance in the West Asia. Thus, efforts were made to form a "Middle East Defence Organisation (MEDO)" but these efforts came to nothing because the Arab countries were suspicious of Turkey as they saw it as a tool of the West and because the Turks were the former masters of the Arab lands. The idea of defence arrangement for the Near East was not abandoned by the US despite the failure of MEDO. Turkey played a major role in forming the Baghdad Pact which was an alliance based on the "northern tier" states of Iran, Pakistan and Iraq to block Soviet advance into the Arab World. Britain joined this alliance but the US did not, for domestic reasons though it gave financial support and took part in its deliberations. Turkey supported the US stand during the Suez crisis of 1956. Meanwhile, Syria's close relations with the Soviet Union was seen as a threat by Turkey. To calm Turkish fears, the US declared that it would help Turkey in meeting any aggression. This declaration was followed on January 5, 1957, by the enunciation of the Eisenhower Doctrine, engaging the US to defend the West Asian

³⁰ Hale, *Turkish Foreign Policy*, p. 124.

countries threatened by “indirect” aggression from “international communism”.³¹The Eisenhower Doctrine authorized \$200 million in economic and military assistance to help friendly states in the West Asia to increase their security and welfare.³²During the Lebanese crisis of 1958,the US partly using Turkish bases landed in Lebanon on the request of the Lebanese government. In March 1959, the Turkey-US signed an agreement titled “Cooperation”³³ which declared the determination of the two parties to resist aggression whether direct or indirect. In 1959, the Baghdad Pact was reconstructed as the Central Treaty Organisation (CENTO) but with Iraq’s withdrawal following the Iraqi revolution, it faded out prominence as a facet in Turkey-US relations. Though it had provided a forum for regular high level contacts and served as an umbrella for a small amount of economic assistance, it was not effective as an instrument of military cooperation as it had no centralized military command like NATO.³⁴

Economic cooperation continued to occupy importance in Turkey-US relations during 1950s.Turkey’s economy was under severe strain in the 1950s and Turkey expected the US to bail it out of economic difficulties. The US did so too despite its reservations about the economic policies pursued by the Turkish government. In 1960,a military coup took place in Turkey. The revolutionary junta promised to remain loyal to all of Turkey’s allies including the US. It handed over power to civilian regime in 1961.The only change in the foreign policy of the new regime was that it tried to give a little more importance to its ties with its Arab neighbours.

The Sixties: The Cuban Missile Crisis and Cyprus Problem

The Turkey-US relationship during the cold war period was not problem free. The convergence of Turkey-US relations in cold war interests and the relationship

³¹ Harris, *Troubled Alliance*, p.66

³² Stephen M. Walt (1987), *The origins of Alliances*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, p.67.

³³ Sunita Pathania (1994), *Soviet Policy towards Turkey, 1945-1965*, Khama Publishers, New Delhi, pp.136-138. After the Lebanese crisis, the US afraid that the revolutionary fever might spread to other pro-western countries of the area, decided to intervene militarily in protection of its strategic and economic interests in the regions. At this point of time Turkey supported the US and permitted the use of its airport. This resulted the tension between Turkey and Soviet Union.

³⁴ Omer Goksel Isyar (2005), “An Analysis of Turkish-American Relations from 1945 to 2004: Initiatives and Reactions in Turkish Foreign Policy”, *Turkish Journal of International Reactions*, Vol.4, No.3, 2005, p33, <http://www.alternativesjournal/volume4/number3/isyer.pdf>, accessed on 3 September 2010.

was one dimensional, but the security focus limited the scope of disagreement between Washington and Ankara. But The resolution of the 1962 Cuban missile crisis resulted in the removal of nuclear-capable missile from Turkey, creating Turkish doubts about the reliability of western defence commitments.³⁵

In 1957, the NATO ministers had agreed in principle to deploy medium range missiles with atomic warheads. Only Turkey, Italy and Britain agreed to deploy these missiles in their territories. In 1959, the Menderes government in Turkey agreed with the US that fifteen Jupiter IRNBs, armed with nuclear warheads would be installed on Turkish territories, significantly enhancing Turkey's potential role in a nuclear war. In 1960, a bilateral agreement was concluded to this effect despite loud protests from the Soviet Union. In 1961, President John F. Kennedy asked for redeployment of the Jupiter missiles by the Polaris submarine launched system as they had become outdated, were inaccurate and were increasingly vulnerable to a Soviet first strike. But Turkey refused as it believed that the missiles enhanced Turkey's security via-a-via the Soviet Union and because of the Turkish military's contention that removal of the missiles would affect the morale of the armed forces.

The crisis broke out in October 1962, when the Soviet placed IRBMs in Cuba.³⁶ The US reacted by imposing quarantine on arms shipment to Cuba and issued orders to intercept Russian vessels headed for Cuba. On October 26, Khrushchev wrote to Kennedy that he would withdraw the Soviet missiles from Cuba if the US lifted its blockade on Cuba and agreed not to invade it. In a second letter, he made withdrawal of missiles from Cuba contingent on the US' withdrawal of Jupiter missiles from Turkey. Kennedy ignored the second letter and replied to the first one accepting withdrawal of Soviet missiles without a trade off and the crisis ended. Though apparently, the US had not made any concessions on the Turkish Jupiter's, later it was

³⁵ Stephen F. Larrabee and Ian O Lesser (2003), "Turkish Foreign policy in an age of Uncertainty", *Arlington, VA: Rand Corporation*, Santa Monica, p.164.

³⁶ Hakam Yilmaz (2001), " American Perspectives on Turkey: An Evolution of the Declassified US Documents between 1946-1960" *New Perspectives on Turkey*, no.25, Fall, 2001, pp.2-4. The Soviet decision on October 1962 to withdraw the missile from Cuba in return for an American guarantee for Cuba's independence and territorial integrity brought the crisis to an end. The Cuban Missile crisis was not an issue that involved the Soviet-Turkish relations directly. Yet it brought Turkey to the centre of the stage when Khrushchev offered to withdraw missile from Cuba in return for a similar US action in Turkey.

revealed that the US had agreed to remove the missiles after the crisis was over. In 1963, the Jupiter missiles were removed from Turkish soil as Turkey also now began to feel that the missiles could make it primary target of Soviet ire. Instead, Polaris submarine were given to Turkey to cover targets previously assigned to the Jupiter missiles and the US agreed to a program of aircraft modernization. Removal of the missiles also removed a major irritant in Soviet-Turkish relations. The Cuban Missile crisis revealed the interdependence of US security with that of her NATO allies; but it also made Turkey realize that a decision by Washington might jeopardize her safety and even her existence.³⁷ The revelation later that the US had actually struck a deal with the Soviets led to anti-Americanism in Turkey.

Relations between Turkey and the US were overshadowed by the Cyprus crisis of 1964 which became the catalyst for the decline of Turco-American relations. Turkey had recognized the British annexation of Cyprus, an island with eighty percent Greeks and twenty percent Turks, under the Treaty of Lausanne in 1923. Greece too had refused to support any movements in Cyprus for union with it. By the 1950s, pro-union or pro-enosis movement began to gain momentum in Cyprus and Greece. The issue was internationalized when Greece took the issue to the UN in 1954. Turkey was against Cyprus union with Greece because of its concern for the Turkish Cypriots and because such a union would fundamentally alter the strategic balance between Greece and Turkey, allowing Greece to surround Turkey on two sides. The struggle in Cyprus began to take the shape of Greek-Turkish civil war in Cyprus. Finally in 1959, it was decided that Cyprus would be independent with a power sharing agreement and with Turkish Cypriots enjoying guaranteed political rights. But in 1963, the President of Cyprus, Archbishop Makarios proposed to change the Constitution to eliminate privileges to the Turkish Cypriots. When fighting broke out between Turkish and Greek Cypriots, the Greek and Turkish contingents stationed on the island also joining the fighting. For the first time in NATO's history, two member states were fighting each other.³⁸ With more troops being dispatched to Cyprus by both Turkey and Greece, the Turkish air force carried out extensively bombardments of the island.

³⁷Vali (1971), *Bridge Across the Bosphorus*, p .129.

³⁸ Mustafa Aydin (2004), "Turkish Foreign Policy :Framework and Analysis" *SAM Paper*, no.1/2004,Ankara, pp.67-70.

The Cyprus crisis had a tremendous impact on Turkey –US relationship. The US failure to support Turkey acknowledged Turkish leadership irrespective political alignments and need to have a more varied and multifaceted approach in foreign policy affairs.

The aircraft used by the Turks were those provided under NATO auspices and assigned to the NATO command. NATO's peace plan which provided for a NATO peacekeeping force was rejected by the Cypriot, Greek and Turkish governments. So the US took the issue to the UN and the UN peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP) was created to maintain the ceasefire lines and the buffer zones. UNFICYP was an impartial, objective body operating exclusively under the mandate given to it by the UN Security Council. Between 1964-68, the UN peacekeeping operation was highly successful in reducing frictions and stabilizing the situation and making it conducive for mediating in Cyprus conflict. In accordance with the Security Council's recommendation 186(1964), Galo Plaza report introduced to promote a peaceful solution to the Cyprus conflict.³⁹ The Galo Plaza report was critical of the Turkish Cypriots proposals for geographical separation of the two communities. The Greek Cypriots accepted the report as the basis for negotiation but the Turkish side rejected and accused the Secretary General Dr. Galo Plaza of having overstepped his mandate by acting as an arbiter rather than a mediator. The Turkish side rejection of the report led to the suspension of the UN mediation efforts and further reinforced both sides to conflict between them. Thus, US refused to take sides in the quarrel and stood for peace and compromise for fear of alienating either Turkey or Greek.

The situation in Cyprus reached boiling point and in June 1964, Turkey decided to invade Cyprus after warning the US ambassador of its intention. This elicited what came to be known as the "Johnson Letter" from the President Johnson to the Turkish Premier Inolu. The letter called for restraint, warned Turkey against using US supplied military equipments in the invasion and urged Turkey to consult the US before undertaking any military action. It further warned that a Turkish military intervention could lead to direct involvement by the USSR. But here Johnson added: "I hope you will understand that your NATO allies have not had a chance to consider whether they have an obligation to protect Turkey against the Soviet Union if Turkey takes a step which results in Soviet intervention without the full consent and understanding of its

³⁹Aswini, K Mohapatra (1997), "Cyprus Conflict: An Overview" , in R. C. Sharma, and, Stavros A Epaminondas (1997), (eds), *Cyprus in search of peace and justice*, Somali Publications, New Delhi, pp.34-35.

NATO allies.⁴⁰ United State's stand led to Turkey abandoning its decision to intervene militarily in Cyprus. But the "Johnson Letter" left a lasting imprint on Turkey-US relations and was perceived in Turkey as a betrayal.⁴¹ Public opinion in Turkey turned against US. The US now came up with an effort to devise a solution for the Cyprus dispute through the mediation of the former Secretary of states, Dean Acheson. Acheson in his plan called for the union of Cyprus with Greece in exchange for cession of the tiny island of Castellarizon, a Turkish military base on Cyprus, to Turkey and compensation to those Turkish Cypriots who wished to immigrate to Turkey. This plan however was not acceptable to either Turkey of Greece even though it was revised to offer Turkey a larger area on a fifty year lease. The failure of the Acheson mission augmented anti-American sentiments in Turkey.⁴²

The Turkish public began to believe that the alliance was an instrumental primarily to protect US interests and that US interests diverged from those of Turkey. During 1966-1968, there was an open debate in Turkey as to whether it should remain in NATO. It was argued that membership of NATO required Turkey to maintain an oversized army, thus diverting resources away from civilian development projects, which would be a better defence against communism.⁴³ Any war, nuclear or conventional, between the Superpowers would make Turkey an instant target even if the war was fought in another theatre and for reason remote to Turkey's national interests. Even if Turkey were neutral but was attacked by the Soviet, the US would assist it anyway as it could not afford to let the Soviet dominate the West Asia. The adoption of the strategy of "flexible response" (which did not entail an automatic nuclear response) by the US after the Soviet Union development of thermonuclear weapons also caused concern in Turkey. Turkey nevertheless, decided to continue in the alliance as if it quit NATO, it would have faced serious shortage of military spare

⁴⁰ Joseph S. Joseph (1997), *Cyprus: Ethnic Conflict and International politics from Independence to the Threshold of the EU*, New York: St. Martin's Press, p.85

⁴¹ Nashu Uslu (2003), *The Turkish-American Relationship between 1947 and 2003: The History of a Distinctive Alliance*, New York, Nova Publishers, pp.175-178.

⁴² Omer Goksel Isyar (2005), "An Analysis of Turkish -American Relations from 1945 to 2004: Initiatives and Reactions in Turkish Foreign Policy", *Alternatives: Turkish Journal of International Relations*, vol. 4, pp.23-25.

⁴³ Hale, *Turkish Foreign Policy*, p.151

parts supplied by the US, would weaken it in its conflict with Greece and deprive it of much needed economic assistance from the US.

In a bid to contain the anti-American passions which continued to be there in Turkey, an US embassy spokesman assured the Turkish press that “the US will be beside Turkey if it is attacked by the Soviet Union while using its treaty rights on Cyprus”.⁴⁴ The US even voted against a UN General Assembly Resolution favouring the Greek position. Turkey and the US signed the Status for Forces Agreement of June 1964, which provided privileges and immunities for non-diplomatic personnel in US government service. The Cyprus crisis nonetheless caused a reappraisal of Turkey’s foreign policy and Turkey now moved towards rapprochement with the Soviet Union and attempted to improve and expand its relations with the Non Aligned countries, especially the West Asian countries.

The Cyprus issue once again gained prominence when the military coup in Greece in April 1967 led to fighting between the Turkish Cypriots and Greek Cypriots. Turkey felt it imperative to defend the interests of the Turkish Cypriots and began to make preparations for military invasion. By the end of July, there was some hope that with new and respected governments i.e. Athens and Nicosia, and with the Turkish military presence establishing a new balance of power on the island, an acceptable solution to the crisis might be found. The UN peace force on Cyprus was quickly expanded, and a Security Council Cease-fire resolution took place. Tripartite negotiations between Britain, Greece, and Turkey began in Geneva with US Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger working by telephone from Washington to help persuade Greece and Turkey to resolve their differences peacefully. The Geneva conference ended with an interim agreement that the Cypriots cease-fire would be respected, that UN-patrolled buffer zones would be establishing along cease-fire lines, and that the political future of Cyprus would be decided in subsequent negotiation, which would include both Turkish and Greek Cypriots representatively.

President Johnson dispatched Cyrus Vance as his personal representatives to settle the crisis. Vance succeeded in piecing together an acceptable arrangement which consisted of both Turkish and Greek pulling back the troops they had stationed on the island. The two rival communities on the island were also to stop fighting.

⁴⁴ Harris, *Troubled Alliance*, p.120

Vance's success in persuading the Greek government to accept the most important Turkish demands helped to restore the standing of the US in the eyes of Turkish opinion.

The Cyprus crisis shook the foundations of the Turkey-US alliance and led to reorientation in Turkey's foreign policy. The Soviet began to give aid to Turkey and by 1978 Turkey became the largest recipient of Soviet economic aid after Cuba.⁴⁵ By the mid 1960's, under the impact of rising anti-American sentiment, the opposition parties in Turkey demanded cancellation or revision of bilateral agreements relating to the US military presence in Turkey, which they alleged violated Turkish sovereignty. The Turkish military also demanded greater operational control of joint installations and a larger share in the military facilities such as runways, hangars etc. The crash of a US reconnaissance aircraft in the Black Sea at this time increased pressures for revision of these agreements. So, negotiations began between the two countries for revision of these agreements.

On July 3, 1969 was signed the Defence Cooperation Agreement which sought to base Turkey-US relations concerning defence on a mutual respect for the sovereignty and equal rights of the two parties and stipulated that any military installations in Turkey and its use must have approval of the Turkish Government and that the joint management and utilization principle would be applied in these installations.⁴⁶ US now began to cut down on the number of its military personnel in Turkey. Turkey also refused to allow its bases to be used by the US during the Arab-Israeli war of 1967 and the Lebanese crisis of 1969. Meanwhile, US economic aid to Turkey continued, though it was annually reduced by Congress from \$135 million in 1968 to \$60 million in 1969 and \$43.5 million in 1970.⁴⁷

The Turbulent Seventies: Opium Crisis

Between 1971 and 1973, the main bone of contention in US-Turkey relations was the dispute over the cultivation of opium. Turkey had earlier adhered to the League of Nations Convention to control the production and sale of narcotics and had

⁴⁵ Charles G .Mac Donald (2003), (eds), *Turkish Foreign Policy and Turkish Identity*, New York: Taylor and Francis Books, p.67.

⁴⁶ Vali, *Bridge Across the Bosphorous*, p.140

⁴⁷ Hale, *Turkish Foreign Policy*, p.192.

made production and marketing of opium a state monopoly. It was only when drug abuse becomes a major issue in US domestic politics that opium productions become a major issue between the two countries. The Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs gradually reached the conclusion that about eighty percent of the heroin illicitly introduced into the US was derived from opium diverted from Turkey.⁴⁸ By the mid 1960s the Johnson Administration began to focus its diplomatic efforts on Turkey to cut off the illicit supply of opium. Under the US pressure, Turkey ratified the 1961 Convention on Narcotics in 1966 despite the fact that there was no major drug abuse in any section of Turkish society and opium production was a major source of income for many farmers. Turkey also cooperated with the US by reducing the number of provinces where opium production was allowed, tracking down opium diverted into illicit channels and in taking actions against drug traffickers.

Under the Nixon administration the war on drugs became an even higher priority issue. The US now pressurized Turkey to completely ban opium production. The Turkish Government succumbed to American pressure and agreed to a complete ban. This evoked protests from the Turkish population as it was felt that Turkey had sacrificed an important source of income merely to please the US. Eventually, in 1974, the civilian government under Bulent Ecevit revoked the ban, but implemented measures to prevent diversion into the illegal market by enforcing what was known as the 'poppy straw process' of harvesting. These measures met Washington's approval and the disputes ended.⁴⁹

Cyprus Crisis

In another sign of deteriorating relations between the two countries, Turkey allowed Soviet planes to over fly its territory to resupply the Arabs but refused permission for US planes to use US bases on Turkish territory during the Arab-Israeli war of 1973.⁵⁰ It was at this juncture that the Cyprus crisis of 1974 erupted.⁵¹ In 1974,

⁴⁸ Harris, *Troubled Alliance*, p.192.

⁴⁹ Nashu Uslu (2003), *The Turkish-American Relationship between 1947 and 2003: The History of a Distinctive Alliance*, New York, Nova Publishers, p.249, and also see, James W Spain (1975), "The United States, Turkey and the Poppy, *Middle East Journal*, Vol.29, No.3, Summer, p.305.

⁵⁰ Steven L.Spigel (1985), *The other Arab-Israeli conflict: Making America's Middle East Policy, from Truman to Reagan*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, p .256.

⁵¹ Due to strategic importance of Cyprus and close proximity to Turkey, Cyprus always been an important item on the Turkish foreign policy agenda. Since then, Cyprus gradually became one of the

President Archbishop Makarios was overthrown in a coup supported by the ruling military junta in Greece and replaced with Nikos Sampson who was known for his hatred of Turks. The failed to take strong action until it was too late as Nixon was embroiled in the final stages of the Watergate scandal and Kissinger was too preoccupied with West Asian peacemaking after the 1973 war. Turkey felt that if an invasion was not carried out, Cyprus would probably be united with Greece, the Turkish Cypriots massacred or expelled and the Greek military junta would consolidate their rule. So, Turkey carried out a military intervention in Cyprus justifying it on the basis of the 1960 Treaty of Guarantee and confrontation was resolved in favour of Turkey with its occupation of the Northern part of the island and forced exchange of islands.

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The Cyprus crisis had a major impact on Turkey-US relations as ethnic politics which had so far not played a role in the relationship now became an important factor. Greek-US organizations were a vocal element in shaping US foreign policy to a degree matched only by the Jewish lobby in the Arab-Israeli conflict. The fact that there were an estimated 1.25 million Greek Americans in America as compared to 54,000 Turkish Americans, the support of the Greek Orthodox Church and powerful Congressmen of Greek origin helped the Greek-US lobby. Thus House of Representatives passed Joint Resolution 1131, putting an embargo on military aid to Turkey "until the President certifies to Congress that substantial progress has been made towards agreement on the withdrawal of Turkish Forces from Cyprus and that Turkey is in compliance with the Foreign Assistance Act."⁵² Though President Ford voted the resolution, Congress passed a resolution that postponed the ban on military aid to Turkey until December 10, 1974 and President Ford finally signed it. Despite Kissinger's plea that the ban would prove catastrophic for the defence of the Western World, Congress ratified the embargo on December 10 with the provision that the actual ban on arms shipments would take effect from February 5, 1975.⁵³ In response,

determinants of Turkish foreign policy during Cold War period. Turkey was willing and ready to take military action for Cyprus in both the 1964 and 1974 crises, which meant an open military conflict between Turkey and Greece, both NATO members. In spite of U.S. efforts to prevent such a conflict in the Southern flank of NATO, Turkey refused to back down from its claims over Cyprus and eventually intervened militarily in 1974. In response to the Turkish intervention, the U.S. imposed an economic embargo to Turkey until 1978.

⁵² Andrew Borowiec (1983), *The Mediterranean Feud*, New York: Praeger Publishers, 1983, p.130.

⁵³ Ibid. *The Mediterranean* p.131.



the Turkish Government suspended the Defence Cooperation Agreement of 1969 and ended all operations at all US facilities in Turkey other than those deemed to have a purely NATO function. This curtailed the US 'ability to monitor Soviet troop movements and missile and underground nuclear tests in the Sothern region of the Soviet Union which depended on the use of radar and other facilities on Turkish soil.

In October 1975, under strong pressure front the Ford Administration, the Congress decided to partially lift the embargo, limiting it to supplies covered by grants and deferred credit sales. But both the administration and the US military wanted the ban to be lifted completely. As General Alexander Haig, Commander-in – chief of the US European Command said, Turkey was a “staunch and loyal ally” with geostrategic importance and so “prompt action designed to normalize an increasingly estranged military relationship and assure for the West the full contribution of this valued ally is essential”.⁵⁴ Even President Carter who had adopted a pro-Greek position during his election campaign reversed his stand after his inauguration and supported the lifting of the embargo and in 1978, the embargo was lifted by congress allowing for the re-opening of major US facilities in Turkey the next year. But since 1978, Congress has linked military aid to Turkey to aid to Greece to achieve a balance of military strength between the two countries.

In the late 1970s, the difficulties in Turkey's relationship with the US together with the perceived decline in the Soviet threat and Turkey's economic problems persuaded the Turkish Prime Minister Bulent Ecevit to adopt a “new national security concept and new defence and foreign policies”.⁵⁵ Ecevit argued that Turkey was shouldering an unfairly large burden within NATO, was over-dependent on the US and should therefore cut down its forces, develop its own defence industries and improve relations with its neighbours. He also announced that Turkey would reduce its cooperation with the US and NATO. As a result, Turkey did not allow the US to use its bases for flights by U-2 reconnaissance aircraft to monitor the expected

⁵⁴ Ibid. *Mediterranean* p. 135.

⁵⁵ Hale, *Turkish Foreign policy*, p.162.

It has been seemed that the relations between Turkey and Europe were a function or derivative of the relations with the United States. But in this relational pattern a remarkable change has been seen from the beginning of 1980s. With the military programme on September 12, 1980, the US has occupied a more important place than Europe in Turkish foreign policy. Some accidental values such as human rights, rule of law, social state, democracy etc. have been endangered in Turkey so that the relations with Europe have been considerably gone downhill during this time.

Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty (SALT II) between the Superpowers. In 1979, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and the Islamic Revolution in Iran led to the second round of the Cold war. This again re-emphasized the importance of Turkey to the Western alliance and led to re-engagement in Turkey –US relations.

The Eighties: Re-Engagement Phase

During the Iranian hostage crisis, Turkey refused to impose a trade embargo on Iran like the US as it did not want to alienate Iran. But the 1980s saw an improvement in Turkey-US relations as the Iranian Revolution meant that Turkey was the West's only ally in the Northern tier and its value as a listening post and barrier to any potential Soviet advance into the West Asia was enhanced. The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan strained relations between Turkey and the Soviet Union as Turkey criticized the invasion and gave shelter to several thousands of Afghan refugees of Turkish origin. As a result, Soviet aid to Turkey dried up. The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan demonstrated to the Turks what could happen to a weak nation on the borders of the USSR which opted for neutrality and this reinforced Turkey's need to ally with the West. For US policymakers like Zbigniew Brzezinski, President Carter's National Security Advisor, the area to the east of Turkey was seen as an 'arc of crisis' and with the possibility of Soviet invasion or internal takeover of Iran envisaged as a distinct possibility.⁵⁶

Many members in the Congress believed that progress on Cyprus could be achieved only if Turkey was pressurized and aid was the best instrument for this. Congress wanted a Cyprus settlement. Some members were concerned because they had Greek American constituencies and others because they believed that the Turkish invasion had been an act of aggression, many because they still felt that Secretary of state, Henry Kissinger had too lightly disregarded executive responsibilities to the law and had responded inadequately to Congressional complaints about the wrongful use of US arms by Turks in the invasion.⁵⁷ Thus, aid given to Turkey was linked to aid to Greece. After 1980, the linkage took the form of a 7:10 ratio in military aid: for every

⁵⁶ Hale, *Turkish Foreign Policy*, p.163.

⁵⁷ James W. Spain (1984), *Memoirs of an Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary*, New York: Praeger Publishers, p.50.

\$7 in military aid allocated to Greece, Turkey received \$10 of aid despite the Reagan and Bush Administration's opposition to this ratio.

The clearest sign of re-engagement with the US came the signing of the Defence and the Economic Cooperation Agreement (DECA) in March 1980,⁵⁸ under which the US retained the use of twelve of its most vital bases in Turkey, including Incirlik and other essential intelligence gathering stations, while thirteen other facilities reverted to exclusive Turkish use. Turkey also began to receive increased military and economic aid from the US. The most prominent part of the 1980 DECA program was the establishment of a factory to produce F-16 fighters, in collaboration with the US Company General Dynamics which produced its first aircraft in 1987, although there were many other similar projects. In subsequent years, annual US military assistance to Turkey peaked at \$715 million in 1984, falling to \$526 million as the Cold War gradually scaled down, though Turkey continued to be the third largest recipient of US military assistance after Israel and Egypt. Aid for Turkey continued though the 1985 aid bill for Turkey called for a Presidential certification that Turkey was making efforts to reverse its actions regarding Cyprus question should be handled separately through diplomatic channels. Under US pressure, Turkey upgraded its relations with Israel in 1986. After 1986, Turkey-Israel relations started to improve markedly, as the Turks began to realize the importance of winning the support of the pro-Israeli lobby in Washington as a means of overcoming their problems with the US congress.⁵⁹

The DECA also provided for expansion of Turkey's defence industries through the transfer of technology and equipment. This strengthening of Turkey-US relations was accompanied by growing tensions between the Soviet and Turkey as Turkey had criticised the Soviet Union's invasion of Afghanistan and had become suspicious of Soviet build up in the Caucasus in the early 1980s and the Soviet rearming of Syria after the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982. Turkey's role in deterring Soviet adventurism in Iran and its potential role in protecting the West's access to oil in the

⁵⁸ Omer Goksel Isyar (2005), "An Analysis of Turkish-American Relations from 1945 to 2004: Initiatives and Reactions in Turkish Foreign Policy", *Turkish Journal of International Relations*, Vol.4, No.3, 2005, p.29 <http://www.alternativesjournal/volume4/number3/isyer.pdf>, Accessed on 3 September 2010.

⁵⁹ Hale, *Turkish foreign Policy*, p. 171.

Persian Gulf was highlighted in October 1982 by a Turkey-US to locator operating base agreement.⁶⁰

Internally, Turkey's adoption of the policy of economic liberalization helped bring it closer to the US by creating ideological bonds with the West. After the expiry of the 1980 DECA, a new DECA was signed in 1985. The DECA was again renewed in 1988. In 1985, the Congress gave the President authority to transfer to countries of NATO, southern region excess defence articles to help them modernize their armed forces. Turkey benefited from this act. The reduction of conventional forces in Western Europe allowed the US and other NATO countries to transfer surplus military material to Turkey, along with Greece and Portugal. In the meantime, the end of cold war being played out and the stage was set for a new era in Turkey-US relations, where new issues other than merely security and aid would come into play.

Thus the cold war period proved to be a period of interdependence for the Turkey-US relations: Turkey got protection from the Soviet threat and military and economic aid from the US while for the US, Turkey proved to be an indispensable ally in fighting the Red Menace. Thus, the solid core of mutual interest proved to be a binding factor in Turkey-US relations during the Cold War despite some disputes notably the Cyprus crises and the opium issue.

Turkey-US Relations during Post cold War Period

The end of the cold war completely altered the international system. This is because not only have new actors entered into the international game but the hierarchy of the system has also been influenced deeply. The end of the cold war thus resulted in a systemic change that altered the international distribution of power, the hierarchy of prestige, and the rules that had so far governed international affairs. With the end of the Cold War and the tearing down of the Berlin Wall, Turkish-US relations entered a new period.⁶¹ The post Cold War environment raised a debate about Turkey's future orientation both in Turkey and abroad. Some commentators posited that Turkey had lost its strategic importance because the Soviet threat had

⁶⁰ Bruce Kuniholm (1984), *The Persian Gulf and US policy: A Guide to Issues and References*, Claremont: Regina Books, p.121.

⁶¹ Philip Robins (2003), *Suits and Uniforms: Turkish Foreign Policy Since the Cold War*, Seattle: University of Washington Press, p.13

ended. Some also argued that turning to an isolationist policy was the best option for Turkey as the West no longer needed its support. Some also proposed a closer relationship with the Islamic countries so as to establish a common market, while some also proposed closer ties with the newborn Turkic States.

However, the collapse of communist threat and the subsequent disintegration of Soviet Union provided Turkey both challenges and opportunities to prove her strategic importance which enjoys a unique geographic position between Europe and Asia.⁶² The end of the cold war also meant that importance of many allies decreased. It was speculated for influence that with the disintegration of the Soviet Union, Turkey's strategic importance had diminished, if not altogether disappeared. In fact, in the post-cold war period, Turkey found itself at the centre of an unstable geostrategic and geo political scenario involving the world's most unstable regions: the Balkans, the Caucasus, West Asia and the Eastern Mediterranean. In this stage US realized that Turkey could help stabilize the West Asia and contribute to Balkan security. Turkey due to its geostrategic location could also serve as a countervailing force of moderation against rogue states like Iran, Iraq and Syria. Moreover, because of Turkey's historical ties, with the peoples of Central Asia, Turkey could be a model for the newly independent Turkic republic in Central Asia.⁶³

Its manifold strategic roles as: a moderate pro-western state in an unstable area, a rare, probably unique example of democracy ,however flawed in a Muslim-majority state; a supporter of Israeli-Palestine peace and a pace-setter in Islamic world, normalization with Israel; a base for operation Northern Watch ,which enforces a no-fly zone in northern Iraq ,a key element of United State's Iraq strategy; an ideological counter weight to Iran, a buffer against resurgence of Russian aggression; a forceful but pacific and anti-separatist advocate of the causes of besieged Muslims in its regions(Azerbaijan, Bosnia, Chechnya and Kosovo),⁶⁴ .all of whose kin are liberally represented in Turkey's population mix; an important non-Russian line of communication with the West, and to some extent a role model for the still unsteady

⁶² Aswini K. Mohapatra (2001), "Turkey quest for a regional role in central Asia", *International Studies*, Vol.38, No.1, P.29.

⁶³ Hale, *Turkish Foreign policy*, p.288.

⁶⁴ Alan, Makovsky (1999), "The new Activism in Turkish Foreign Policy", *SAIS Review of International Affairs*, Vol.1, Winter-Spring, pp.93-96, and further details also see, Mustafa Aydi, (2004), "Foucault's Pendulum: Turkey in Central Asia and Caucasus" , *Turkish Studies*, Vol.5, No.2, Summer, pp.1-22.

Turkic-Language states of the former Soviet Union; and a potential outlet for Caspian Sea energy resources as an alternative to Russian and Iranian routes was accepted as being crucial for the US.⁶⁵ Turkey could play a vital role in missile defence due to its existence air space. Turkey's role was critical in another important challenge to the US in the new world order, i.e. proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction ,as it lies core to countries like Iran, Syria and Iraq all of which have moved towards acquiring such weapons. Turkey's role in both the regional and international systems was this recognized as being critical in dealing with the problems and challenges of the post cold war era. It was in recognition of these factors that President Bill Clinton in his address to the Turkish Parliament in 1999 declared Turkey to be a strategic partner of the US.⁶⁶

However, the Turkey-US relationship started rather inauspiciously after the end of the cold war. Firstly; relations were soured in 1990 due to the Armenian and Cyprus questions. On Armenian genocide swiftly reacted by placing limits on US training flights and naval visits to Turkey. Further damage was caused to the relationship when President Bush in 1990 issued a message of sympathy for the Armenians. The bond between the two states got back on track with the Gulf crisis, where Turkey emerged as a main ally in the US war efforts. Turkey became important as a result of its position on the map rather than its potential as a regional actor and partner in its own right. The Gulf war refocused renewed US attention on Turkey, but like the previous context of containment of Soviet power, it did so in a derivative way.⁶⁷ However, the focus of the Turkey-US security relationship has shifted since the end of the cold war from the need to counter the Soviet threat. By contrast, Turkey-US security cooperation was focused primarily on the West Asia, the Caspian region and the Balkans. This shift in focus has given Turkey-US relations an important new strategic dimension that did not exist during the cold war.

⁶⁵Quoted in Nilofer Nali, "Turkey and NATO: Changing Geo-politics and Turkey's Role,<http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Cyprus/8732/natoturkey2.html>, accessed on 8 January, 2011.

⁶⁶ Kemal Koprulu (2005) "Paradigm Shift in Turkish-US Relations," *Turkish Policy Quarterly* 4, No.1, p. 2, at http://www.esiweb.org/pdf/esi_turkey_tpq_id_23.pdf, accessed on, 14 March, 2011, and also see, "Turkish –US relations" Ministry of Foreign Affairs Turkey.

⁶⁷ Khalizad, Zalmay, Lesser O, Ian, and Larrabee, F Stephen (2000), *The Future of Turkish-Western Relations; Towards a strategic Plan*, Rand Publications, see, Introduction.

The Gulf war

The Gulf war was a watershed in the Turkey-US bilateral relationship in the post-cold war era. This was the first instance in the post cold war era, which demonstrated Turkey's geostrategic importance to the US. The Gulf crisis was of pivotal importance for the Turkish foreign relations in the post cold war era for two reasons. First, it marked the end of the conventional wisdom that Turkey need not be an actor in the West Asia subsystem, either as a function of Kemalist disdain for the region or as part of the post-Baghdad pact trauma.⁶⁸ Secondly, it focused renewed attention on Turkey's geostrategic importance in the US. So Turkey grabbed the opportunity of allying with the US once more as good relations with the US had always been a cornerstone of Turkish foreign policy.

During this period the United States, Congress ended the military aid program for Turkey. It was during these years of uncertainty that Iraq invaded Kuwait on August 2, 1990. In response to that invasion, on 6 August 1990, Resolution 661 was adopted by the Security Council postulating that all states shall prevent all trade activities with Iraq or Kuwait.⁶⁹ On 8 August, Turkey declared that it would adhere to all of the decisions of the United Nations in this matter, and Turkey shut down the Kirkuk-Yumurtalik oil pipeline that had been transporting Iraqi oil to the Turkish Mediterranean port of Ceyhan to stop the Iraqi aggression. This was indeed significant step for Turkey because it had been supplying 40 percent of its crude oil through this pipeline. In response to the increased tension, Turkey increased troop levels to approximately 120,000, with air support, armour and transport along the Iraqi border. Turkey also allowed the coalition forces to use Incirlik air base. These decisions "marked a radical departure from Turkey's established policy regarding non involvement in regional conflicts and wars."⁷⁰

⁶⁸ Raymond Hinnebusch and Anoushivaran Ehteahami (2002), (eds), *The foreign policy of Middle Eastern States*, Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publications, p.326.

⁶⁹Resolution 661 (1990), <http://www.casi.org.uk/info/undocs/gopher/s90/15>, accessed on 24 December, 2010.

⁷⁰.Sabri Sayari (1997), "Turkey and the Middle East in the 1990s," *Journal of Palestine Studies* 26, No.3, spring, p.45.

Three of Turkey's actions played a key role in the economic and military campaign against Saddam Hussein's regime: it shut off the twin pipelines that carried Iraq's oil exports, it permitted the use of Incirlik Air Base, and it held down eight Iraqi divisions in the north that could otherwise have been used against the coalition forces. Right after the First Gulf War, in April, a refugee crisis emerged when Saddam launched a military campaign to suppress the Kurdish rebellion in the north of the country. About 500,000 Iraqi Kurds escaped to the Turkish-Iraqi border. The Turkish Red Crescent, local villagers, and later on international aid agencies did their best to cope, but it soon became clear that the situation was unsustainable.⁷¹ The Turkish National Security Council decided to appeal to the United Nations Security Council for assistance. Accordingly, Security Council Resolution 688 declared that the repression of the Iraqi civilian population threatened international peace and security in the region. Thus, in 1991, Operation Provide Comfort (OPC)⁷² was created to conduct humanitarian operations and return refugees to their homes. In July, OPC was replaced by Operation Poised Hammer, which was also generally known in Turkey as *Cekic Guc*. The no-fly zone was established on 2 August 1992.⁷³ If Saddam tried to launch any attack, he would face coalition air power and ground troops.

Consequently, the Incirlik air base became crucial for the patrol of the no-fly zone north of the 36th parallel. The PKK exploited the collapse of Saddam's power in northern Iraq, as well as the availability of arms from retreating Iraqi troops. On 4 August, PKK terrorists attacked a gendarmerie post in Hakkari, killing nine Turkish soldiers and abducting seven of their comrades to PKK bases in Iraq as the beginning of their bloody campaign. Additionally in 1992, there were some developments in northern Iraq that resembled the rudiments of a de facto state formation similar to the legislative elections. During that period, many in Turkey voiced suspicions about the

⁷¹ Ibid, "Turkey and the Middle East", p.45-46.

⁷² Operation Provide Comfort (OPC), was initiated after the Gulf war when the United Nations took steps to protect the Kurdish people of northern Iraq, who were being persecuted by Iraqi government. Thousands of refugees were fleeing northern Iraq and migrating to other countries, predominantly Turkey. The role of OPC was to stop this inhumane treatment of the Kurdish population and to promote stability in northern Iraq.

⁷³ Quoted in, Iraq no Fly Zones, Iraq Inquiry, *Ministry of Defence Report*, 6th.nov.2009, at www.iraqinquiry.org.uk/media/38010/mod-no-fly-zone-r1pdf, accessed on 14 April, 2011.

motivations of its Western allies, including the United States, who backed these developments.

The economy of Turkey was another concern because the First Gulf War caused great economic losses for Turkey, including oil prices, land transportation, disruption of the construction sector, tourism sector and exports. Added to that, Turkey had to find an extra oil resource because of the closure of the Kirkuk-Yumurtalik pipeline.⁷⁴

In the post cold war era, like the First Gulf War proved, the predictions for a peaceful and prosperous new world order were too optimistic. Although the threat of an all-out war between the superpowers has decreased since the end of the Cold War, new and potentially more explosive problems have emerged. Among them, one can see a flare-up in ethnic tensions with a tendency for violent irredentism that has swept through much of the Balkans and the Caucasus with potentially disastrous consequences for the entire region. Other risks and threats take the form of terrorism, religious fanaticism, and rapid population growth in the developing countries, Also, pollution on a global scale; increased racism and xenophobia have all gained ground.

In line with this new environment, Turkish-US relations also changed. A new concept called the enhanced partnership was introduced in 1991. This new concept was aimed at diversifying and deepening the Turkish- American relationship as well as developing it on a more substantial basis.⁷⁵ Meanwhile, for a short period of time, the Islamist Government, in a coalition with the liberal True Path Party (TPP), came into power in the mid 1990s. This new government was not in favour of expanding relations either with America or with Western countries. While the new prime minister was paying a number of consecutive visits and trying to bind Turkey to Developing-8 (D-8) countries, he insistently rejected visiting the United States of America during his administration.⁷⁶ However, his government collapsed after a short period of time.

⁷⁴ Mustafa Aydin and Cagri Erhan (2003), *Turkish-American Relations: Past, Present, and Future* London: Routledge, 157.

⁷⁵Turkey and U.S.
http://www.turkishembassy.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=510&Itemid=490, accessed on 24 December, 2010.

⁷⁶Mehran Kamrava (2005), *The Modern Middle East: The Political History Since The First World War*, California: University of California Press, 311.

Turkey, during the 1990s, made many international attempts to sustain peace and stability worldwide and sent troops to more than thirty points on the globe. Turkey sent three hundred troops into Somalia under the UNOSOM II (United Nations Operation in Somalia) command in 1993 and has, for some time since then, taken command of this peace force. Due to its historical ties, Turkey sent fourteen hundred troops to help its Bosnian friends under UNPROFOR (United Nations Protection Force) command in 1993. These troops worked also under the IFOR (Implementation Force) command. Kosovo was another crisis in which Turkey and U.S. forces worked together under NATO command. Turkey contributed to the NATO air operation with twenty-one planes including F-16s and KC-135s in 1999.⁷⁷

In 1997, Turkey and the United States identified five primary topics of mutual interest, which became known as the Five Topics Agenda. These topics included energy, economy and trade, regional cooperation, Cyprus and defense issues and security. This was in response to the US Secretary of Commerce's designation of Turkey as an emerging market among the big ten emerging markets. It was clear that Turkey would have an important role in US trade and investment strategies in the new millennium. In December 1998, after the United States and Britain executed the Desert Fox Operation in Iraq to demolish weapons, a disagreement emerged between the Turkey-US. Turkish authorities argued that America had not sought Turkey's approval before the operation. In order to stop any possible refugee flow, Turkey closed the Harbour border gate. The Turkish General Chief of Staff and his U.S. counterpart came together on February 22, 1999, to make some alterations in the Document of Engagement Rules, which had been signed by the military authorities of Turkey, the United States, and Britain earlier, in order to obligate the U.S. for prior consultation with Turkey in terms of these kinds of operations.⁷⁸In late 1998, Turkish-American decision makers cooperated on the the European Security and Defense Policy Initiative subject, which has distorted the Turkish EU aspiration. The ESDI has

⁷⁷Ian O. Lesser (2004), "NATO Looks South: New Challenges and New Strategies in the Mediterranean", Rand Corporation, p. 41, at, http://www.rand.org/pubs/monograph_reports/MR1126/, accessed on January 5, 2011.

⁷⁸Isyar, "An Analysis of Turkey-US", p.35.

been the topic as the United States has supported the European countries while preserving its own concerns because of NATO. In December 1998, Britain and France signed the St. Malo Declaration. According to this declaration, the European Union (EU) would take its decisions about the subjects with respect to its own security and could automatically benefit from NATO's planning and operational facilities without asking for other non-EU members of NATO, like Turkey. In this context, Turkey was excluded from consultation and decision mechanisms; however, Turkey has asserted its veto power to impede this kind of automatic mechanism. This question remains to be solved at a future date.

The Kurdish Question

The Kurdish uprising is one of the key area of cooperation between Turkey-US in the aftermath of the 1991 Gulf war.. The Turkish Kurds are the most traditionally structured social group in the whole country. The root of the Kurdish Problem is the discrimination against Kurds in Turkey. The area, where most of the Turkish Kurds live, i.e. the southeast part of the country is poorer and more economically underdeveloped than other parts of the country. Kurds were banned from speaking their own language in any official forum.⁷⁹ This kind of discrimination naturally led a separatist movement which later developed into a terrorist movement under the PKK led by Abdullah Ocalan. Abdullah Ocalan initially led a campaign for Kurdish succession and then for Kurdish autonomy. The PKK grew into a impressive force in the early 1990's, gaining control over considerable amounts of territory in south-eastern Turkey. The Turkish military carried out a harsh crackdown on the PKK in the 1990's. It undertook a scorched earth policy to eradicate any kind of popular support for the PKK. By the mid-90,s the PKK had retreated into northern Iraq from where it conducted a terror campaign against Turkey. So, Turkish forces carried out harsh reprisals against it by crossing over the border into northern Iraq.⁸⁰ The US was perhaps the only country which did not condemn the Turkish Military's action.

By 1998, Turkey realized that PKK leader Abdullah Ocalan was in Syria and threatened to invade Syria unless it expelled Ocalan. Syria complied with the Turkish

⁷⁹ Ceng Sagnic (2010), "Mountain Turks: State, Ideology and the Kurds in Turkey" , *Information Society and Justice*, Vol.3, No.2, July, pp.128.

⁸⁰ , Henri J. Barkey and Graham E. Fuller (1998), *Turkey's Kurdish Questions*, Carnegie Publication, New York, p.159.

demand and he was expelled. Ocalan sought asylum in different countries and was eventually assisted by Greece, which hosted him in its embassy in Nairobi. Turkish commandos assisted by US intelligence agencies in Feb.1999, captured Abdullah Ocalan, leader of the Kurdish Worker's Party (PKK), in Nairobi.⁸¹ US intelligent agent in Nairobi interpreted Ocalan's telephone calls and informed Turkey of his presence there. He was tried and convicted of treason and separatism in June 1999, and sentenced to death. The US helped Turkey capture Ocalan due to its importance as a base for US military Operation against Iraq and also because it considered him a terrorist. Even after Ocalan's capture and the PKK's decision to lay down arms, Turkey has continued its military campaign against the organization, raiding PKK strongholds in northern Iraq.

The US intervention in the Gulf and nature of Turkish involvement in the way reduced chances of autonomy to the Kurds. Despite the Kurds to revolt against Saddam Hussein, when they did revolt in 1991, the US did nothing to help them and the revolt was crushed.⁸² This was because it feared that the revolt would break up Iraq into two or three parts and destabilize the entire region. Moreover, it could not antagonized the Turks by helping to establish an independent Kurds state. Nevertheless from 1996, the US played the role of a mediator between the two rival Kurdish policies, the PKK and the KDP. In brief, the capture of the PKK leader Abdullah Ocalan in Kenya through Turkish-U.S. intelligence cooperation is one of the most important events in 1999. Turkish public opinion was very positive due to this cooperation, in terms of bilateral relations. However, the Turkish Prime Minister later commented that he could not understand the real intentions of the U.S. in this cooperation. In addition, visits between top officials during 1999 accelerated bilateral relations. In April, Turkish President Suleyman Demirel visited the United States for NATO Summit. In September, Turkish Prime Minister Bulent Ecevit visited the United States in the aftermath of the Golcuk Earthquake which killed thousands in

⁸¹ Statement of Sonar Cagaptay the House International Relations committee, Hearing on "Turkey's future Direction and the US-Turkey Relations", Oct,1,2003, at http://www.house.gov/international_relations/108/per100103.htm, (Accessed on 12 January 2011).

In 1996, Turkey and Israel signed military training agreement and arm industry cooperation which soon followed by enhanced trade activity. This enhanced relations with Israel also helped Turkey to fight against the PKK, and induced Syria to expelled the PKK leader Abdullah Ocalan.

⁸² Peter W. Galbraith (2005), "Refugees from war in Iraq, What happened in 1991 and What may happen in 2003", at www.migrationpolicy.org/pubs/mp/policyBriefIraq, (Accessed on 22 February 2011).

Turkey. In November, U.S. President Bill Clinton visited Turkey, addressing the Turkish Grand National Assembly. These visit strengthened the strategic nature of the relationship, which has been termed a strategic partnership as of September 1999, meaning that strategic cooperation is multidimensional and multi-faceted and involves a wide range of overlapping interests in Europe, the Caucasus, Central Asia and the West Asia.⁸³

Turkey's EU Aspirations and Role of US

During the post-Cold war era Turkey's main foreign policy objective has been become a part of the European Union. Turkey applied to join the EU in 1963, but there has been little progress on this issue since then. Turkey has to satisfy the EU's accession rules i.e. Copenhagen criteria in order to join the EU. The EU objection to Turkey's accession is that Turkey is a Flawed democracy since its military has too much influence over politics and its poor human rights record with regard to the Kurd issue. The political powers of the military were reduced. EU reforms have civilianized the Turkish National Security Council (NSCO), the country's top foreign policy body, in which the military used to enjoy dominance.⁸⁴ Today the NSC is an advisory body with a majority of civilians reporting to the Deputy PM. The fact that as Turkey was discussing the Iraq war, the army was conspicuously absent from this debate shows the changing role of the military. As far as Human Rights are concerned, Turkey granted amnesty to members of the PKK. Turkey has also given cultural rights to the Kurds, who are now allowed to receive education, run TV programme, and even conduct election propaganda of Kurds.

The US has been an enthusiastic advocate of Turkish membership since 1991. It played a significant role in the EU establishment of a Custom Union with Turkey in 1995. The US sees Turkey's entry in to the EU as a means of trying up Turkey with the West. For the US, Turkish accession would fulfil its long held strategic goal of placing a key ally in a prosperous and stable Europe while also contributing to reform

⁸³ Omer Goksel Isyar, (2005), "An Analysis of Turkish –American Relations from 1945 to 2004: Initiatives and Reactions in Turkish Foreign Policy", *Alternatives: Turkish Journal of International Relations*, vol. 4, p.36.

⁸⁴ Soner Cagaptay (2003), "Turkish Future Direction and the US-Turkey Relation", October 1, 2003, at http://www.house.gov/international_relations/108/par100103.htm (Accessed on 12 January 2011).

in the greater West Asia. This is because a “no” could push the Turkish economy into depression, undermine its surprising political stability and reverberate across the Muslim World.⁸⁵ Besides, integrating a state that favours strong transatlantic ties into EU could have a positive effect on how EU-US relations evolve in the long run. The US also feels that preparing for and joining the EU will have positive effect on Turkey’s own growth as a secular, Western –oriented democracy. This in turn, will improve the scenario for strategic cooperation between Turkey, the US and Europe.

Turkey-US relations after 9/11

Relations between Turkey-US were strengthened by the events of September 11 and increased Turkey’s strategic importance to the US. Turkey was the first Muslim majority state to offer condolences to the US immediately after the attacks and it offered unconditional support to the US for fight against the perpetrators of the attacks. As the debate about “what went wrong” with the US policy towards the Islamic world unfolded, Turkey’s secular and democratic political system stood out as an exception.⁸⁶ Attention now changed from Turkey’s geostrategic location to what Turkey represents and the Muslim, democratic, secular, and pro-western attributes of Turkey acquired greater relevance. However, the collapsed of Soviet Union and the September 11 attacks, the global attention was focused on promoting political reforms in West Asia to eliminate the “roots of terrorism”, where Turkey could be a possible model for the promotion of democracy in the Arab World.⁸⁷ The September

⁸⁵ Morton Abramowitz and Richard Burt (2004), “High Stakes for Turkey and the West”, The Washington Post, August 20, 2004, at [http://www.acus.org/Transatlantic Relations/High%20Stakes%20for%20Turkey%20and%20the%20West.pdf](http://www.acus.org/Transatlantic_Relations/High%20Stakes%20for%20Turkey%20and%20the%20West.pdf), (Accessed on 12 January 2011).

⁸⁶ Omar Taspiner (2005), “Changing Parameters in US-German-Turkey Relations”, at <http://www.aicgs.org/publications/PDF/polRep18.pdf>, Accessed on 15 January, 2011.

⁸⁷ Aswini K. Mohapatra (2008), Democratization in the Arab World: Relevance of Turkish Model, *International Studies*, Vol.45, No.4, p.271.

Turkey has often been projected as a model by various American think-tank and the western media enlargement of market democracies in the adjacent countries in West Asia and North Africa to counterbalance the surge of radical Islam. Together with Turkey’s geo-strategic salience, the idea of a Turkish model of democracy seems to have provided the rationale for a joint US–Turkish enterprise in West Asia following the breakup of the Soviet Union in the early 1990s. During this In order to play an ambitious role in the region, Turkish decision-makers and analysts maintained that their secular beliefs and liberal–democratic credentials represented their country’s ‘soft power’. In the past few years, however, the Turkish elite appears to have been less receptive to the Western projection of Turkey as a suitable model for the Muslim world.

11 attacks led to a growing acceptance by the international community of Turkey's approach to the fight against terrorism as it has been fighting against terrorism for many years. Turkey has a long history of fighting terrorism and therefore was expected to be helpful for US to better understand threats in the region.

However, it was believed that Turkey could share its experience of trying to keep an open society while enforcing laws and taking strongly steps against terrorism. Its use of military means against Kurdish rebels had earlier been criticized by the West. But now, there was a realization that the military option could not be ruled out completely while dealing with terrorists. Turkey had earlier tried to bring the terror issue onto NATO's agenda albeit unsuccessfully. Thus, Turkey benefited from the changed international atmosphere following 9/11, as the attacks now come to be known as popularly, as at last the phenomenon of international terrorism became an international concern and a consensus seemed to be emerging on the issue.

Turkey could easily sympathize with the US "war on terror" as it had also suffered at the hands of Kurdish rebels for more than 15 years. As far as Turkey was concerned, its support to the US crusade against terrorism was the logical corollary of its position on international terrorism. Turkey accepted the words of US that the Al Qaeda was responsible for the 9/11 attacks.⁸⁸

Another cooperation between Turkey-US was on the war on Afghanistan. Turkey's decision to support the US war on Afghanistan was the fact that Turkey considers the Central Asian Republics near Afghanistan to be of strategic importance to it and it did not want Islamic fundamentalism to grow in this region and cause problems to its allies there; something which was probable if the Taliban continued its reign in Afghanistan. Joining the "war on Terrorism" in Afghanistan was, for Turkey a useful

⁸⁸ Stephen A. Cook "US-Turkey Relations and the war on Terrorism", Brookings Analysis Paper no.9, November 6, 2001, www.brookings.edu, Accessed on 12 October 2010.

The September 11 attack showed that the parameter of relationship have changed significantly between Turkey-US. After the September 11 attack the Turkish leaders assumed that the fighting against terrorism could be the common purpose of their relationship. But the March 2003, decision of the TGNA and the US inaction towards PKK have muddled their relations, although Turkey provided support to the US before and after the invasion of Iraq. In Afghanistan Turkey also commanded its military and participated in the reconstruction process.

means to enhance its influence in Central Asia and to have any in political future of not just in Afghanistan but Central Asia as well. So, Turkey the only Muslim nation in NATO announced that it would send special troops to Afghanistan .This move was approval by Turkey's parliament too despite widespread public opposition to the war. The government statement said the aim of the mission was "surveillance, struggle against terrorists, guiding the Northern Alliance, supporting humanitarian mission, protecting innocent people and helping the evacuation of civilians when necessary.⁸⁹ However, Turkey in a way was obliged to help the US as the NATO had invoked Article V of its constitution which said that an attack on one country would be seen as an attack on all members of the alliance. Turkey's permanent representative to NATO, Ambassador Onur Oymen welcomed the invocation of Article –V: "*we have always called for terrorist activities to be included within the Article V...we have always stated that an attack does not only mean a country's intrusion into another's territory but it also covers terrorist attacks which are an international problem*".⁹⁰

However, Turkey's support to the US on "war on terror "was importance because, the "war on terror" was increasingly being seen as a war against Islam. Thus, a Muslim nation's participation in the Afghanistan campaign was one way of assuaging such misgivings in the minds of Muslims throughout the World.

On the whole, Turkey's special relationship with the US since the end of the World War 11 was sustained notwithstanding a litany of diplomatic hiccups, disagreement and even an extent of disillusionment, especially in the wake of 1974 Cyprus crisis. Originally predictably on shared political strategic interests driven by then the threat of Soviet expansionism during the Cold War, the relationship continue to grown in strength and even at one stage was dubbed by critics an "Americanism" of Turkey's foreign policy. Subsequently, through Turkey opted for diversification of its external relations and sought to pursue independent policy in the West Asian region, it never made a fundamental change in terms of its military, security and

⁸⁹ Available, URL:// <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/Europe/1632032.stm>, Accessed on 15 January, 2011.

⁹⁰ .Huseyin Bagci and Saban Kardas "Post 11 September: The Strategic Importance of Turkey Reassessed". in Turkey's strategic future, *working paper* no.13,May 2003,(London: International Institute for strategic studies and centre for European policy studies), p.23.

economic ties with the West, particularly the US. It was, however, with the Iraq war of 2003, the special relationship underwent a steady deterioration so much so that the image of America at the societal popular level changed from one time benefactor to 'enemy' out to dismember the Kemalist Republic.

CHAPTER-II

Invasion of Iraq and Regional Implications

The Iraq war, 2003 was the second phase of the US' "War against terror", the first being the war on Afghanistan. In fact, Deputy Defense Secretary, Paul Wolfowitz proclaimed that the operation in Iraq was "the central battle in the war on terrorism."¹ It marked a turning Point in the US' relations with its enemies, its allies and its perception of itself. Unlike the first Iraq war of 1990-91, when an international coalition including Turkey, supported the war, this time, no international support was forthcoming for the Bush Administration in its war on Iraq. This disagreement over the Iraq war challenged the main institutions underpinning the new world order like the UN Security Council, NATO and the European Union. Even the UN Security Council, which is responsible for maintaining international peace and security, failed to reach a consensus on what to do about the Iraq issue and the EU and NATO were divided over the issue. Turkey, a strategic friend, ally, and partner of the US throughout the decades, was one of the first countries in the world to extend its condolences and express support for the war on terror. As the US and Turkey share a common concern with the guiding principles of the Taliban and Al Qaeda, the US expected the support of Turkey, as a major ally, its war on Iraq. But Turkey refused to back the war on Iraq which resulted in strained relations between the US and Turkey. The alliance was severely shaken over the question of Iraq and led to one of the biggest crises in US-Turkey relations.

Background of 2003 Iraq War

The US military had been engaged in a low key undeclared war against Iraq ever since the Gulf war of 1990. The US enforced two degenerated no-fly zones in the North and South of Iraq meaning the Iraqis could not fly either plane or helicopters in these areas, which comprised sixty percent of the country.² President Clinton's policy towards Iraq had been to leave Saddam in place, while not going in for a full fledged war. This policy was adopted because the administration felt that a war against Iraq would destroy stability within Iraq and the Gulf region, the belief turbulence in Iraq would strengthen war and the belief that Saddam could be brought down only by a

¹ Wesley K. Clark (2003), *Winning Modern Wars: Iraq, Terrorism and the American Empire*, New York : Public Affairs, p.158

² Bob Woodward (2004), *Plan of Attack* , New York: Simon and Schuster, p.9

Sunni coup from within the regime.³ In 1998, a clear indication of congressional support for a more active overthrow effort was encapsulated in the Iraq Liberation Act (ILA) which gave the President authority to provide up to \$97 million in defence articles to opposition organisations for promoting insurgencies against the Saddam regime.⁴ This was for the first time that the US made its policy of promoting regime change in Iraq as an official, undeclared policy. But efforts to this effect did not succeed. Before 2002, the US policy towards Iraq was framed as a containment of potential regional aggression and a general consensus existed that containment did not require regime change.⁵

During the first year of the Bush Administration, the basic elements of the Clinton Administration's policy towards Iraq continued and the focus was on strengthening the containment of Iraq. This policy changed drastically after September 11. The shift towards a more assertive policy towards Iraq was demonstrated in President Bush's "axis of evil speech" in which he declared Iraq to be part of the axis along with Iran and North Korea. The administration now began stressing on regime change and asserting that containment was insufficient. Immediately after the overthrow of the Taliban in Afghanistan, speculation began that the administration might try to change Iraq regime as some officials believed that the US need to respond to the 9/11 attacks by ending all regimes supportive of terrorism, including Iraq.

While the official reason for the war on Iraq was that the Iraq allegedly possessed links with the Al Qaeda and its acquisition of Weapons of Mass Destruction,(which have not been found till now), many other theories have been advanced by scholars around the world. One reason is that the war was waged to obtain control over Iraq's oil reserves which are second only to that of Saudi Arabia. After 9/11 attacks, the US-Saudi Arabia alliance became strained as most of the hijackers responsible for the 9/11 attacks were Saudis. There were also reports that

³ Richard N. Perle (2000), "Iraq :Saddam Unbound," in Robert Kagan and William Kristol (eds.), *Present Dangers: Crisis and Opportunity in American Foreign and Defense Policy* , San Francisco: Encounter Books, p.101.

⁴ Kenneth Katzman (2003), *Iraq: US Regime Change Efforts and Post War Governance*, Washington DC: Congressional Research Services, p.11

⁵Chaim Kaufmann (2004) "Threat Inflation and the Future of the Marketplace of Ideas: The Selling of the Iraq War," *International Security* (Massachusetts), vol.29, no.1, summer, p. 5.

Saudi Arabia could no longer be relied on. By occupying Iraq and moving American military bases from Saudi Arabia to Iraq, the US could establish a secure alternative to Saudi oil.⁶ Moreover, as global oil supplies were becoming increasingly tight, the sanctions on Iraqi oil had to be lifted. If this was done while Saddam Hussein was in power, this would have made him too dangerous and powerful. Therefore, his regime had to be removed from power.

Many others have attributed the war to the US' larger goal of democratizing the West Asia and redrawing the map of the West Asia in order to promote stability in the region.⁷ The US realized that undemocratic regimes in the West Asia had contributed to the rise of Islamic terrorism. Thus democratizing the West Asia was one way of getting into the roots of terrorism and meeting the challenge of Anti-Americanism, especially in the West Asia. The US believed that a quick transition from authoritarianism to more open societies would improve economic opportunities, make governments accountable and responsible and allow public participation in policy making. On May 9, 2003 in a speech at the university of South Carolina, President Bush announced America's firm commitment to democracy and freedom in the West Asia as the primary goal of America's war on terror:

*"... We support the advance of freedom in the Middle East, because it is our founding principle, and because it is in our national interest. The hateful ideology of terrorism is shaped and nurtured and protected by oppressive regimes. Free nations, in contrast, encourage creativity and tolerance and enterprise. And in those free nations, the appeal of extremism withers away. Free governments do not build weapons of mass destruction for the purpose of mass terror. Over time, the expansion of liberty throughout the world is the best guarantee of security throughout the world. Freedom is the way to peace ..."*⁸

As President Bush said publicly on the eve of the war, liberating Iraq could transform the Middle East by ushering in democratic governments throughout the stronger allies for a peaceful settlement of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.⁹ This was

⁶ George Soros, (2004) *The Trouble of American Supremacy: Correcting the Misuse of American Power*, London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, p. 53.

⁷ Katzman (2003), *Iraq: US Regime*, n.4, p.15.

⁸<http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2003/05/20030509-11.html>, accessed on 22 February 2011.

⁹ Ivo H. Daalder and James M. Lindsay (2003) "The Bush Foreign Policy Revolution," in Fred I. Greenstein, (ed), *The George Bush Presidency: An early Assessment*, Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, p. 128.

one way of ensuring Bush's place in history as the President who brought peace and democracy to the West Asia. It was also felt that Iraq's security could be established there. This would reassure Israel and weaken the Palestinians extremists sufficiently and allow some progress towards a settlement on terms acceptable to Israel and the US.

The US is the world's largest debtor and its debt is denominated by dollars. The US economy would be very vulnerable if a significant portion of the Middle East oil revenues were switched to another currency.¹⁰ The health of the United States' economy is intimately tied to the dollar's role as reserve currency. Iraq had switched over to Euro in November 2000 for selling its oil through the oil for food programme. Some scholars felt that the US believed that other countries in the region might follow the suit and waged the war to prevent this eventuality. The war, they feel, was waged to prevent further OPEC momentum towards the Euro as an oil transaction currency standard and to secure control of Iraq's oil. Yet others feel that Iraq was an arena for the US to demonstrate its military power and show off its weapon systems so as to attract more weapons sales from around the world.

There have been revelations that President Bush and top officials of his administration were determined from early 2001 to bring about the regime change in Iraq.¹¹ Firstly, his administration had many officials like Cheney and Wolfowitz who had come to office intent on toppling Saddam.¹² They believed that the US had made a mistake by not overthrowing the Saddam regime during the 1991 war. But President Bush became receptive to their arguments only after 9/11 attacks. Moreover the administration believed that Saddam could only be ousted easily as compared to Iran and North Korea because the government in Iran had broad public support and because Korea probably possessed nuclear weapons and held South Korea hostage against any American attack.¹³

But, it was only in summer 2002 that the administration began their campaign to generate support for the war against Iraq. They made four main arguments to

¹⁰ Vassilis K. Fouskas (2003), *Zones of Conflict: US Foreign Policy in the Balkans and the Greater Middle East*, London: Pluto Press, p. 93.

¹¹ Kaufmann, (2004) "Threat Inflation", p.5.

¹² Daalder and Lindsay, (2003), "The Bush Foreign Policy Revolution", p. 127.

¹³ Daalder and Lindsay, (2003), "The Bush Foreign Policy Revolution", p. 128.

persuade the public of their case against Saddam Hussein: (1)'He was an almost undeterrable aggressor who would seek any opportunity to kill Americans virtually regardless of risks to himself or his country; (2) He was cooperating with the Al Qaeda and had even assisted in the September 11 terrorists attack against the US; (3)He was close to acquiring nuclear weapons and; (4)He possessed chemical; and biological weapons that could be used to devastating effect against American civilians at home or US troops in the West Asia.¹⁴

Meanwhile the administration had made an efforts to get the Congress' support for the war. President Bush in his State of the Union addressed to Congress in January 2002 and in speech to the graduating class at the US Military Academy in June 2002, denounced Saddam Hussein's regime as part of an 'axis of evil' and threatened a pre-emptive action.¹⁵ On October 10, 2002 the House of Representatives passed a resolution by 296 to 133 votes authorizing the President to use the US armed forces in Iraq "as he deems necessary and appropriate" and the next day the Senate also passed the resolution 77-23.¹⁶

The War in Iraq

Internally, the Bush Administration was divided on the issue of invading Iraq. While the hawks led by Secretary of Defense, Donald Rumsfeld did not want to get UN support for the war, the State Department wanted to ensure legitimacy for any military intervention. Secretary of State, Colin Powell argued that by going to the UN, the US would be able to gain broad international support for the resumption of tougher inspections, and if necessary, for war, and that war could be avoided if Baghdad knew that its only alternative was to destroy its Weapons of Mass Destruction and allow UN arms inspections.¹⁷ Vice President Dick Cheney and Rumsfeld believed that military force i.e. a combination of precision airpower, local opposition forces and a number of US ground troops was the only way to remove the Saddam Hussein regime. In contrast, Powell argued that if Washington convinced the international community to force Saddam Hussein to choose between his weapons or

¹⁴ Ramazan, Gozen, (2005), "Causes and Consequences of Turkey's out-of-war position in the Iraq war of 2003, *The Turkish Yearbook*, Vo.xxxvi, pp.84-86.

¹⁵ John Keegan, (2004), *The Iraq War*, New York: Alfred A knopf, p. 100.

¹⁶ Woodward, *Plan of Attack*, p. 203-204

¹⁷ Daalder and Lindsay, (2003) "The Bush Foreign Policy Revolution", p. 130.

his rule, he would give up his weapons. This, Powell believed, would weaken Saddam's hold on power and enable the Iraqi citizens to overthrow the Saddam's regime. But Cheney argued that weapons inspections would fail and would provide false comfort to Saddam Hussein who would then "seek domination of the entire Middle East, take control of a great portion of the world's energy supplies threaten America's friends in the region and subject the US and any other nation to nuclear blackmail."¹⁸

There were also differences of opinions within the administration over what Saddam's ouster from power would accomplish. Assertive Nationalists like Cheney and Rumsfeld believed that removing the Baath regime and disarming the Iraq would eliminate a significant threat to regional stability and American security and were not very concerned about what would happen to Iraqi society once these major security objectives were accomplished. But democratic imperialists like Paul Wolfowitz saw this as an opportunity to democratize Iraq and thereby begin transforming the greater Middle East.¹⁹ Wolfowitz believed that American security required more than just toppling evil regimes and required support to governments that embraced America's values and principles.

When the administration's internal debate spilled into public domain, President Bush was forced to take a stand. He decided to follow Powell's advice and go to the UN. In his speech to the UN on September 12, 2002, the President asked the Security Council's mandate for Resolution 1441.²⁰ In his speech, the President accused Saddam Hussein of connections to terrorist outfits, Human rights violations and developing Weapons Of Mass Destruction and called the Iraqi regime a threat to peace.²¹ He called on the Iraqi regime to stop support to terrorism to dispose and destroy its WMD's and stop prosecution of its civilian population if it wanted peace. He promised to work with the Security Council for necessary resolutions on Iraq passed in the last twelve years. In his speech, he asked "...all the world now faces a

¹⁸ Ibid, (2003) "The Bush Foreign Policy Revolution p. 131.

¹⁹ Ibid, (2003) "The Bush Foreign Policy Revolution, p. 129.

²⁰ Pinaki Bhattacharya (2004), "Bush's War: Preemptive Thought Process," in Sreedhar and S N. Malakar (eds.), *The Second Coming: The US War on Iraq, 2003: An Indian Perspective*, New Delhi: Academic Excellence, p. 33.

²¹ K P. Fabian (2003), *The Commonsense on the War on Iraq*, Mumbai: Somaiya Publications, p. 393-94.

test, and the UN, difficult and defining moment. Are the security council resolutions to be honoured and enforced, or cast aside without consequence? Will the UN serve the purpose of its founding, or will it be irrelevant?”²²

Bush’s speech was welcomed by most countries around the world as it was felt that the US had decided to work through the UN and would not act unilaterally. Iraq reacted to this speech by saying that the UN inspectors could return unconditionally. This caught the US administration off guard. It finally decided to table a new resolution in the Security Council i.e. resolution 1441 which was passed unanimously after weeks of debate in November 2002. The resolution imposed a tough inspection regime on Iraq and put the burden on Iraq to prove that it did not possess WMDs.²³ But the UN weapons inspectors led by Hans Blitz did not find any evidence of WMDs in Iraq. In spite of this, the US was determined to carry out the invasion ignoring protests from many countries across the world. Security Council opponents of the war like France, Russia, China and Germany wanted to give more time to Iraq for the inspections and felt that Iraq was well contained by the sanctions and the US enforced no-fly zones. They believed that Iraq did not pose an immediate threat to US national security. Though the US did try to get the new resolution passed saying Iraq had violated resolution 1441, the resolution did not get passed and the US had to go ahead with the invasion without UN authorisation.²⁴

The US invasion began on March 19, 2003 Saddam Hussein’s rejection of March 17, the US ultimatum to leave Iraq to avoid war. This Operation was called *Operation Iraqi Freedom*. US soldiers along with British, Australian and Polish Troops ousted the Saddam Hussein regime in three weeks of fighting.²⁵ The US scored victory over the Iraqi forces easily and took control over Baghdad in April. Thus, the US won even though it did not have an international coalition supporting it this time around. Although the victory was achieved easily and quickly, the US subsequently faced another threat; insurgency waged by Iraqis against the US

²² George W. Bush “Address to the UN General Assembly,” September 12 2002, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2002/09/20020912-1.html>, Accessed on 24.4.2011.

²³ Soros (2004), *The Trouble of American Supremacy*, p. 56.

²⁴ Ibid, (2004), *The Trouble of American Supremacy*, p.57.

²⁵ Daalder and Lindsay, “The Bush Foreign Policy Revolution”, p. 132.

occupation. Shortly after the war, the US began a process of establishing a successor regime.

NATO and the Crisis over Iraq

There was very little international support for the US' decision to wage war over on Iraq. In fact, the issue ruptured the US' relations with many of its close allies like France and Germany. Relations within NATO were badly strained over the Iraq issue. It put the US and Britain on one side and members of 'old Europe' like Germany and France on the other side. This was one of the biggest crises that NATO has faced ever since its founding. While Germany and France were against the war on Iraq itself, Britain, Spain, Italy, Poland, Hungary, Denmark, Portugal and the Czech Republic expressed solidarity with the US and pledged support for the US' war against the Saddam regime, in what is now known as the "Letter of Eight."

But the immediate cause of the acrimony in NATO was the proposal to get formal authorisation of advance NATO military planning to help Turkey, a NATO member, defend itself in the event of a war in Iraq.²⁶ This issue generated considerable debate within NATO as early as January 2003 but erupted into public domain only in February 2003. Getting NATO to protect Turkey was seen by Washington as a good way to line up NATO support for an eventual war and also as a means to give a greater role to the alliance to make up for excluding it from the operations in Afghanistan.²⁷ The issue pitted France, Belgium and Germany who argued that NATO planning was unnecessary and unnecessarily provocative, against the US and its allies like Britain, who argued that defence of an ally should not be ignored.²⁸ The opponents of NATO planning believe that a NATO decision to protect Turkey was an implicit acceptance of an armed intervention in Iraq. So France, Belgium and Germany vetoed the Plan to defend Turkey when it was put before the North Atlantic Council. Later, the vote was moved into the Defence Planning

²⁶ Terry Terriff (2004), "Fear and Loathing in NATO: The Atlantic Alliance after The Crisis Over Iraq." *Perspectives On European Politics and Society: Journal of Intra-European Dialogue*, (Leiden), vol.5, no.3, p.419.

²⁷ Philip H. Gordon and Jeremy Shapiro, (2004), *Allies At War: America, Europe and the Crisis over Iraq*, New York: McGraw-Hill, p. 137.

²⁸ *Ibid*, (2004), *Allies At War: America*, p.139.

Committee in which France was not a member and Belgium conceded to a reworded agreement which decided to send the weapons to Turkey.²⁹

The NATO dispute showed how tense relations within the alliance had become. It was a controversy which could easily have been avoided as the US had never made support for its out-of-area activities such as Korean or Vietnam Wars, a litmus test of loyalty to the alliance as a whole. Moreover, Turkey itself was not very enthusiastic about NATO, playing a role in defending it and both France and Germany were prepared to help Turkey individually without NATO. In fact, Germany had promised to supply the Patriot missiles to Turkey bilaterally and France had also said it would be immediately at hand to protect Turkey if it came under attack by Iraq.³⁰

The US in its early plans counted upon Turkey's support for the war. But the Turks feared that support for the war in terms of it becoming a forward base for armed attacks by the US could result in Iraq attacking Turkey. Hence, the need for a plan to protect Turkey against Iraq. The US logically felt that NATO could provide this protection to Turkey. It was felt that Turkey could be protected by NATO sending it AWACS surveillance planes and Patriot missiles.³¹ Initial US plans were for NATO to carry out this task so that the US military force could carry out their invasion of Iraq. The Plan was for the fourth army division to use Turkey as a forward base from which it could launch an armed aggression into Northern Iraq and to have American aircraft fly out of Incirlik to conduct bombing attacks in Iraq.³² Moreover, the US felt that an official NATO declaration of support for Turkey under Article V³³ of the Treaty would garner political support for the new Turkish government to let the US use it as a base in view of the public opposition to it.

The controversy was created over a long standing issue in NATO-whether NATO should conduct 'out of area' military operations. While Turkey is part of NATO, it is not seen to be a part of Europe by some members of the alliance. So they refused to commit their troops for protecting Turkey as they believe that NATO's

²⁹ Teriff, (2004), "Fear and Loathing in NATO, p. 420.

³⁰ Gordon and Shapiro, (2004), *Allies At War: America*, pp.140-41

³¹ Gordon and Shapiro, (2004), *Allies At War: America*, p.137.

³² Teriff, , "Fear and Loathing in NATO, 425.

³³ Article V of Treaty says that an attack on a NATO member will be considered as an attack on all NATO member. Under Article V of the Treaty, Turkey would get support by attack any external party.

operation area is confined to Europe alone despite the fact that NATO had invoked the Article V of the treaty to support US after the 9/11 attacks. Another reason why France and Germany refused to back the Plan was because they did not share the views of the Bush Administration on the extent of the threat posed by Saddam Hussein's WMDs or on how to address this threat. Moreover, these countries had major commercial interests in Iraq, the US stance seemed unilateralist and militaristic. The US felt on its part that the French and Germans were unreliable and ungrateful allies.

Turkey's Response to the Iraq War

As discussed in the proceeding chapter, Turkey had supported the US during the first Gulf War and helped the US to enforce no fly zones in Iraq. Despite domestic opposition and opposition from the powerful military, Prime Minister Ozal had placed his country squarely behind America's policy on Iraq in 1991. He bypassed the government and the Parliament in his support to the US led coalition. Turkey also supported the US sanctions on Iraq and shut down the pipeline which carried oil from Kirkuk to the Mediterranean port of Yimurtalik. In return, the US has turned blind eye to the Turkey's repeated incursions into Northern Iraq in pursuit of Kurdish rebels who had sought refugee in Northern Iraq and had given it the status of a "strategic partner." Moreover, Turkey was one of America's most trusted allies in the region. So it was expected that Turkey would support the US position on the Iraq War.

It was in this belief that the US prepared a war plan in which the turkey would have a significant role to play. The plan was to launch an attack into Iraq through Turkey i.e. from the Northern Part. This plan involved using the hundred mile Iraq-Turkey border to introduce a division size force of some 15,000 to 20,000.³⁴ Victory, it was felt could be achieved easily by building a relatively large ground force that would attack simultaneously from the South (Kuwait) and the North (Turkey).³⁵ The Northern front would have allowed the US to spread Iraqi defences thin through a

³⁴ Woodward, *Plan of Attack*, p.123.

³⁵ Isaac Ben Israel,(2003), "The Revolution in Military Affairs and the Operation in Iraq," in Shai Feldman (ed.), *After the War in Iraq: Defining the New Strategic Balance* , Brighton: Sussex Academic Press, p. 58.

north-south pincer, averted a concentration of Iraqi forces along one axis of advance and made rapid progress possible for the US forces.

Even as the debate continued about the US plan to invade Iraq, Turkey opposed the plan and urged Baghdad to comply with UN inspections and resolutions to avoid war. The Turkish Prime Minister even initiated and hosted a summit in Istanbul attended by Egypt, Jordan, Syria, Saudi Arabia and Iran to find alternatives to the war. The US hoped to soften this stance. During his visit to Turkey in July 2002, he provided the assurances about the territorial integrity of Iraq. He made it absolutely clear that the US did not support the establishment of a Kurdish state in Iraq. The American position he outlined included the following important principles: that Iraq would remain undivided, that Iraq would be democratic with equal rights for all its citizens, that the oil reserves of Iraq would be utilized to benefit all citizens of the country without regard to ethnic or religious identity, that Turkey would be compensated for losses in the war.³⁶ Turkey postponed its decision as the country was in election mode at that time. In the Turkish elections held in November, the newly established Islamic Justice and Development (AKP) Party came to power. The AKP with strong Islamic roots was also not fundamentally inclined towards joining the US-led invasion.

The Negotiations

Like many countries around the world, Turkey too felt that the Iraq war was unwarranted. There were many reasons for this.³⁷ Turkey had enjoyed broad economic and political relations with Iraq both before and after the 1991 Gulf War. But following the 1991 war and the subsequent closure of the Kirkuk-Yurmurtalik pipeline to Turkey's Mediterranean coast, the subsequent sanctions and impoverishment of Iraq, Turkey had lost its major trading partner in the region and a lucrative source of revenue. Moreover, Washington's promise of compensating Turkey for its losses in the war did not materialize. The Turkey economy went into

³⁶ Helena Kane Finn "The U.S.- Turkey Relationship: A Diplomatic Perspective" at http://www.cfr.org/pub5882/helena_kane_finn/the_us_turkish_relationship_a_diplomatic_perspective.php, Accessed on 24 february,2011.

³⁷ Bill Park, (2003) "Strategic Location, Political Dislocation: Turkey, The United States, and Northern Iraq," Middle East Review of International Affairs, vol.7, no.2, June, 2003 at <http://meria.idc.ac.il/journal/2003/issue2/jv7n2a2.html>, accessed on 22.March, 2011.

recession after 1991 war as tourism and foreign investment to the country declined. Predictably, Turkey was wary of another conflict in the region as this would adversely affect Turkey's IMF sponsored economic reform programme designed to revive the economy.

Domestic factors also played a role in Turkey's stand on the Iraq war. The AKP came to power promising to rejuvenate the faltering economy and implementation of political, legal, and administrative reforms to ready the economy for EU accession negotiations. Moreover, the new government was more sympathetic to its Muslim neighbours as it was basically an Islamist party and was inexperienced in handling foreign affairs. Further, Turgut Ozal, the then Turkish Prime Minister had played an important part in Turkey's decision to support the US in the 1991 war despite opposition from both the elites and domestic public opinion and was willing to get involved in the region's affairs in contradiction to Turkey's traditional policy of non-involvement in the region's affairs. Another reason was that domestic opinion in Turkey was against the War and few believed like Ozal that accommodating the US would benefit Turkey and increase its Post Cold War value to the West. In view of the nationwide local elections scheduled for April 2004, the Turkish government could not afford to have Turkish troops suffer casualties in Iraq as this would affect the AKP negatively in the elections.³⁸

Yet another factor was the lack of international support for the US' decision to attack Iraq. The fact that the US' European allies were against it on this issue also encouraged Turkey to differ with the US. This could also have inflated Ankara's assessment of its indispensability to Washington. Besides, Turkey's stand was also partly a product of its desire to align itself with European policy. Moreover, it felt that getting involved too closely in the war could make it a target of regional hostility against it as however the war ended, Turkey would continue to inhabit the region and it would have to rebuild any fractured relations with its neighbours like Iran and Iraq in the context of rising Islamic fundamentalism and Anti-Americanism in the region.

³⁸ Soner Cagaptay (2003), "Turkey's Future Direction and US-Turkey Relations" October 1, 2003, at http://commdocs.house.gov/committees/intrel/hfa89669.000/hfa89669_0f.html, accessed on 24 November, 2010.

There were also fears that the war was a new strategy by the US to dominate the West Asia.

Of all, the most important factor for Turkey was the possible implications on the Kurdish issue of a war on Iraq, which was considered a vital National Security issue for Turkey. After the failure of the 1991 uprising of Iraqi Kurds against Saddam Hussein failed, there was a huge upsurge of Iraqi Kurd refugees on Turkey's border fearing retaliation from the Saddam regime. The International community had intervened and had helped set up safe havens for the refugees and a 'no-fly-zone' policed from Incirlik in Turkey. Later a Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) was created near the Turkish and Iranian borders. Turkey feared that the KRG could become a model for the Turkish Kurds and the KRG at some point of might even support the Turkish Kurds' fight against the Turks. The KRG experiment, Turkey felt, could garner international support for the Kurd cause and ultimately lead to a sovereign Kurd state and create tension between states where Kurds live (Iran, Syria, Turkey and Iraq) and threaten peace in the whole region. But Turkey could not afford to completely antagonise its lone standing ally, the US either. The new Turkish Prime Minister Abdullah Gul expounding on Turkey's dilemma said: "...We have to convince our people, we have to convince our Parliament. Whether we fully cooperate or do nothing, we are going to suffer."³⁹

Turkey's response to the US appeal for support was to continue to lobby against the war on the one hand and positioning Turkey to make the best of the unwanted situation on the other. Three issues emerged. First was the economic compensation that it should seek in return for its assistance in the war. The second issue was the terms under which Ankara would permit its territory to be used by the US and the allied forces. Third, Turkey's military drew up plans to insert substantial forces into Northern Iraq to control the situation there is necessary. So it tried to negotiate with the US making use of its strategic location as a lever to fulfil its own needs. Ankara's stance irritated the US greatly as it perceived Turkish action as one mercilessly exploitative Washington.

³⁹ Todd S. Purdum (2003), *A Time of Our Choosing: America's War in Iraq*, New York: Times Books, p.100.

Assistant Secretary of Defence, Paul Wolfowitz made another visit to Turkey in December 2002 in which he asked for permission to use Turkish territory as a launch pad for ground attacks against Iraq. As an incentive for Turkey's approval, he promised American support for Turkey's much desired entry into the EU.⁴⁰ In the negotiations that followed, Turkey asked for a reduction in the number of US troops who would be allowed to enter Turkey and wanted the US to permit the Turkish troops into Northern Iraq. The US agreed to allow Turkish troops into Iraq as long as they steered clear of Kurds even though this was upsetting for the Iraqi Kurds who threatened to resist the entry of Turkish troops in to the KRG area. It also wanted UN backing for the war and expected a significant financial incentive in exchange for its support.

In January 2003, Ankara agreed to allow US technicians to enter its territory to assess the suitability and condition of bases and ports that might be used in the war. On February 6, Turkish Parliament voted to permit around 4000 US personnel to enter the country to start upgrading of the facilities in Turkey despite opposition from some AKP deputies.⁴¹ But the Turkish Government accompanied the vote with the rider that it should not be interpreted as implying that this approval for the entry of US troops would also give the US permission to launch a war on Iraq using American troops passing through Turkey.⁴² It also made it clear that in view of the prevailing public opposition to the war and dissension without the AKP, it could not guarantee that the parliament would pass the vote permitting the US troops to be deployed in the country.

Moreover, the Turkish military, which was traditionally all powerful on such issues, was not supportive of the war. It took umbrage on the US restrictions on Turkish troops in favour of the Iraqi Kurds. The EU's demands to reduce the role of the Turkish military in Turkish politics if it wanted to become a member of the EU also tied the military's hands.⁴³

⁴⁰ Ibid, (2003) A Time of Our Choosing, pp.100-102.

⁴¹ Bill Park, (2003) "Strategic Location Political Dislocation: Turkey, United States and Northern Iraq", *MERIA Journal*, Vol.7, No.2, June, 2003, see home page.

⁴² Cagaptay, "Turkey's Future Direction and US-Turkey Relations" p.36.

⁴³ Michael M. Gunter, (2003), "The US-Turkish Alliance in Disarray," *World Affairs*, Washington DC, vol. 167, no. 3, Winter, 2003, p.119.

Turkey was also uneasy about the ongoing talks between the US and the Iraqi Kurds though the Iraqi Kurds, while resisting any Turkish invasion, reassured Turkey that they stood for a united Iraq. Turkey has always promoted itself to be the guardian of the Turkoman minority in Iraq due to historic and ethnic ties with the community. It therefore tried to prevent the creation of an independent Kurdish state by championing the cause of the Turkoman minority and asking for self-government for them instead of them being incorporated into a Kurdish State. One key element in the negotiations was the amount of compensation Turkey wanted in return for cooperating with the US. Many Turks felt that cooperation in 1991 war had only resulted in economic loss for them and were therefore determined to make use of the opportunity to get an economic package from the US. The Turkish approach led to ill feeling in Washington as it felt money was the only concern for Turkey. Under Turkish law, any proposal for the stationing of foreign troops on Turkish soil had to be approved by the parliament. Therefore, it was decided that Turkey would seek Parliamentary approval for US troops to enter Turkey on February 18. But negotiations regarding money, the number of US troops and the terms of Turkish entry into Iraq had not been settled to Turkey's satisfaction. So the vote was postponed.

Finally, on February 26, the Turkish government introduced a measure in Parliament that would permit the entry of 62,000 US troops, 255 jet aircraft and 65 helicopters for a period of six months and also allowed an unspecified number of Turkish troops into Northern Iraq.⁴⁴ On March 1, in the immediate wake of a National Security Council meeting at which the powerful Turkish military had remained emphatically mute, the Turkish Parliament rejected the measure by a margin of three votes.⁴⁵ This was despite the fact that the final vote was 264 in favour to 251 against, with 19 abstentions, as under Turkish Parliamentary rules, a majority of members present – or 268 votes – was required for passage of the resolution.⁴⁶ But the slim margin by which the resolution was disapproved showed the US' influence over Turkey's ruling classes even when the Turkish people were vehemently opposed to

⁴⁴ Park, , (2003), "Strategic Location, Political Dislocation, p. 35.

⁴⁵ Justus Leicht and Peter Schwarz, "Turkish Parliament votes down US war plans," at <http://www.wsws.org/articles/2003/mar2003/turk-m04.shtml>, Accessed on 10 October 2010.

⁴⁶ Purdum (2003), A Time of Our Choosing, p.101.

the stationing of US troops in Turkey. The US felt betrayed by the vote. It now felt that new bases could be built in countries like Bulgaria and Romania. The Parliament vote was a big blow to the US and made execution of the US war plan more difficult and added necessary complications to its war effort. American ships laden with war materials had been cruising the Turkish coast waiting for permission to land but now they were forced to turn back. Wolfowitz's remarks in an interview with CNN in which he suggested that Turkey apologise for refusing the entry of US troops and blamed the military leadership for not lobbying actively for a positive vote caused uproar in Turkey further straining the alliance.⁴⁷

With the vote being passed, Turkey forfeited the \$30 billion package in loan guarantees and grants that the US had agreed to give it. While warning Turkey not to intervene unilaterally in Northern Iraq, the US now shifted towards the option of mounting a lighter and smaller attack against Northern Iraq with forces that could be flown directly to air bases there. Granting the US over flight rights would also require approval from the Turkish Parliament. Pressure from the US and the Turkish military led to a measure to this effect being laid down in Parliament and on March 20, the Parliament allowed over flight rights to US aircraft. The deal also allowed Turkish troops to enter Northern Iraq but did not allow US troops to enter Turkish territory. Turkey was the last NATO ally to grant over flight rights to the United States. But the decision to allow the US to rotate troops using the Incirlik military base helped to reduce the tensions that had crept into relations between the US and Turkey.

However, Turkey's refusal to cooperate with the US in the war had an unexpected result: Since Turkey was not willing to cooperate with the US, the US had no option but to rely on the Iraqi Kurds. It formed a tactical alliance with the Kurdish militias or Peshmergas. This of course increased the Kurds' influence over the US. The Iraq war has now concentrated an unprecedented amount of political power in the hands of Iraq's Kurds. Moreover, once the oil rich provinces of Mosul and Kirkuk fell, Iraqi Kurds took control over them, something which could never have happened, had Turkey anchored the Northern Front. The Turks fear that Kirkuk's oil wealth will be used by the Kurds to fund Kurdish nationalist ambitions. The US also forced

⁴⁷ Bill Park , (2004), "Between Europe, the US and the Middle East: Turkey and European Security in the Wake of the Iraq Crisis," *Perspectives on European Politics and Society*, vol.5, no.3, p.495.

Turkey to back down from its stated intention to send troops into Iraq to counter Kurdish advances into Mosul and Kirkuk and to protect the Turkmen minority there. If the Parliament vote had gone in favour of the US, Turkey would have been able to maintain a sizable military presence in buffer zone in Northern Iraq as part of the political, military and economic agreements made with the US. This aggravated Turkey all the more because the PKK renounced the ceasefire that it had announced against Turkey in 2004 and renewed its attacks on Turkish targets. Since Iraq is currently under the US, Turkey blames the US for this.

The Sulaymaniyah Incident

The infamous “July 4 incident” or the Sulaymaniyah incident further strained relations between the two countries. On July 4, 2003, US troops arrested Turkish special operation troops in Sulaymaniyah, a city in northern Iraq, on charges that they were conspiring to assassinate elected Kurdish officials there. In the past, Turkish forces had been allowed to operate with impunity in Northern Iraq. This was seen by many Turks as a deliberate provocation and a clear sign that Washington favoured Iraqi Kurds over Turkey, a NATO ally. The Sulaymaniyah incident caused an unprecedented crisis in US-Turkish relations and presented their long time strategic alliance with what Hilmi Ozkok, the Chief of the Turkish General Staff, called its “biggest crisis of confidence ever.”⁴⁸ The Turkish media too reacted angrily to the incident.⁴⁹ But the US refused to apologise officially for the incident.

The Sulaymaniyah incident demonstrated clearly that Turkey and the US now had diametrically opposing views and interests in Northern Iraq. It also showed that Turkey’s strategic importance had declined from the US’ point of view. But the US’ refusal to allow Turkey to take action against the PKK in Northern Iraq has had the effect of Turkey moving closer to Iran and Syria as all three countries agree on the Kurdish threat to their security. The Turkish Prime Minister even travelled to Syria in April 2005, much to Washington’s displeasure. In another setback to relations, on June 8, President Bush rejected a Turkish request for US forces to crack down on

⁴⁸ Gunter, (2003), “The US-Turkish Alliance in Disarray” p.120.

⁴⁹ Huriyat News, 7 July, 2003.

Kurdish militants who were launching attacks against Turkey from Northern Iraq.⁵⁰ In fact, some officials like Secretary of Defence, Donald Rumsfeld even blamed Turkey for the Iraqi insurgency after the fall of Saddam Hussein as they feel lack of troops in the Northern part of Iraq has contributed to the chaos. Turkey was one of the few countries which was cold about the Iraqi elections in January, 2005. It preferred to concentrate more on the voting irregularities in the North of Iraq rather than the emergence of a democratically elected government.

However, despite the upheaval in the Turkish-US alliance over the Iraq war, both sides have taken care not to completely cut off sides and to see that each other's interests are preserved to some extent. Turkey realizes that the US is now its South Eastern neighbour and will continue to be so till a permanent solution is found to the Iraqi insurgency and the US decides to leave the country. For the US, in post-Saddam Iraq, Ankara's support is crucial, not only because it provides the United States with easy access to Iraq and elsewhere in the crisis-ridden Middle East, but also because a secular, democratic Turkey remains a source of inspiration for the region. This is why despite its minimal cooperation, Turkey still received \$1 billion in economic aid in the President's supplementary war budget. Moreover, Secretary Powell's wartime visit to Ankara, where he again described Turkey as a model for a future Iraq, helped repair damaged relations.⁵¹

Turkey, on its part, allowed US planes to fly sorties over its territory, let US planes in distress use its bases such as Batman, Diyarakir and Incirlik and allowed US vehicles to pass through Turkey to support US forces as they launched the northern front in March 2003 in as bid to mollify the US.⁵² It also permitted the transit passage of US combat troops to the US request for some 10,000 Turkish troops to help contain the growing Iraqi insurgency. But the Iraqi Kurds vehemently opposed the proposal and the US withdrew the request. But the Turkey's positive response helped improve

⁵⁰ Bill Sammon, Bush won't help Turkey with Kurds, the Washington Times, June 9, 2005, <http://www.washingtontimes.com/national/20050608-112523-6452r.htm>, Accessed on 22 October, 2010, President Bush praised Turkey as a close, democratic ally in the West Asia, but stopped short of meeting Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan's plea for greater U.S. assistance to defeat a Turkish terrorist group operating out of northern Iraq.

⁵¹ Omer Taspinar (2005), "Changing Parameters in U.S.-German-Turkish Relations" 18 AICGS Policy Reports , American Institute for Contemporary German Studies, The Johns Hopkins University, at <http://www.aicgs.org/Publications/PDF/PolRep18.pdf> , Accessed, on 22 October 2010.

⁵² Gunter, (2003), "The US-Turkish Alliance in Disarray ", p.121.

relations between the US and Turkey. The US on its part placed the newly renamed PKK i.e. the Kongra-Gel (Kurdistan Peoples Congress) on its list of terrorist groups keeping in view Turkey's sentiments. Turkey also helped train the Iraqi army and police. The US also gave Turkey's primary access to reconstruction contracts after the fall of Saddam Hussein. Turkey's Prime Minister Recep Erdogan was received at the White House in January 2004 clearly signalling the desire on both parts to revitalize ties. Further in April 2005, the US and Turkey signed a \$1.1 billion for upgrading of 117 F-16 fighter jets.⁵³

Iraq provides another area for cooperation between the US and Turkey. Both the countries stand for the unity and development of Iraq. The fact that the Iraqi Prime Minister Ibrahim Jaafari's first foreign trip was to Turkey also shows the importance Iraq attaches to ties with Turkey. Turkey the US realises could help in Iraq's reconstruction especially the infrastructure which it had helped build in the first place. These developments can serve as building blocks to revitalize the "strategic partnership" between the US and Turkey.

Regional Implications and Iraq war

The US invasion of Iraq 2003, demonstrated again that the Gulf region had been the main source of instability in the West Asian regions for a generation, even more than the Arab-Israeli conflict. The Iraq war 2003 had a traumatic impact on other countries in the region ,most notably the Arab states, as a consequences of the total subjugation of an Arab country by a great power for the first time since the beginning of Arab independence; the first overthrow of an Arab regime by a foreign military power⁵⁴. At the same time the traumatic effect of the war also stemmed from the rapid capitulation, for a second time little over a decade, of the Arabs' largest military machine; the shattered expectations of a heroic, drawn-out, house to house struggle in Iraqi cities; the humiliating capture of a major Arab state and its capital city; the fear of US plans for control of Iraqi oil; and the images of human suffering in the country.

⁵³ Frank Carlucci and F. Stephen Larrabee, (2005), "Revitalizing US-Turkey Relations", June 8, 2005, <http://www.washingtontimes.com/commentary/20050607-095000-7007r.htm>, Accessed on 22 January 2011.

⁵⁴ Kam Ephraim (2003), "The War in Iraq: Regional Implications" in Feldman Shai, (eds), *After the war in Iraq*, Jaffee Center for Strategic studies Publication,p.101.

The US invasion of Iraq and its outcome are likely to have far reaching implications in the Gulf region and the entire West Asia. The significance of these implications stems from two reasons. First, Iraq has been a key player in the West Asia due to its military and economic potential and political weight. Because of this, it has been a part of the main development in the West Asia and has striven to influence them. Second, the US military campaign that was launched despite widespread international and regional reservations was so impressive in performance and result that it can be expected to impact on the conduct of other countries in the region. Moreover, the Bush administration has made it clear that the war in Iraq is not an isolated campaign, and it plans to build on the war's outcome to influence other aspects of the West Asian arena, above all the war on terror, the development of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD), and the deadlock political process between Israel and the Palestinians.⁵⁵

Regime Change

After the overthrow of Saddam Hussein, the developments in the region began with the future of Iraq, especially the shaping of a new regime and the US policy regarding Iraq. The US government openly sought to establish a stable, moderate, democratic regime in Iraq that is linked to the US. However, the former political system, based on the Ba'ath party, the Iraqi army, and security organizations, has disintegrated. Saddam Hussein's generation long rule in Iraq relied on brute force, atrocity, and fear, and during this period he suppressed the growth of any real opposition to his regime.⁵⁶ The new government will have to be established at the ground level with foundations the US administration, including the people of Iraq, as well as perhaps elements from the Iraqi army.

Moreover, Iraq's population is divided between Shittes, who make up over half the population, Sunnis, and Kurds, as well as other small minorities. Further subdivisions define the main ethnic groups, while after the wake of Iraq war 2003, the interests of the three major group clash. The Sunni minority held the top government positions in Saddam Hussein's regime, and it is now waging a rearguard battle to retain at least some of its status. In the wake of the 1991 Gulf war the Kurds gained

⁵⁵ Ibid, After the war in Iraq, p.101-102.

⁵⁶ Bessmertnykh A. , (2005), "*The Iraq war and its Implications*" International Affairs, p.24-26.

autonomy under the protection of the US and Britain in northern Iraq's Kurdish region (Kurdistan), and are now seeking to exploit the results of the latest war in order to expand their autonomous territory, move toward independence, or at the very least have Kurdistan integrated within the framework of a federated Iraqi state.⁵⁷ The other ethnic group, the Shittes see the vacuum created in Iraq as an historic opportunity to obtain their rightful share in the government, and in addition certain elements hope to foment a Shittes religious awakening in Iraq with the aim of establishing an Islamic-Shiite regime. But it can be observed that the conflicting interests among the three groups could lead to violent power struggles that would frustrate US efforts to set up a stable, western oriented regime in Iraq. The Kurds who possess a military organisation and who have already attained a large degree of autonomy try to exploit the vacuum and strike for independence, they are liable to spark a violent internal struggle in Iraq that might invite military intervention by Iran, and even more so by Turkey, because of the fear that Kurdish independence in Iraq would encourage a similar inclination among the large Kurdish populations in their countries.

Unlike Kurds, the Shittes do not seek autonomy but the establishment of an Islamic-Shiite regime in Iraq. The vacuum created in Iraq after the fall of Saddam Hussein's could provide the Shittes with the opportunity to lead the future regime on an Islamic-Shiite platform. A Shiite' regime in Iraq could undermine US plans to establish a moderate and democratic regime. A Shiite' dominated Iraq could also ally itself to the Islamic-Shiite regime in Iran and create a consolidated stronghold of Shiite power in the Gulf, although it would probably choose to preserve its Iraqi Shiite uniqueness.⁵⁸ For these reasons, the US is working to avert the creation of the Shiite regime in Iraq, but the US have expressed concern that the Shiites are better organised and thought that the blocking of Shiite aspirations will be a difficult task. Thus, the Bush administration's declared interest of democratic regime in place of Saddam Hussein's dictatorship.

However, after the war in Iraq, the institution of democratic reconstruction, will invariably confront enormous obstacles. In addition to the absence of any genuine

⁵⁷ Carpenter, Ted Galen, 2009), "Middle east Vortex: An unstable Iraq and its Implication for the region", *Mediterranean Quarterly*, 20:1, p.23-24.

⁵⁸ Kenneth Katzman (2003), US Regime Change Efforts and Post war Governance, *Congressional Research Service*, Washington DC, PP.4-5.

organised opposition to the former regime that might form the core of a new government, Iraq has no basis of even the most rudimentary democratic process. It lacks any semblance of democratic mechanisms and norms, or any tradition of open political activity that could be restored. In this respect it lag behind other West Asian states such as Egypt, Jordan and Iran. The collapse of the former one-party system has led to the mushrooming of many old and new political parties and organisations, but the emergence of these parties increases the difficulties for the US to control Iraq and build a new regime with broad appeal.⁵⁹ Thus, the process of building democratic institutions in Iraq could take years, and particularly since democracy cannot be imposed from without, no one can guarantee its success. The introduction of democratic processes is apt to hasten the establishment of an Islamic-Shiite regime in Iraq, because Shiites constitute the majority of the population in Iraq. Furthermore, the efforts to build a democracy will disturb several of US allies because the leap to democratic rule would threaten stability of the autocratic nature of regime in the area.

Conclusion

The collapse of Saddam regime and deterioration of Iraq's military capability had a significant impact on the long term stability and peace in West Asia for more than one reasons. First of all, the overthrow of Saddam Hussein created a serious power vacuum, increasing the possibility of competition among the key regional actors like Iran and Turkey, and to lesser extent, Saudi Arabia and Syria to step in. Secondly, instability in Iraq may overflow onto greater strategic environment, in the form of military intervention or political subversive activity in Iraq by other states. Thirdly, the spill over of Iraq's Kurdish problem into Turkey or Iran; and terror attacks against US and Israeli target because of US involvement in Iraq.⁶⁰ Although such attacks have occurred outside the Iraqi context, the US military presence is likely to help radical Islamic movement recruit activists and supporters to unite against the hated enemy who occupies a Muslim state and degrades the Arab people. Again the long time involvement of US military in Iraq results Anti-Americanism in the West Asian regions. Fourthly, the Iraq crisis again illustrated the weakness of the Arab World and expressed schisms within. Even though the crisis involved a key Arab

⁵⁹ .ibid, *After the Iraq war*, p.104.

⁶⁰ Ibid, *After the Iraq war*, p.108.

state, the Arab countries failed to stave off the war. They also failed to consolidate a joint position, remaining split in their approach to the US military campaign. Finally, the Iraq war significantly increased the US military, political and economic involvement in the region that had profound impact on other states in Iraq's environment, especially Iran, Syria, Turkey, and Gulf states.

CHAPTER-III

Divergence of Interests and Objectives

Turkey since the end of the World War occupied a special place in US foreign policy. During the cold war, Turkey played an important role in the US containment policy as the southeast bastion of NATO and as a buffer state against Soviet Union. In the Post-cold war era, Turkey's geographical "eye in the Storm" location made her a valuable partner for the US.¹ Initially, Turkey and the US had a convergence of interests in the uncertain and volatile international environment of the post-cold war era. Turkey's unique character among the Muslim countries made it a valuable asset in bringing the cultural gap between Europe and the West Asia. Its geographic position and military bases facilitated information gathering and intelligence about potential terrorist activities as well as operations against such groups. Similarly, the US was important for Turkish interests, for its place in the global balance of power, as a security provider, and as a key supporter in Turkey's bid for membership in the European Union (EU). In addition, US support during the 1990s for Turkey's policy of opposing Kurdish separatists was important for Turkish security since one of Turkey's major foreign policy objectives is to prevent Kurdish terrorism, as well as the establishment of a separate Kurdish State. Even though the Turkey and US shared a convergence of interests in countering terrorism and protecting West Asian stability, there was also a more serious divergence of interests, specially over issue of Kurdistan in Iraq, which became visible more after the Iraq war and other two important issues include regime change and stability of Iraq.

The relations between two countries first defined at the beginning of 1990s and in post-September 11, as a 'model' of democracy in the Muslim World underwent a steady deterioration in the wake of the March 2003 Iraq War. In fact US believed that it had a vital interest in supporting Turkey as an ally and as a democratic stronghold at one of the world's most strategic crossroads. At this point, the US strongly supports Turkish membership to the EU since it is believed that Turkey's membership to the Union would consolidate its place in the Western alliance and also, strengthen the link

¹ Maltem Muftuler-Bec (2005), "Turkey and the United States-The Impact of the war in Iraq", *International Journal*, Vo.61, no,2-3, Winter 2005-2006, p.61

After the collapsed of the Soviet Union, Turkey feared that, it would lose its strategic importance in the eye of the US. But it was only speculation, the reality is new world order increased its strategic position. Turkey is located such an area which the US has much concern: the Caucasus and Central Asia, West Asia and the Balkans. So it was important for the US to keep understanding with Turkey to achieve her goals in these regions.

between Islamic world and the West.²In the decade following the end of the cold war, Turkey was faced with the problem of lesser its real estate value in strategic terror for the West.³

For the past 20 years, Turkey's primary interest in Iraq had consistently been to protect the integrity of its border and to eliminate PKK separatists, who have used the mountain of northern Iraq as a base for attacking Turkish targets. While Turkey never liked Hussein, but both Turkey and Iraqi President Saddam Hussein saw the Kurds as a common threat and worked together when it was in their mutual interests. Similarly, US primary concern in Iraq until March 2003 was to contain Saddam Hussein's regional power and prevent his regime from acquiring weapons of mass destruction with which he could threaten his neighbours and destabilize oil markets.⁴While the United States viewed the PKK as a terrorist group, it certainly never regarded the PKK as a threat greater than the Iraqi regime. But Unlike Turkey, which has generally, sees all the Kurds in northern Iraq as a threat to its interests, United States has distinguished between the PKK and Iraqi Kurdish political factions, which it views as allies against Saddam Hussein. Throughout 1990s and after the Gulf war, Turkey and United States were able to manage these differences regarding Kurdish issue in Northern Iraq. But the attacks of September 11, 2001, transformed the strategic landscape in Iraq. When the Bush administration decided to go to war with Iraq in 2003, neither Turkey nor United States fully appreciated the extent to which a war and occupation could put their interests at odds.

Promotion of Democracy in Iraq

One of the most significant but least appreciated changes in US foreign policy during the past two decades is the emergence of democracy promotion as a central,

² Steven A. Cook and Elizabeth Sherwood-Randall (2006), "Generating Momentum for a New Era in U.S.-

Turkey Relations", New York: Council on Foreign Relations, CRS No.15, June ,p.13

³ Nasuh Uslu, (2003), *The Turkish-American Relationship between 1947 and 2003: the History of a Distinctive Alliance*, New York: Nova Science Publishers, 2003, p. 13.

Turkey is neighbor to pivotal countries for the US policy and interests. Again the instability within Turkey easily effects the interests of the US, Turkey's critical water ways is much concern for the us, and being a Muslim countries of the NATO member which is a good example for other West Asian countries of opposition to the US .

⁴ James E. Kapsis (2005) "From Desert Storm to Metal Storm" How Iraq Has Spoiled US-Turkish Relations", *Current History*, Vol.104, No.685, and Nov.2005.p.381

bipartisan dimension of United States engagement with the world. The support for democracy promotion took root with President Reagan's memorable Westminster Address in 1982 that spurred the establishment of the National Endowment for Democracy (NED). The effort expanded geometrically following the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, when Congress and the administration of George H.W. Bush committed hundreds of millions of dollars, mostly through the Agency for International Development (AID), to support the consolidation of democracy in the post-communist countries. The effort continued to expand during the Clinton administration with the creation of new offices in AID to back transitions and to support free elections, independent media, the rule of law, and civil-society NGOs, and also with the initiation of the Community of Democracies, a new multilateral structure designed to strengthen cooperation among established and emerging democracies.⁵ The administration of George W. Bush has magnified still further the United States' support for democracy, pledging most recently in the State of the Union Address that America will stand with the allies of freedom to support democratic movements in the West Asia and beyond, with the ultimate goal of ending tyranny in our world. As far as Iraq is concerns, the consensus on democracy promotion does not preclude sharp partisan disagreements on particular issues of foreign policy. It is important to emphasize, though, that the Iraq debate was not about democracy promotion, but focused instead on the decision to use military force to end Saddam Hussein's regime, largely because it was suspected of having weapons of mass destruction that could threaten the United States. On the issue of helping Iraqis establish a democratic system following Saddam's removal from power, however, the consensus has held firm.⁶

As pointed out by an analyst, the consensus was based fundamentally on three propositions: "first, that the spread of democracy, serves the American national interest since it will lead to a more secure and peaceful world; second, that the spread of democracy serves the American national purpose in that it advances the ideals of freedom and human dignity which are the country's core values; and third, that it is

⁵ Thomas Carothers, (2007), "US Democracy promotion during and After Bush, Carnegie Endowment for international peace, Washington DC, p.17.

⁶ Carl Gershman,(2005), "Democracy as policy and Universal value" *The Whitehead Journal of Diplomacy and International Relations* , Winter/Spring, p.19

appropriate and desirable for the United States to provide moral, political, technical, and financial support to people who are striving to achieve democracy, all the while recognizing that democracy, as a system of self-government, must ultimately be built in each country undergoing democratization by the people themselves”⁷.

In responding to criticism as regards the smooth transition in Iraq, President Bush proclaimed on September 23, 2003, “Iraq as a democracy will have great power to inspire the West Asia”. That assertion stems from the President’s notion that a democratic Iraq will serve as a model throughout the Arab world, something of a democratic domino, in fact. The official American effort to spread democracy to Iraq and implement democratic governance programs around the world has four principal objectives: to strengthen the rule of law and respect for human rights, to develop open and competitive political processes, to foster the development of a politically active civil society, and to promote more transparent and accountable government institutions.⁸

The US plan for “promoting democracy” in Iraq was an integral component of its overall interventionist project in the West Asia .US policy makers are deeply divided over the invasion and occupation of Iraq and they face an expanding foreign policy crisis. Nonetheless, there is consensus among them, and among transnational elites more generally, on political intervention under the rubric of “democracy promotion.” Such political intervention is not just a Republican, much less a Bush regime, policy. As such, it plays a key legitimating function and can be expected to become a central component of overall US strategy in Iraq in the coming months and years. Washington’s plan for “political transition” in Iraq involves the election of constituent assembly in December 2004, in the wake of the alleged “restoration” of Iraqi sovereignty in June 2004, to be followed by general elections in December 2005. The US government had already allocated by early 2004 at least \$458 million dollars for a program to “promote democracy” in Iraq.⁹ Judging by the general pattern of US

⁷ Albrecht Schnabel, “ A rough journey: Nascent democratization in the Middle East” ,pp.2-4 in Amin Saikal and Schnabel, (2003), (eds), *Democratization in the Middle East: Experiences, struggles, challenges*, United Nations University Press, New York.

⁸ , William I. Robinson,(2004), “What to Expect from US “Democracy Promotion” in Iraq”, *New Political Science*, Volume 26, Number 3, September, pp.441-442

⁹ .ibid p.442

“democracy promotion” around the world, it was expected that this program would involve funding by Washington through numerous channels—both overt and covert—of political parties and other elite forums in Iraq, as well as a series of organizations in Iraqi civil society, among them, trade unions, business councils, media outlets, student and women’s groups, and professional associations. These “democracy promotion programs” were part of a larger “four step” plan for the entire West Asia announced by Washington in 2003, using its occupation of Iraq as leverage.

The US had three goals for the political system it would attempt to put into place in Iraq. The first was to cultivate transnationally-oriented elites who share Washington’s interest in integrating Iraq into the global capitalist system and who can administer the local state being constructed under the tutelage of the occupation force. The second was to isolate those counter-elites who are not amenable to the US project, such as nationally (as opposed to transnationally-) oriented elites and others in a position of leadership, authority and influence, who do not share US goals. The third was to establish the hegemony of this elite over the Iraqi masses, to prevent the mass of Iraqis from becoming politicized and mobilized on their own independent of or in opposition to the US project, by incorporating them “consensually” into the political order the US wishes to establish.¹⁰

The US policy of democratic promotion in West Asia during 1990s interregnum was driven by a mix of idealist and pragmatic considerations. During this period, a specifically democratisation Arab regime has seen as the means of securing peace in “conflict ridden” region in West Asia. However, in 1990s none of the US policy were powerful enough to overwhelm realpolitik practices towards West Asia. The fear of instability, disruption to the oil supply and other economic interests overwhelmed democracy in this region. During this period, due to the threat of political ascendancy of anti-western Islamist movements, democracy promotion remained a limited aspect of US policy.¹¹

¹⁰ Marina Ottaway (2008), “Democracy Promotion in the Middle East: Restoring Credibility”, *Policy Brief*, 60, May, p. 2.

¹¹ Katerina Dalacoura (2010), “US Foreign Policy and Democracy Promotion in the Middle East: Theoretical Perspectives and Policy Recommendations”, *Ortadogu Etutleri*, Vol.2, no.3, p.59.

Moreover, the terrorist attacks of 11 September, 2001 on the US catapulted democracy promotion onto the centre of US policy in West Asia. The attack meant the democratic peace theory as the main justification for democracy promotion in West Asia, partly because they showed that non-state actors, rather than states, now posed the greatest danger to the US. Immediately, following the attacks, a view which gained wide currency was that Islamist Terrorism now threatening the US, on its very own soil, was the outcome of a profound democratic deficit in West Asia.¹²

Democracy promotion by the United States in the Arab world since September 11, 2001, had had three components. The most visible has been the Bush administration's high flying rhetoric the so-called freedom agenda. Hinging originally on the assumption that U.S. intervention would transform Iraq into a thriving democracy that would in turn influence the entire Arab World; the rhetoric rang increasingly hollow as Iraq slid into conflict. Worse, by holding up Iraq as a model of democratic transformation long after this was plausible, Washington helped convince many in the Arab world that "democracy promotion" was only a euphemism for forcible regime change. Finally, the rhetoric created a backlash among supporters of political reform by promising an active U.S. role that failed to materialize. The second component of the approach has been pressure on specific countries to modify their domestic policies. Most of the pressures were quite general and ill-conceived. Saudi Arabia and Egypt, for example, were singled out after September 11 for contributing to the rise of terrorism because their authoritarianism engendered frustrations that led to terrorism. Such criticism angered the governments but did not point to specific steps they should take, much less to overall reform strategies. But occasionally the United States also applied pressure to obtain specific responses.¹³ The third element of Bush's democracy promotion was the "Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI)". The project was based on the reasonable assumption that democratic transformation requires social, economic and cultural change, not just a change in political institutions. However, the disparity between MEPI's ambitious goals condemned the program to marginality from the start.

¹² Ibid, "US Foreign policy", p 60.

¹³ Ottaway "Democracy Promotion in the Middle East", pp.2-3

Turkey and US during Iraq War

After September 11, 2001 attack on the US, Bush administration declared war against Iraq and suspected threat of Saddam Hussein for the security of the United States. Following the 9/11 incident, Turkey immediately condemned the attacks and gave its full support to the US. Earlier in post cold war period, US support for the PKK issue and captured of its leader gained momentum in the strategic relationship between Turkey and United States. But the 2003 US invasion of Iraq has broken the relationship due to the different perception on Iraq.

In 2002, when the US began its preparations for a war against Iraq, the Bush administration had expected to be able to rely upon Turkey's logistic support and access to its military bases. The US had apparently planned to invade the country from both the north and the south simultaneously, and for this reason Washington wanted to use Turkish soil for the invasion of Iraq. On 10 December 2002, President Bush and the leader of Turkey's newly elected Justice and Development Party(AKP), Recep Tayyip Erdogan, met in Washington. During that meeting, Erdogan insinuated that Turkey might allow the creation of a "northern front" for the upcoming invasion of Iraq. The US perception of Ankara's support was reinforced when in "December, the Deputy Defense Secretary Paul Wolfowitz returned from Ankara assured by the Turkish General Staff that Turkey was on board, save for the details."¹⁴ With that understanding, on 6 February 2003, the Turkish parliament approved a prime Ministry motion that allowed the deployment of US technical and military personnel to Turkey for a period of three months for the renovation and upgrading of military facilities and ports. In the meantime, US and Turkish officials were engaged in intense bargaining over the nature of compensation in return for Turkey's participation in the Iraq war as a member of the "coalition of the willing."

In December 2002, the US first requested access to the military bases in Turkey and counted upon bringing a force of 62,000 into Turkey for the invasion of Iraq. The possible deployment of such a large military force caused alarm among the Turkish public. The Turkish public was further alarmed when the US asked for access to civilian airports in various parts of Turkey, including Istanbul for the staging of the

¹⁴ Henry Dirella and John Studies (2003.), "Repairing Turkish-American relations," *Washington Times*, 27 July.

air campaign against Iraq. The Turkish public was concerned that the war zone would include Turkey if the civilian airports were allocated to US military use. In return for its support, Turkey was to receive US\$26 billion in grants and loans. More important, Turkey would have been given clearance to follow US troops into Iraq to assist in the stabilization of northern Iraq and to prevent the emergence of a Kurdish state there. One respected American journalist suggested that this meant the US "would have escorted the Turkish foxes into the Kurdish henhouse."¹⁵ The Turkish media, in contrast, stressed the importance of protecting Turkish interests in Iraq, namely preventing both PKK terrorists from using Iraq as a base to hit targets in Turkey and the creation of a Kurdish state. On, 1 March 2003, Turkish government rejected the request of the US for the deployment of troops in Turkish soils. Turkish decision not to allowing deployment of US troops dealt a serious blow to the ties between Turkey and United States.

At this point, the Kurds issue had become a central point of their difference regarding Iraq war with respect to the Iraqi Kurds. For the US, the Kurds were perceived as natural allies in helping to defeat Saddam Hussein and implement regime change in Iraq. On the other side, Turkey was very suspicious of the Iraqi Kurds design on statehood, their support for Kurdish separatists in Turkey, and of any possible claims an independent Kurdish state might make on Turkish territory. It was highly likely that from the start the Bush administration failed to understand fully the extent of Turkish sensitivities on the Kurdish issue. Besides, the two countries had differences over various other issues related to the Iraq war: stability of Iraq, promotion of democracy and terrorism (specially the Kurds Issue). At the same time, Turkey and United States shared basic common goals in Iraq for the promotion of democracy after the Iraq aftermath. After the US invasion of Iraq, the US openly sought to establish a democratic regime in Iraq, in the interest of United States. Turkey the most important ally of US before the war also supported the cause of United States for the stable regime which replaces the autocratic rule of Saddam Hussein. Both Turkey and United States would very much prefer to see Iraq remain united and not break up into numerous enclaves of states along ethnic or sectarian lines. They both would like a strong central government that is not only capable of

¹⁵ Philip Robins (2003), "Confusion at home, confusion abroad: Turkey between Copenhagen and Iraq," *International Journal*, 79, Summer, pp. 567-569

bringing back political and economic stability, but that would also be robust enough to become a future counterweight to Iran in the region.¹⁶ Neither Turkey nor United States would like to see emergence of any form of a fundamentalist state in Iraq.

The promotion of democracy in Iraq was the main communality of interests between the Turkey and United States. Turkey was one of the first neighbouring states which surrounding Iraq extended the support to United States for the promotion of democracy in Iraq. However, although they had shared goals, the interests and objectives differences while the US for interest tried to establish pro-American government which must suits the interests of United States, Turkey did not support the imposition of democratic regime in Iraq by United States.¹⁷ However, the institution of democracy promotion would invariably confront enormous obstacles. In Iraq, there was absence of any genuine organised opposition to the future regime that might form the core of new government, has no basis of even the most rudimentary democratic processes. It lacked any semblance of democratic mechanisms and norms, or any tradition of open political activity that could be restored. The collapse of former one party system had already led to the mushrooming of many old and new political parties and organisations, but the emergence of these parties increases the difficulties for the United States to control Iraq and build a new regime with broad appeal.

Thus the process of building democratic institutions in Iraq could take years, and particularly since the democracy cannot be imposed, no one can guarantee its success. Moreover, the main goals of United States were the foundation of stable regime in Iraq with its own interests. Iraq as a Shiite majority state could be as an “¹⁸Islamic-Shiite” regime in the process of democracy which will affect the interests of the United States.

In short, the divergence between Turkey and United States began with the plan of imposition and transplanted of democracy in Iraq by the Bush administration,

¹⁶ Henri J. Barkey (2005), “ Turkey and Iraq, The Perils (and Prospects) of Proximity”, *Special Report*, 141 , p.2

¹⁷ Kam Ephraim (2003), “The War in Iraq: Regional Implications” in Feldman Shai, (eds), *After the war in Iraq*, Jaffee Center for Strategic studies Publication, p.102.

¹⁸ *Ibid. After war in Iraq*, p.104

which affecting the territorial integrity of Turkey and Iraq. However, Turkey was apprehensive over the turmoil in Iraq and its implications for Turkish security. Turkey was particularly disturbed over the possibility of Kurdish autonomy transforming into an independent entity or the possible creation of a federal structure in Iraq that would provide greater independence for the Kurds.¹⁹

Stability of Iraq

After the war in Iraq, US and Iraq's neighbours are played a major role both positive and negative in the stabilization and reconstruction of the "New Iraq". After the invasion of Iraq, the regional security and stability was the main concern for Turkey and United States. Iraq future is one of the most important and troubled topics in Turkey-US relations since the 1991 Gulf war, but specifically after the US invasion of Iraq in 2003. Although Turkey fully supported the first Gulf war in 1991 and rapidly went along with the US in Afghanistan. But in 2003, Turkey opposed the invasion of Iraq for several important reasons, which are concern to the security, integrity and others interests. These reasons continued to be of utmost importance after the US invasion of Iraq. Ever since the end of Gulf war in 1991, Turkey was more deeply involved in Iraqi affairs. The establishment of no fly zone over northern Iraq, enabling British and US aircraft operating out of the Turkish air base at Incirlik to routinely patrol the territory in defence of Iraqi Kurds, made Turkey permanent pillars of the US policy of containing Saddam Hussein. However, the main divergence of interests between Turkey and US developed when the situation in Iraq did not progress in the way Turkey wished and Turkey and US had agreed on before. The United States gave its attention to stability in Iraq and supported the relatively stable north and Kurdish region for the sake of protecting and improving stability.²⁰ The current situation represents a conundrum for Turkey because of its proximity; it is propelled to act in Iraq both in defence of its interests and, simultaneously, with a great deal of caution and restraint for the fear of future entangling itself in what appears to be a quagmire.²¹

¹⁹Kapsis, (2005) "From Desert Storm to Metal Storm" , p.381.

²⁰ Abdullah Karakoç (2009), Turkey's Relations with Iran and the United States: A Shift in Alignment? *Thesis*, Naval PostGraduate School, March, Monterey, California, p.37.

²¹ Quoted in Thessismun (2008), Thessaloniki International Student Model United States, United Nations Security Council, p.4 at, www.Thessimun.org.

The unabated violence that ensued the overthrow of Saddam Hussein has also heightened Turkish concerns over the ultimate stability of Iraq. Beyond the immediate concern over the Kurds, there are also lingering fears about the potential breakup of Iraq and the emergence of unstable, radical, and possibly fundamentalist Shi'a or Sunni entities, as well as the likelihood of a two- or three-way civil war.²² Such an eventuality could affect Turkey in two distinct ways. The first was the danger that the violence and instability would be exported to Turkey and other neighbours. The emergence of an authority in Baghdad bent on revenge and punishing the Kurds for being the primary allies of the United States in the war against Iraq might ultimately lead to interethnic violence close to Turkey's own borders. In turn, if the incipient Kurdish state were threatened, the possibility of American military intervention in support of the persecuted Kurds would put pressure on Turkey to open a second front against Saddam similar for its demand before the war, Turkmen role and fate in any such conflict between Arabs and Kurds.²³ Besides, there was also a delicate understanding between the two primary Kurdish groups, which fought bitterly with each other in the 1990s, that can be endangered by the potential chaos and uncertainty of Iraq. In the event of civil war in Iraq, Turkey would likely to be hard pressed to resist domestic calls for direct intervention.

The second way a fragmented Iraq could affect Turkey is that instability and violence in its immediate neighbourhood—especially the kind of violence that is likely to pull Turkey into Iraq, either to protect the Turkmen or to support other interests—may make the European Union suspend or even reconsider the accession process. Moreover, should events in Iraq lead to greater unrest within Turkey's own Kurdish population, either as a result of Turkish Kurds' need to come to the support of their brethren across the border or because of increased repressive measures employed by Turkey to quell Kurdish turmoil, the Europeans are quite likely to freeze the accession process. Hence Iraqi instability can potentially derail what ultimately has been regarded as the greatest achievement of Turkish diplomacy to date—the beginning of European Union accession talks. Should Iraq fall into the hands of a

²² Ephraim Kam, "The War in Iraq: Regional Implications", in Isaac Ben Israel, (2003), in Shai Feldman (ed.), *After the War in Iraq: Defining the New Strategic Balance*, Brighton: Sussex Academic Press, p.104.

²³ Barkey, (2005), "Turkey and Iraq, p.7.

fundamentalist Iranian type Shi'a regime, it is quite possible that both the United States and the European Union will want to see Turkey become the bulwark against both Iran and Iraq. Although such a role would transform Turkey into a frontline state, it would necessarily pit Ankara against its neighbours, a position it has not relished in the past and is unlikely to do so in the future. The AKP led government has aggressively sought to improve ties with Turkey's Muslim neighbours and the Muslim world in general, and it even aspires to have Turkey assume a leadership role among Muslim countries. In the event of a Sh'ia takeover of Iraq's government, U.S. and EU resistance to the division of the country may diminish as they consider the benefits of a Kurdish buffer state.²⁴ It remains to be seen whether the Turkish establishment, including the government, would countenance an independent Kurdish buffer state by overcoming its deeper fears stemming from such an entity.

The dilemma for Turkey is one of ascertaining a risk-minimizing policy vis-à-vis Iraq at a time when the future of the country is indeterminate. Turkish leaders not only have to balance their own domestic preferences but also must prepare for the worst as they currently define it. Turkey's conundrum extends beyond the probable emergence of a Kurdish entity in northern Iraq and includes the disposition of the other parts of the country, including the future of the Turkmen minority.²⁵ Clearly, as it defines its immediate interests, Turkey would perceive an independent Kurdish state in northern Iraq, with Kirkuk as its capital and the Turkmen under its tutelage neighbouring a rump "fundamentalist" Iraqi state or two, to be its worst scenario. Unlike any other difference it may have had with its principal strategic ally, the United States, over a variety of issues, the direct involvement of the United States in Iraq complicates matters for Turkey. Turkey will be careful not to alienate Washington, irrespective of its relations with the EU, especially considering the importance the U.S. attaches to an eventual resolution of the Iraq crisis in a manner that does not compromise its image, credibility, and influence in the region.

After the war, at first glance, long-term Turkish and American interests in the West Asia do not differ very much. Both sides would prefer a democratic, stable, and unified Iraq; both perceive Iraq as a critical country in the region and are committed

²⁴ Ibid, *Turkey and Iraq*, p. 9

²⁵ Bill Park (2004), "Iraq's Kurds and Turkey", p.26.

to its territorial integrity, regarding it as a valuable ally in containing Iran's ambitions. Washington and Ankara, including the Islam-friendly AKP government (not to mention the secular military), would consider the emergence of a full-blown fundamentalist regime in Iraq a failure of the Iraq war. Continued instability in Iraq not only undermines U.S. objectives but, from Turkey's standpoint, also has the potential of spilling over into Turkish territory through infiltration by PKK-like groups, the influence of fundamentalist activists, and consequent refugee flows. Both countries have shared the same viewpoint on the PKK presence for more than a decade, it must be removed.

Despite the compatibility of long-term interests, there is a great deal of variance on the means to accomplish these goals, and the divergence revolves around the future of Iraq; contingencies there divide the two countries the most. Ankara wants to see Kurdish ambitions circumscribed and also to see the Turkmen play a greater role in a reconstituted Iraq and assume control of the city of Kirkuk as a bulwark against Kurdish separatist ambitions.²⁶ The U.S. is more ambivalent about Kurdish aspirations: having promised them support for a federal arrangement in 1998, when Secretary of State Madeleine Albright negotiated a truce between the two Kurdish factions in northern Iraq, Washington is unlikely to back away from that promise. Realistically, the U.S. also understands that after more than a decade of quasi-independence, a federal structure is the absolute minimum condition that could convince the Kurds to remain within a unified Iraq. Turkey, too, reluctantly understands the necessity of a federal arrangement; but whereas the U.S. would leave the details of this arrangement to be determined by the Iraqis, Turkey wants not only to have a say but also to minimize the geographic and institutional reach of this kind of federation.

What is more worrisome to the Turks is whether the U.S. would support the creation of an independent Kurdish state in northern Iraq, should conditions in Iraq deteriorate beyond a certain point. Underlying the Turkish viewpoint is a deep mistrust of U.S. actions and intentions in Iraq. The mistrust was accentuated by the failure of the pre war diplomacy. On the eve of the war, and despite intense domestic

²⁶ Barkey (2005), "Turkey and Iraq", pp, 16-17.

opposition, the Turkish government promised the U.S. that it would allow the creation of a second front, yet it failed to deliver on its promise when its inept handling of the parliamentary vote on the issue resulted in a negative vote. The agreement, which had been meticulously negotiated, would have allowed for a sizable Turkish military contingent to enter northern Iraq on the heels of U.S. troops. With the deal off the table, the U.S. has been adamant in limiting the Turkish military presence in Iraq to a minimum and has heeded Iraqi (both Kurdish and non-Kurdish) demands not to let Turks bring in troops. Still, despite the opposition to the war, Turkey did quietly lend a hand to U.S. forces by opening limited use of the border with Iraq and airspace, and later by becoming a conduit for supplies. The parliamentary rejection precipitated a crisis in Turkish-American relations, and, after the vote, the U.S. was careful not to criticize the government, which had at least tried to pass the resolution through parliament.

However, Deputy Defense Secretary Paul Wolfowitz's interview with CNN-Turk criticizing the military establishment in Ankara for failing to provide leadership on the issue and trying to indirectly stall the measure shocked many.²⁷ Many Turks are convinced that the United States seeks to punish Turkey for having rejected the deployment of U.S. forces in Turkey in the March 1, 2003 parliamentary vote. In their view, the rejection privileged the Iraqi Kurdish factions by providing them an opportunity to demonstrate their support for the Bush administration's Iraq policy. Therefore, the increased reliance on the Kurds by the United States came at the expense of Turkey, which prohibited the entry of U.S. troops into northern Iraq from Turkish soil. In effect, the reliance of the U.S. forces in Iraq on Kurdish units to help them maintain order and even engage insurgents further inflames Turkish perceptions that the Kurds are now more important than them. Furthermore, U.S. inaction on the PKK front is also interpreted in the media as another way in which Washington is punishing Turkey for its rejection. All these perceptions culminate in the fear of a hidden U.S. agenda to create a state for its loyal Kurdish allies.²⁸

To some extent, the U.S. has also been exasperated with Turkish opposition to any future Iraqi agreement that offers the Kurds more than symbolic autonomy. As

²⁷ For a transcript, see <http://dod.mil/transcripts/2003/tr20030506-depsecdef0156.html>.

one commentator has recently argued, since the March 1, 2003 parliamentary vote, the real change in U.S.-Turkish relations has been one of diminished importance for the United States. Both the July 4, 2003 incident involving Turkish Special Forces and the decision of Coalition Provisional Authority head L. Paul Bremer III to side with the Iraqis that same summer against the deployment of Turkish troops in Iraq reflected the growing unease within the U.S. Department of Defense about Turkey's intentions. Yet TGS chief Ozkok and his deputy Basbug have tried hard, despite rank-and-file uneasiness, to reinvigorate the Turkish-American relationship and put a stop to the spiraling anti-American rhetoric emanating from Ankara. Another cause of disagreement is that neither Turkey nor the United States has succeeded in formulating a coherent Iraq policy. Because of all the unanticipated difficulties it has faced almost since the end of major combat operations, the U.S. has had to continually improvise its policies on the ground. The Turks, because of the fundamental nature of the threat they perceive to their own vision of national identity from Kurdish independence in Iraq and the domestic fallout such an event may cause, have opted out for a policy that cannot accommodate the changing conditions and realities in Iraq.²⁹

The differences in threat perceptions from Iraq between the USA and Turkey became more visible in this period. First of all, they differed on the priorities of the threats Iraq posing to their national securities. For the USA, regime change in Iraq by military force was imminent since it believed that there is strong connection between terrorist groups and Saddam regime.³⁰ Therefore, the USA had the aim of preventing such a strike from Iraq before it actually acquired the necessary capacity to do so. On the other hand, Turkey also was uneasy about Saddam regime however, it supported the view that such a regime change should not be imposed outside by use of force rather than it should be supported by its internal dynamics. Moreover, Turkey had concerned about post-Saddam Iraq challenges on the status quo and the balance of politics in the region. In addition to these, unless Afghanistan operation was not

²⁹ Bill Park, "Iraq's Kurds and Turkey", p.23-24, also for details see, Henri J. Barkey, (2005), "Turkey and Iraq, The Perils (and Prospects) of Proximity".

³⁰ Radiye Funda Camkiran, (2008), "Understanding Today's Turkish-American Relations over Iraq through a Retrospective Analysis: A Comparative Approach to the US and Turkish Foreign Policy Before Iraq War", *Working Paper*, pp.16-17.

concluded and the regional stability was not achieved, an operation in Iraq would not be correct in terms of timing for Turkey.

Turkey's professed first preference in Iraq is to see a return of central government authority and control over the entire Iraqi territory. As in the past, it prefers the new government in Baghdad to be able to overcome the ethnic, regional, and sectarian divisions that have plagued the country to varying degrees over the course of its history. Besides, a stable Iraq would help promote Turkish economy lucrative trade relationship; this includes the security of the two pipelines that carry oil from northern Iraqi fields to Turkish terminals at the Mediterranean port city of Ceyhan³¹. At different times, Ankara has articulated what it deems its "red lines" in Iraq, which have had a great deal more to do with the disposition of northern Iraq than anything else. At first, these "red lines" were declared in opposition to any Kurdish federal arrangement in Iraq. For Turkey, an additional and important consideration is whether a new government in Baghdad can successfully control its northern borders and put an end to the infiltration by the PKK and other Kurdish insurgent groups. Turkey also wants to see Iraq's oil resources brought under the firm control of the central government in Baghdad; oil, it fears, can provide the resources for a future drive to Kurdish independence.³² And although it understands that it will not be able to influence Baghdad to minimize cultural autonomy, Turkey would still like to see restrictions on domestic education policy. The acceptance of Kurdish as a language on par with Arabic could, in Ankara's view, fuel demands for the same in Turkey. Ironically, Turkey's own negotiation process for accession to the European Union is likely to increase Turkish Kurds' demands for cultural rights.

Terrorism

After demise of Soviet threat, the United States and Turkey found themselves in a new collaboration against terrorism. Particularly, September 11 terrorist attacks made clear that the US and Turkey need each other in order to fight against terrorism. Also, along with emerging greater West Asia project, ensuring stability in the wider West Asian region has been an important cooperation reason for the US-Turkish

³¹ Barkey, "Turkey and Iraq", pp.16-17

³² For details see, Bill Park, Iraq's Kurds and Turkey: Challenges for US Policy.

partnership.³³ Turkey as a country had combated PKK terrorism since 1980s .The United States supported Turkey in war against PKK terrorism after the Gulf war. They have communalist of interests on fight against terrorism in the post cold war era. Terrorism is one of the main concerns where the interest of Turkey-US evolved. The first cooperation in this field started when both the countries decision makers came in 1999. The capture of the bloody terrorist Abdullah Ocalan in Kenya through Turkey – US intelligence cooperation is one of the most important events in the cooperation against terrorism against both the countries.³⁴

Another communality of Interests and objectives between Turkey and United States came when the September 11 attack on US in 2001. Turkey as a country facing the PKK problem since two decade, it condemned the September 11 terrorist attacks against the US, declaring its decision to continue the battle against terrorism, and pledged its support. In response to the September 11 attacks, President Bush declared the US manner against terrorism in the aftermath of attacks and accused Iraq, Iran and South Korea as “axis of evil”. The well known quota of President Bush is “if you are not with us, you are against us.” That speech was a result of stability to terrorism.³⁵ Turkey extended support to the US after the attack and opened air space for flights in support of Operation Enduring Freedom and allowed the use of Incirlik air base in this framework. The Turkish administration also dispatched military Special Forces personnel to Afghanistan and assigned Turkish personnel to Florida to support the US anti-terror efforts. After September 11, Turkey was one of the first to join US in the struggle against global terrorism. Turkey became a staging area for the Afghan

³³ Frances G. Burwell, (2008) “The Evolution of US-Turkish Relations in A Transatlantic Context”, *Colloquium Report*, April, 2008, <http://www.strategicinstitute.army.mil>, p, 2, Accessed on 23 August 2010.

³⁴ Omer Goksel Isyar, (2005), “An Analysis of Turkish-American Relations from 1945 to 2004: Initiatives and Reactions in Turkish Foreign Policy”, *Turkish Journal of International Reactions*, Vol.4, No.3, 2005, p36, <http://www.alternativesjournal/volume4/number3/isyer.pdf>, Accessed on 3 September 2010.

³⁵ Rajan Menon, S Enders Wimbush, (2007), “Is the United States Losing Turkey?” www.hudson.org/files/pdf_upload/Turkey%20PDF.pdf, accessed 02 October 2010.

operation and later took command of the international security force there.³⁶ So, in this way Turkey-US relationship developed against war on Terrorism

The divergence of interests and objectives of Turkey and United States can be seen regarding US invasion of Iraq in 2003. In addition to different views about Iraq's future, PKK terrorism, as could be predicted before the war, stands as an important point of conflict between Turkey and the USA after the war. Despite the cooperation with the USA in Afghanistan and Iraq in the global war against terrorism, the US' inaction against the PKK disappointed Turkish public and led to a depreciation of its prestige as an ally in the eyes of the Turkish public. From the US perspective dealing with the PKK is not a priority as before the war. Instead, PKK issue was perceived as a manifestation of Turkey's Iraq policy with which Turkey would like to have a say in the future of it. Moreover, the USA said that the problem should be solved between Iraq and Turkey. Despite the establishment of trilateral mechanism between the parts to deal with it did not work. This fuelled public criticism in Turkey since the public believes that the US has the power but not the will to help Turkey in order not to harm its relations with the Kurds in Northern Iraq. As Robert Wexler, representative in Congress from the state of Florida, observed:

*The myriad of challenges to the US-Turkish relationship, which will be addressed by our witness, are multiple, complex and intertwined. The most significance divergence has been in Iraq and particularly as it relates to Kurdish terrorism. Since 2004, the PKK has killed and injured more than 1500 people in Turkey. Given America's leading role in Iraq, there is a perception in Turkey that America has not done enough to remove the threat of the PKK terrorists based in Northern Iraq. Perceived inaction on the American side has lead to a nationalist backlash in Turkey against the US. It is critical that the US and Iraqi Kurdish leaders do more to make address the PKK threat.*³⁷

After the Turkish Parliament refusal of the US plan of attacks, US supported the cause of Kurdish autonomy in the region in returns of the Kurdish support. Moreover, after 2003, the PKK terrorist organisation grew stronger, because of the US support.

³⁶ SonerCagaptay (2003), Turkey's Future Direction and U.S.-Turkey Relations: Hearing before the Subcommittee on Europe of the Committee on International Relations, House of Representatives, One Hundred Eighth Congress, first session, October 1, 2003,

³⁷ Quoted in Mustafa Gul, The USA-Turkey Relationship After 2003 Iraq Crisis, p.17.

At this point of time Turkish suspicions about US motives towards PKK grew as the US continued to ignore the fact that the terrorist organisation had increased its bloody activities in Turkey.³⁸ However, after the invasion of Iraq, US authorities wanted the Turks to leave the PKK problem to them. Contradictorily, the arms that had been seized from the terrorist organization appear to belong to the U.S, even though the United States declared that Washington had no policy to arm the terrorist organization, while accepting that they were U.S. arms. In addition to this, arrested PKK terrorists claimed that U.S. officers visited the terrorists' camps in the Qandil Mountains many times and brought money, arms, and talked with the current leader of the terrorist organization. The existence of the helicopter-landing zone in the terrorist organization's camp was introduced as proof to their claims because only the U.S. had helicopters in the region. So, the differences occurred due to the Turkish suspicion about the US policy towards PKK.

However, Turkey does not see a fragmented Iraq which will threaten the territorial integrity and security of Turkey due to PKK activities in the regions. In reality, the US was not very determined to address the PKK issue. Their tolerance towards the two Kurdish groups, namely the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) and the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) meant that they indirectly ignored the PKK problem because both Kurdish groups tolerated the PKK presence in their region so as to avoid violent PKK reprisals. Hence, the tolerance towards the PKK by the US created some problem in Turkey-US cooperation on terrorism because there is no other option for US to achieve their goals.

Anti-Americanism-

All these issues and the US-led war against Iraq in 2003 itself had resulted with Anti-Americanism in Turkey. By invading Iraq from the north as well as south, the US and its allies hoped to strike at Saddam Hussein forces from different directions and quickly overwhelm them. From the very beginning, Turkey was suspicious about the US war plans and was reluctant not only to take part in the US-

³⁸ Andrew McGregor, "PKK Arms Scandal Fuels Turkish Suspicions," *Terrorism Focus* IV, No.27 (August 2007), p. 4. http://www.jamestown.org/terrorism/news/uploads/TF_004_027.pdf (Accessed on 22 June 2011).

led war but also to ease the latter's military strike on Iraq by opening air bases and borders to coalition troops.³⁹

The reasons for Turkey's reluctance were manifold and an anti-American stand could be seen for the following reasons. Firstly, Turkey repeatedly pointed out its economic losses from the first Gulf War in 1991, which had never been fully compensated by the US. Second, Turkey feared that a military strike on Iraq could lead the Kurds to establish an independent state next door. A possible refugee flood (as had previously happened in the first Gulf War) and the possible Kurdish control of the oil-rich cities of Mosul and Kirkuk, where a sizeable Turkoman minority lived, were also serious concerns for Turkey. Third, opposition to the war also stemmed from the stance of the newly formed government of the Justice and Development Party (Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi – AKP). The AKP government was facing trouble over the possible operation against Iraq because of pressure from its grassroots. Despite having an overwhelming majority in Parliament with 363 seats, the AKP would have had difficulty passing the decision wanted by the Americans regarding Iraq since it came from an Islamist political tradition which opposes declaring war against a fellow Muslim country.⁴⁰ Besides, the emergence of the Kurdish mini-state in post-Saddam Iraq under the name of Kurdish Regional Administration (KRG) and its attempts to annex Kirkuk also turned many Turks including those supportive of the strategic alliance with the US apprehensive about the American long-term agenda in the region. Its alleged plan to re-draw the map of West Asia, which would entail territorial losses for Turkey added fuel to the existing nationalist conspiracy theories and further aroused anti-US feelings as evident in successive opinion polls. According to the 2006 Pew Global Attitude Survey, for example, the number of Turks who had a favourable view of the US fell from 32 percent in 2004 to 23 percent in 2005 and to a mere 17 percent in 2006. Even in 2007, the result of the same survey fell to 9 percent favourable view of the US, the lowest among all states and considerably less than even the Palestinians.⁴¹

³⁹ Aylin Guney, (2008), "Anti-Americanism in Turkey: Past and Present", *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol.44, No.3, May, p.447

⁴⁰ ,ibid, pp447-449

⁴¹Loannis N Grigoriadis,(2010), "Friends No More?The Rise of Anti-American Nationalism in Turkey", *The Middle East Journal*, Vol.64, No.1, 2010, p.58.

The rise of anti-Americanism in Turkish society also could be seen in media. In the past few years, the Turkish media has also grown increasingly anti-Americanism.⁴² The commercial success of a Movie based on a popular TV series was an additional manifestation of rising anti-Americanism in Turkey. “*The Valley of Wolves: Iraq*”⁴³ a new film released in 2006 and reflecting the increasing wave of anti-Americanism attracted record audiences in Turkey. At the time of release of this movie, the most expensive production in the history of Turkish cinema eventually became its biggest commercial success. The spectacular commercial success of the movie replete with nationalistic and anti-American messages comprised a clear signal of the growing popular anti-American nationalism in Turkey.

Iraq war and the US presence in Iraq in its aftermath represent a turning point for Turkish foreign policy and specifically for the West Asia and its alliance with the USA. Since the war made it difficult for Turkey to follow a balanced policy between its responsibilities in the Western alliance and the relations with regional states. However, the US presence in the region as an outside power makes it difficult for Turkey to follow such policy and tries to minimize the damages to the alliance and its relations with other regional powers which inevitably, clashes with the US interests at some points. The problems the alliance witnessed in this period can be grouped mainly under the subjects of the future of Iraq and establishment of a possible independent Kurdish state in Northern Iraq and the PKK terrorism. Although Turkey and the US have agreed on long-term stability in Iraq, they differ on the future shape of Iraq. For instance, while the USA supports a federal Iraq,⁴⁴ Turkey is worried about the prospects of an independent Kurdish state in Northern Iraq. In connection Turkey has raised the issue as regard the status of Kirkuk to protect its multi-ethnic structure so to prevent it becoming an independent Kurdish state. In the aftermath of the US war on Iraq, Turkish special relationship with the US came under strains, this together with surge of anti-Americanism sentiments and resurgence of PKK violence eventually paved the way for a significant shift in Turkish foreign policy orientation.

⁴² Aylin Guney, (2008), “Anti-Americanism in Turkey: Past and Present, Middle Eastern Studies, Vol.44, No.3, May, p.482.

⁴³ A films which serves resist views.

⁴⁴ Camkiran, “Understanding Today’s”, p.23

Reflective of this, Turkey's "Zero Problem" with its so ruthingly neighbours and rapprochement with Russia, its 'ancestral enemy'.

The Following chapters will discuss the nature of change in Turkish Foreign Policy behaviours mainly focusing on especially in West Asia regions vis-à-vis its southerly neighbours, Iran, Syria and Israel.

CHAPTER-IV

Changes in Turkey's Foreign Policy Behaviour

Geopolitics is a fundamental factor in determination of Turkish foreign policy since Ottoman times. According to Hale, geopolitics is the link in terms of continuity and consistency between Ottoman and Turkish foreign policy. While its geographical situation increases Turkey's international weight, it also entails the risk of powers with ambitions in these regions".¹

Turkey is located both in Europe and in Asia, a trait shared only with Russia. Geographically, it is a Balkan, Black Sea and Mediterranean state. The Balkan and Black Sea regions are vital for strategic relations with Central Asia and the Caucasus, especially through its ethnic, religious and cultural ties. The Mediterranean region is imperative for relations with the Arab world, Israel and Europe. While Turkey is a West Asia country, considering its historical ties to the region, it is also a bridge between the West Asia and Europe as well as Central Asia.² Accordingly, the Turkish Straits Bosphorus and Dardanelles carry significant strategic importance. Turkey's proximity to West Asia, the Caucasus and the Balkans illustrates its geopolitical importance and contributes to the diversity of Turkish foreign policy. At the same time its location in the tumultuous West Asian region creates significant security concerns.

In the 19th century, the Ottoman Empire followed a foreign policy agenda based on the exploitation of balance of power' between major European powers. With the advance of foreign affairs institutions in the 19th century, Ottoman Empire sought flexible alliances 'based on the strategic needs at the time. The birth of the new republic in 1923 under the charismatic leadership of Ataturk led to a period of transformation from old Ottoman values to new Republic on values. The Ottoman foreign policy based exclusively on external factors (for security and development) was reshaped into a policy in which accounted for domestic factors along with external factors. Turkey is considered as a "Middle Power"³ in international system,

¹ William Hale (2000), Turkish Foreign Policy, 1774-2000, Frank Cass, London, p.7, Further details see Introduction Chapter.

² Mustafa Aydin (2004), "Foucault's Pendulum: Turkey in Central Asia and Caucasus", Turkish Studies, Vol.5 (2), pp.1-5

³ A state's power in the international system is measured as a combination of its economic capabilities and its military muscle. Based on this definition, states in the international system are categorized as great, middle and small powers. Middle powers are defined as states which have the potential to show resistance to pressure from great powers and to exert influence on neighboring small powers. They lack the power to affect international politics on a global scale. When middle powers face a security problem from a major power, they either depend on alliances or try to exploit the balance of power

being one of the successor states of the Ottoman Empire. The Ottoman Empire preferred to cooperate with European power in order to defend its territory against extend threats. Turkey its successor state adopted a similar policy before and during the cold war and allied itself with the West. In this respect, the external factors were predominant in Turkish Foreign Policy making as well as 19th century Ottoman foreign policy. An evaluation of Turkish Foreign Policy in its historical depth reveals distinct pattern since Ottoman times. The first decades of the 20th century witnessed the collapse of the Ottoman Empire. In this period the Ottoman adjusted their foreign policy from a “flexible alliance” strategy to “permanent alliances”. Eventually Ottoman Empire shifted its foreign policy toward establishing permanent alliances. Thus, in the early ages Turkey was busy with conducting its Westernization agenda in domestic politics, while trying to normalize its foreign relations. It is also evident that the extra-ordinary conditions strictly shaped and limited the foreign policy behaviour of the new Turkish republic and mainly resulted in security oriented foreign policy formation.

With the arrival of the cold war, the bipolar international system forced the states to place themselves within a one of the two rival powers, mainly with US and Soviet Union. In this power polarization, Turkey determined its position under the Western security umbrella. The emergence of the U.S.S.R. after the Second World War as a threat to the Western alliance allowed Turkey to form permanent alliances with the Western powers. Accordingly, Turkey prioritized external factors in its foreign policy making over domestic concerns during the Cold War. In this period, membership to NATO, the U.S. alliance and possible European Union membership were at the centre of Turkish foreign policy making.⁴ Reprioritization of domestic factors occurred after the end of Cold War, especially with Turkey losing much of its appeal for Western powers as an ally against a less powerful Russia.

Turkish domestic turbulence had its roots in ethnic and religious diversity within the country. Islamic politics started to be more active and influential with Prime Minister Turgut Özal (1983-1991, President from 1991to1993) and even more so with Prime Minister Necmettin Erbakan (1996-1997). Ethnic based political parties also

between great powers. For Further details see, William Hale, (2000), Turkish foreign policy, 1774-2000, Frank Cass, London.

⁴ Mustafa Aydin (2000), “Determinants of Turkish Foreign Policy: Changing Patterns and Conjunctures during the Cold War”, *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol.36 (1), pp.105-107.

emerged, especially with HADEP, which allied with a leftist party (SODEP) for the general elections in 1996.⁵ In 2002, AKP won a majority of the parliamentary seats and formed its own government. With the elections in 2007, AKP had 47 percent of the votes, a significant victory for any political party, and especially for a party with Islamic roots.⁶ Even though AKP followed a pro-Western foreign policy, its leaders were known to be against the Western alliance. It is interesting to note that Turkey is the only Muslim country with a democratic political system based upon secular principles. It is also a member of NATO, as well as the Council of Europe and the Islamic Conference. Although Turkey is mainly a West Asian country (97 percent of its land is located in Asia), it has been actively seeking a membership to European Union and its predecessors for the past forty years.

The influence of domestic factors on Turkish foreign policy gained importance after the end of Cold War, especially after Islam started to gain influence in the Turkish political arena. Economic factors (especially after the financial crises of 1995 and 2001),⁷ military factors (especially after the PKK and the hostility of Turkey's neighbors and some of its allies through support for terrorism and instability in Turkey),⁸ ethnic factors (especially after PKK and HADEP) and religious factors (especially after RP and AKP) became the driving force behind Turkish foreign policy.⁹

Turkey learned several lessons during and after the Cold War about its Western alliance. Despite international opposition, Turkish military intervention in Cyprus (1974) was clear evidence for its inability to ignore domestic public pressure, even when the foreign policy is exclusively based on external factors. After the Cold War, the lack of Western support, delays in the European Union membership discussions and economic consequences of the two Gulf Wars also met with public criticism.

⁵ Quoted in Factors Driving Turkish Foreign Policy, p.2, available at, etd.lsu.edu/docs/available/etd-11022008-215511, accessed on 12 June, 2011.

⁶ Joshua.W Walker (2007-8) "Reexamining the US-Turkish Alliance", *The Washington Quarterly*, Winter, p.95

⁷ Ziya Onis (2000). "The Turkish Economy at the Turn of a New Century: Critical and Comparative Perspectives," in Morton Abramowitz, (eds), *Turkey's Transformation and American Policy*, New York: The Century Foundation Press, pp. 95-115

⁸ Hale, *Turkish Foreign Policy*, pp. 195-199

⁹ Ahmet Sozen (2005), "Turkish Democratization in Light of its EU Candidate Status" in Kirstyn Inglis and Andrea Ott, (eds), *The Constitution for Europe and an Enlarging Union: Union in Diversity?*, Amsterdam: Europa Law Publishing, pp. 300-304.

Increased terrorist activity was blamed in part on the lack of international support. A growing number of countries supporting Armenian accusations of alleged atrocities during the First World War also created a loss of public confidence for Western allies. In addition to international uncertainty, the unique Turkish cultural mosaic brings its own complications for Turkey. Its domestic identity crisis further complicates its position in the international system. Considering the increasing power of Islamists in politics, domestic debates over its identity as 'Western verses Eastern' are more heated than ever.¹⁰

Decline of the Soviet system signified a vital transformation in the parameters of the Cold-War international relations. Bipolar balance of power system collapsed. The end of the strategic balance between the two continental powers left behind an ambiguity for the future of international order. Consequentially, political instability remained after the bipolar order paved way to the strategic monopoly of the US leadership. The period in the aftermath of Cold-War ages, until the 9/11 incident has been a re-adjustment process for Turkey to define its position in the new World politics.

During the post cold war period, Turkish foreign policy were heavily curtailed by three chronic domestic problems: Economic crisis, Political instability and Terrorism. It was against a tough domestic and an international background which was full of uncertainties due to the constantly transforming international paradigm that Turkey was designing and implementing its foreign policy behaviours. Hence curtailed by domestic problems and challenged by the Post cold war uncertainties, Turkish foreign policy was unable to fully usurp the new opportunities of the post cold war era. Instead Turkey followed its traditional principles in foreign policy making in order to erase the threats of the post cold war era. Besides the newly opened geographies such as the Balkans, the Caucasus and Central Asia where Turkey had very modest moves, and tried not to in its traditional relations with the

¹⁰ For Details see, Mustafa Aydin (2004), "Foucault's Pendulum: Turkey in Central Asia and Caucasus", *Turkish Studies*, Vol.5(2), pp.5-8

neighbours and in relations with the US, the EU and the West Asia in most part of 1990s.¹¹

However, the Turkish political elite have mostly been ambivalent about the relations with the West (US and EU) and the West Asia. This is due to the Kemalism that inhibited from the latest stage of Ottoman Empire.¹² Moreover, Turkey continued to have good relations with the West in 1990s. With optimism and increased political credit, mostly due to the announcement of Turkey, by the European Union as a “candidate country” for full membership in December 1999 at Helsinki summit.¹³ However, the pace of the reforms in Turkey to fulfil the criteria to start the accession negotiations with the EU, the Copenhagen political criteria, was quite slow. Further the economic crisis in 2001 was also a big blow to the ruling government in Turkey to bring reforms. Moreover, the new government AKP come to power in 2003, the one party government replaced by twelve years of coalition government (1991-2003), determined to bring more reforms in Turkey. Since in power the AKP government calling for more democratization and carrying Turkey to the EU. The AKP government adopted and implemented the economic reform program of the previous government without much change. By and large, the AKP government has so far showed its commitment to democratization and Turkey’s EU membership process by measurable deeds. On 6 October 2004, the EU Commission in its annual Regular Report on Turkey indicated that Turkey had fulfilled the Copenhagen political criteria and recommended that the Council open accession negotiations with Turkey. After tough negotiations at the EU Council Summit on 17 December 2004, the Council decided to start the accession negotiations with Turkey on 3 October 2005 and the actual negotiations indeed started where Turkey is now an “acceding country” for the EU membership.¹⁴ Starting with the 1999 Helsinki Summit where Turkey was declared a “candidate country,” and the EU accession process not only effected

¹¹Ahmed Sozen (2006), “Changing Fundamental Principles in Turkish Foreign Policy Making” *Working Paper*, p.12

¹² Turkey’s foreign relations are still under the impact of the traditionalist Kemalist worldview. On the one hand, there is the latent mistrust towards both the West and the West Asian neighbors. On the other hand, this worldview is mirrored by the narrow notion of security – limited to the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the state – that characterizes Turkish politics.

¹³Amanda Akçakoca (2009), “Turkish foreign policy – between East and West?”, *Policy Brief*, October 2009, pp.2-3.

¹⁴ Sozen, “Turkish Democratization”, p.303

internal political change but also, corresponding changes in Turkish foreign policy behaviour in conformity with European norms.

Like while the Post-September 11 direction of the international politics re-elevated Turkey's international position and its foreign policy orientation. Islamic radicalism, blamed for the September 11 incidents, carried Turkey to top of the new international order questions. Turkey was addressed as a road for the peace in its region and portrayed as 'the role model' for democratization in Muslim West Asian Countries, as the only Muslim state with a Western orientation, with its functioning democracy and its managements to conciliate its modernization project with its traditional Muslim population.¹⁵

Within the context, Turkey's foreign policy underwent changes to adopt itself to the global systematic environment in the wake up US declared 'war on terror'.

In other words, September 11 events constituted a new turning point of the international order, along which terrorism was presented as the new threat for the world peace and security. In addition to the international factors, socio-political transformations at domestic level have also been influential in the reconstruction of old policy attitudes in foreign policy agenda.

Post-Cold War Foreign Policy Changes

Collapse of the Soviet system signified a vital transformation in the parameters of the Cold-War international relations. Bipolar power system disappeared and international order entered into a systemic ambiguity. Parameters of international relations changed and new opportunities and challenges have emerged. The end of cold war resulted the value of US hegemonic leadership. End of the strategic balance between the two continental powers, the US and the USSR, left behind an ambiguity for the future of international order and resulted in the strategic monopoly of the US leadership. United States strategic utilization of the political instability of the post-Cold War era emerged depending upon the following factors: '(i) the end of strategic

¹⁵ Cigdem Nas (2005), "Turkey's International Role as a Democratic Model in the Middle East", *Turkish Review of Middle East Studies*, No.16. pp. 247-250, and Futher Details see, Aswini k Mohapatra, (2008), "Democratization in the Arab World : Relevance of the Turkish Model", *International Studies*, Vol.4, No.4, p.282.

stability, (ii) geopolitical and geo-economic vacuum of power in international relations and international political economy, (iii) the emergence of authentic identities after the dissolution of the pseudo-fronts of bipolarity, (iv) intra-civilizational and intra-systemic competition'.¹⁶ Depending upon these factors, political instabilities and conflicts emerged or deepened in territories having strategic significance. And, any system of 'balance of power'¹⁷ to impede the attitudes of the bellicose countries towards these fragile territories could not be established after the Cold War. United Nations, as the basic international organization which is obliged to execute its mission maintaining international peace and security, has failed especially with respect to the US occupation of Iraq in 2003. And, the lack of any system to protect the balance of power provided the sufficient international environment for US, as a non-substitutable military power, to emerge as a world hegemonic power.

Regionally, removal of the bipolar power balance increased the fragility of the Muslim World. The "Muslim world"¹⁸ left at the center of the intersectional arena of civilizational revival and the strategic competition of great and the regional powers. The collapse of the Soviet system did also influence the strategic position of the Muslim world through the following terms; the central and southern part of Central Asia with Muslim majority states became independent and thus the control and influence of the Muslim world over especially through the Caucasus and Afghanistan, access of Muslims to Europe is eased by means of the Muslim communities of the Balkans, the geo-economics of the Muslim world was more strengthened by the resources of the new Muslim independent states.¹⁹ All this served in strengthening the multi-dimensional capacity of the Muslim world in Central Asia. Meanwhile, it also meant more possibility for Turkey's contact in these countries.

Thus, the NATO continued to be the basic organization holding Turkey within the Western security system. Turkey, as a member of NATO, appeared right at the

¹⁶ Ahmet Davotoglu (1997), "The Clash of Interests: An Explanation of the World Disorder", *Perceptions: Journal of International Affairs*, Vol.II No.4, December 1997-February 1998, p.3.

¹⁷ "Balance of Power" is defined as 'the power struggle and rivalry process which is formed between one or more states for the sake of impeding the occurrence of a hegemonic power in any region or in whole international system and so, to protect the sovereignty and the presence of the existing national states'.

¹⁸ Muslim World refers to the countries with Muslim majority population in the Caucasus, Balkans, Central Asia, and also the West Asia.

¹⁹ For details, see Davotoglu "The Clash of Interests", p.10-11

center of the most sensitive region of the world politics surrounded by the Caucasus, the Balkans and the West Asia. Thus, it differed from its all Western allies, which had been secured from the post-Cold War remnant instable territories, and could not immediately locate itself through the new international arena.²⁰ Thus, Turkey insisted on NATO membership, partly because of its security guarantee and also in order to represent its Western orientation.²¹ Strategically salient position in the Western system in the wake of the Soviet disintegration, fade of the Cold War power balance left Turkey in a comprehensively new international environment with more political instability. Emergence of ethnic national crisis surrounding Turkish neighbouring territory meant also new challenges for Turkey.²²

Meanwhile, the geographical position of Turkey also played a very vital role in this regard because it surrounded by various neighbours with different characteristics, ideologies, regimes and political goals. Due to Turkey's geographical position, interests of several great powers intersect and at this point, it increases Turkish Strategic importance as the number of actors increased. In addition to its strategic position, Turkey is surrounded with the geo-politically problematic areas of world politics. It is also note that the surrounded territory of Turkey are full of civil wars, regional tensions and tactical maneuvers to have a word in shaping politics in these regions due to its geographical proximity and reserves of natural resources.²³ Therefore, diverse interests and visions of each strategic power in these sensitive regions obstruct a long lasting and comprehensive solution. Thereby, Turkey's strategic position makes its foreign policy vision vital, in his volatile geography.

Largely with this international and regional environment, Turkey was forced to revise its foreign and security policy interests, in the aftermath of the Cold war. Turkey began to search foreign policy alternatives with more implication to historical and cultural ties in the region through a more constructive approach.

²⁰ Philip Robins (2003); *Suits and Uniforms: Turkish foreign policy since the Cold War*, C. Hurst & Co. Publishers, pp.13-14.

²¹ Hale, *Turkish Foreign Policy*, p.192.

²² Sabri Sayari (2000), "Turkish Foreign Policy in the Post-Cold War Era: the Challenges of Multi-Regionalism", *Journal of International Affairs*, Fall 2000, Vol.54, No.1, p.169.

²³ Davotoglu "The Clash of Interests: An Explanation of the World", pp.6-7.

Financial Breakdown

The 2001 economic crisis in Turkey had the set the record for the country's worst recession and the deepest decline in economic growth since world war 11. The Turkish lira was devalued by nearly 50%, devastating the savings and incomes of, by some estimates, 95% of the population, and the poverty threshold fell below what it had been in 1994.²⁴ The major challenge confronting the economy, and supposed to be the new government policies which would revive the economy of Turkey.

Following the economic crisis, the AKP came to power in Turkey, winning an overwhelming majority of seats in Parliament. The predominant issue throughout the election campaign was the dire state of the Turkish economy. Nevertheless, during its campaign the AKP presented no cogent economic strategy of its own, let alone an alternative to the IMF steered program of the ousted Bulent Ecevit government. However, Turkish long standing relationship with International Monetary Fund (IMF) intensified at the end of 1990s. The Turkish general election of 18 April 1999 ushered into power a new coalition government that, eight months later, sought US\$4 billion assistance from the IMF and committed itself to an IMF-approved program of economic reform. Within a year, an economic crisis peaked—in November 2000 and February 2001—and the Turkish economy experienced a real terms contraction of 3.5 percent, with official unemployment doubling to 11.8 percent.¹ From January 2001 to April 2002, borrowing from the IMF increased by \$23 billion. In the general election of 3 November 2002, none of the parties (government or opposition) elected in 1999 were returned.²⁵

Moreover, when AKP took office the Turkish' debt burden was at barely sustainable levels. To avoid the another economic crisis, one of the keys to debt management was for the government to take steps to reassure markets that the IMF economic program was on course because any crisis of confidence could jeopardise debt rollover by pushing up interests rates. Due to this reason, pressure on the freshly minted AKP government to stick with implementation of the IMF-scripted reforms was felt immediately. During this period the AKP tried to find ways to loosen the

²⁴ Marice J. Patton, (2006), "The Economic Policies of Turkey's AKP Government: Rabbits from a Hat?", *Middle East Journal*, Vol.60, No.3, Summer, p.513.

²⁵ Calum Miller (2006), "Pathways Through Financial Crisis: Turkey" *Global Governance* 12, pp.450-451

IMF's tight leash, time and again announcing policies that showed it to wriggle out of the IMF constraints.

The attitude of the AKP towards the IMF and the 2001 program is revealing. Before the campaign started, AKP's leader, Recep Erdogan, was highly critical of the program, promising that his party would negotiate a new program if elected. This hard-line position was significantly moderated during campaigning and particularly as the AKP's prospects of victory became clear. Immediately after the AKP's success, the new economy minister, Ali Babacan, was dispatched on a tour of key financial centers to reassure market players that the AKP would implement the program. This gives us a useful insight into the importance of domestic perceptions of the IMF. In criticizing the IMF, the AKP was pandering to a domestic Turkish hostility to the IMF, based largely on perceptions of its challenge to national sovereignty.

When AKP took office, the Turkish economy was situated a top risky fault line. In 2001, GDP had contracted by minus 7.4% per capita income regressed, and unemployment reached its highest level in two decades.²⁶ Due to this financial breakdown, Turkey grappling with upwardly ratcheting external and domestic debt loans, as well as shouldering the costs of bailouts in the ailing banking system through re-capitalizing state owned and troubled private sector banks, Turkey was backed into a corner. This time it was essential for external financial to avoid a debt default. Nevertheless, at the time of the AKP, Turkey had the dubious distinction of being the all time greatest recipient of IMF loans with a portfolio of \$31 billion borrowed. At the end of 2002, Turkey was saddled with an external debt of \$131.6 billion, an increase of 15.5% over 2001, and domestic debt had expanded by 86%.²⁷ Domestic and foreign debts together totalled \$206 billion with debt servicing payments equalling nearly half of GNP. The riskiest aspect of Turkey's debt repayment prospects has been the government's huge borrowing requirement since domestic debt, comprised largely of Turkish Lira denominated short-term maturities, is rolled over very quickly and paid off by the new government borrowing.

²⁶ For details see, Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development, Policy Brief: Economic Survey of Turkey, October, 2002, at <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/52/1/2763824.pdf>, accessed on 22 June, 2011.

²⁷Patton, "The Economic Policies", p.516.

In brief, the AKP was born in the midst of a Turkish economy crisis which took the country to the brink of bankruptcy. In a notoriously corrupt economic system, the wealth of the country was being plundered by the secular elites and foreign enterprises. By undertaking bold economic reforms and a liberal market economy approach, the AKP gradually resuscitated the ailing economy and significantly reduced inflation and unemployment. The steady growing Turkish economy has now become the 17th largest in the world and 6th in Europe, and is rising.²⁸

Two important developments closely associated with the global financial crisis helped enhance the confidence and assertiveness of Turkish policymakers. First, the global crisis created an impetus in favor of the broadening of the global governance structure. The G-20 replaced the G-8 as the key organizational nexus in debates concerning the future of global finance and global economic governance. Turkey, as a member of the G-20, now had the opportunity to be an active participant in the process of shaping the new rules and institutions of the post-crisis global economy, as opposed to its previous role as a peripheral partner and the passive complier of the rules imposed from above by the powerful core countries of the north. Second, Turkey, with a much better regulated banking and financial system in the aftermath of the 2001 crisis, managed to avoid the typical financial and balance of payments crisis which it had frequently experienced in the past. Consequently, it was not in direct need for the IMF assistance. The AKP government capitalized on Turkey's new found economic strength. While negotiations with the IMF continued as a tool of expectations management, the final new deal between Turkey and IMF was continuously delayed and eventually no agreement was signed. The government used this as a sign of national strength and autonomy. Indeed, a more independent and IMF-free path in the economic sphere appeared to constitute a natural counterpart or corollary of a more independent and assertive style of foreign policy.²⁹

The global crisis also strengthened efforts in the search for new markets at a time when the EU as Turkey's leading trade and investment partner was experiencing major difficulties. Clearly, Turkey's new regional initiatives, especially towards the

²⁸ For Details see, Seyfeddin Kara (2010), "Closer look at AKP after its eight-year rule in Turkey" *Crescent Magazine*, July, 2010.

²⁹ Ziya onis (2011), "Multiple Faces of the "New" Turkish Foreign Policy: Underlying Dynamics and a Critique," *Insight Turkey*, p.55

West Asia, North Africa and the post-Soviet region, have had strong economic motives. Active foreign policy towards neighbouring countries has been clearly motivated by the desire to reach new markets. Arguably, the global financial crisis has helped to accelerate the transnationalization of small- and medium-sized business in Turkey, notably from the rising centers of Anatolian capital. Indeed, key civil society organizations representing the aforementioned rising centers of industrialization and capital accumulation in Turkey, such as TOBB, MÜSİAD and TUSKON, have emerged as central actors in Turkey's foreign policy initiatives. Foreign policy in Turkey is no longer the monopoly of politicians and diplomats. It has been increasingly driven from below by key economic and civil society actors. In other words, economy and trade has turned out to be the practical hand of Turkish foreign policy.³⁰ The impact of new foreign policy initiatives aimed at a diversification of Turkey's external relations is clearly reflected in the changing pattern of foreign trade, pointing towards a decline in the share of the EU countries and a striking increase in trade with Asia and the West Asian regions. For instance, the EU's share in Turkish foreign trade declined from 53.63% in 2003 to less than 42% in 2010, whereas Asia's share skyrocketed from 18.8% to almost 30% in the same period.³¹ It is vitally important to note that the shift in trade started well before the global financial crisis, which implies a structural transformation.

Democratic Reforms and EU Accession Process

Since the establishment of Turkish republic in 1923, Turkish long cherished goals to become part of European. In its early years of reforms process, Turkey aimed at distance from the old counterpart Ottoman style and substituting them with new faces of Western style state structure. Thus, in gaining of recognition of its western identity, Turkey eager to apply membership for the European Economic Community (EEC), and become an associate member in 1964. However, to become full- fledged member of the community, Turkey was to achieve a custom union agreement. Turkey with its progress of civilization in later half of 1980s, and successful transition to export-oriented market economy, applied for full membership in 1987, but the EEC rejected Turkey's accession applications. In the post-cold war environment, Turkish

³⁰ Ibid, pp.56-58

³¹ Onis, Multiple faces of the "New" Turkish foreign policy", p.57.

strategic importance has recognised, its progress in economic liberalization and integration into global market, wake up EU leaders and custom union agreement signed in 1995. While entry into the custom union raised hope for Turkey's EU integration process as the European status one of its official foreign policy objectives of Turkey since its establishment in 1923. But the decision of the European council at its Luxemburg summit not to include Turkey in the EU's enlargement process enraged the Turkish leaders. Finally, at the Helsinki summit of the European council in December 1999, Turkey was granted the candidate status but without any definite time set for the start of accession process.³² Unlike, the other candidate countries, Turkey was required to meet the "Copenhagen political criteria"³³ before the beginning of the accession process. At the same time Turkey's aspiration to become European, the Turkish modernisation process become a struggle between the European-oriented state elite and constitute elements in Turkish society.³⁴ "The EU has increasingly been the main motor behind the Europeanization process in Turkey as the EU membership perspective become clearer for Turkey and it become obvious that accession negotiations with the EU could not begin unless Turkey fulfilled the political conditions for EU accession".³⁵

Turkey's more than a half century's European journey has followed continuous rises and falls. In this course, Turkey has never abandoned his claim of being a member of the European Union. Turkey's decisive stance toward EU membership increased Turkey's international credibility and also helped to improve bilateral relations with neighbours. Throughout the EU integration process, various "domestic reforms"³⁶ were attained, which contributed to Turkey's path to democratization

³² Aswini K. Mohapatra (2011), "Turkey's Transition to Liberal Democracy and the Issue of its EU Membership", *India Quarterly*, Vol.67, No. 2, p.157.

³³ The Copenhagen criteria are the rules that define whether a country is eligible to join the European Union. The criteria require that a state has the institutions to preserve democratic governance and human rights, has a functioning market economy, and accepts the obligations and intent of the EU. The political requirements for accession stipulate that any candidate country must have achieved stability of institutions guaranteeing democracy, the rule of law, human rights and respect for and protection of minorities .

³⁴ Meltem Muftuler Bac (2005) "Turkey's Political Reforms and the Impact of the European Union", *South European Society & Politics* , Vol. 10, No. 1, March ,p.16.

³⁵ Meltem Muftuler Bac (2000) 'The Impact of the European Union on Turkish Politics', *East European Quarterly*, vol. 34, no. 2, pp. 162-167.

³⁶ Particularly since late 2001, successive Turkish governments, supported by large parliamentary majorities, have pursued an ongoing and unprecedented process of domestic political reform. More

During the period of 1990s, for the EU membership Turkey should democratize was the minimum criteria to join the club. It is evident that the any deterioration in the European process has at times led to the degeneration in the democratization process. Gradually, it has become clear that for Turkey to understand the required democratisation reforms as foreseen in the EU accession criteria.³⁷ Finally, EU accession criteria adopted in the 1993 Copenhagen summit explicitly state that the stability of democratic institutions and respect for human rights are essential pre-conditions for candidacy status as well as for opening accession negotiations.

However, it is assumed that the degree of Turkey's EU oriented foreign policy hinges of her democratisation. A healthy Europeanization process would result in a healthy democratization process and this would in turn lead to more pro-EU, more cooperative, more compromising and more multi-dimensional Turkish foreign policy. Consequently, steps towards democratic change were made before the December 1999 Helsinki Summit which accorded the Turkey EU candidacy. Until then, democratic reforms had been largely superficial and ad hoc and similarly Turkey did not represent a fully-fledged and committed programme of democratic transformation.³⁸ Given the co-relation between political reforms and relations with the EU, this process of change has been associated with Turkey's

specifically, in October 2001 under the former coalition government led by Bulent Ecevit, the Turkish Grand National Assembly approved 34 constitutional amendments, most of them in the area of human rights. These were followed by a set of seven harmonization packages passed in 2001–2003, which amended the laws in the Penal Code and the Anti-Terror Law that were most commonly used in restricting human, cultural and political rights. The first two packages concentrated on the freedoms of expression and association. The extensive third harmonization package abolished the death penalty and lifted the ban on broadcasting and education in languages other than Turkish. The fourth and fifth packages amended the Law on Political Parties, increased penalties for torture crimes, expanded the freedom of the press and freedom of association. The two packages passed in July 2003 extended freedom of speech and association, increased the civilianization of the National Security Council (MGK) and extended cultural, religious and linguistic rights. A further set of constitutional amendments was passed in May 2004. The amendments further enshrined the abolition of capital punishment, strengthened gender equality, provided for the civilianization of the Higher Education Board (YOK) and abolished the infamous State Security Courts (ECHR). This was followed by an eighth harmonization package in June 2004, which implemented the second set of constitutional amendments. There has also been a new Law on Associations in July 2004, a legislative package reforming Public Administration, a Law on Compensation of Losses resulting from Terrorist Acts and a new Penal Code which, amongst other matters, strengthened women's rights.

³⁷ For Details see, "The Impact of 'Democratisation along the EU accession process' on the Turkish Foreign Policy".

³⁸ Nathalie Tocci (2005), "Europeanization in Turkey: Trigger or Anchor for Reform?", *South European Society & Politics*, Vo.10.No.1, April, p.74.

Europeanization was the pressure coming from various civil society groups in Turkey that wanted to begin accession negotiations with the EU.⁴⁰ Thus, the prospects of membership increased the visibility of pro-democracy and pro-European groups in Turkey. An increasing credibility of Turkey's EU accession process has also served to raise the credibility of civil society actors who have been publicly for democratic change.

In December 2004, the European Union (EU) agreed to open accession talks with Turkey. For many Turks, this was a long-awaited affirmation of Turkey's European vocation, a project whose roots date to the beginning of the Turkish Republic. Of course, eventual membership in the EU is not assured, and many in Europe object to the prospect of Turkish accession on political, economic, and or cultural grounds.⁴¹ However, the EU's decision was a real breakthrough for many reasons, not the least of which is that it stated that Turkey had met the political aspects of the Copenhagen Criteria for membership. This was in sharp contrast to EU pronouncements in 1997, when the Turkish membership bid was rejected because of the shortcomings of democracy in Turkey.

Regardless of the fate of Turkey's EU bid, there is little doubt that the Turkish state and society have been transformed in recent years by a "political avalanche of democratization."⁴² Although there have been voices calling for political liberalization in Turkey for many years, the immediate impetus for this transformation was the EU's decision in 1999 to accept Turkish candidacy for membership with the stipulation that

³⁹Europeanization is about 'the construction and spread of what come to be regarded as "European" norms regarding particular policies, political procedures or societal self-definitions'.

⁴⁰ Bac Muftuler "Turkey's Political Reforms", p.21.

⁴¹Perhaps the most notorious objection was that of former French President Valery Giscard d'Estaing, who claimed that Turkish entry into the EU would be 'the end of Europe, For extended discussion of issues surrounding Turkish entry into the EU, see Ali Çarkoğlu and Barry Rubin,(2003), (eds), *Turkey and the European Union*, London: Frank Cass.

⁴²Gamze Avci (2005), "Turkey's EU Politics: What Justifies Reforms?" in Helene Sjusren, (eds), *Enlargement in Perspective*, Oslo: ARENA Report No. 2, p. 141.

Turkey would have to make numerous political reforms to gain eventual entry into the organization. In the wake of that decision, Turkish governments have pushed through a number of reforms in some sensitive areas (e.g. rights for Kurds and Kurdish language, circumscribing the power of the military) that would have been unthinkable just a few years before. One Turkish observer noted that the EU had sparked a “period of profound and momentous change in Turkish history... [that] would have been impossible in the absence of a powerful and highly institutionalized EU anchor in the direction of full membership.”⁴³ Indeed, the reforms in Turkey, which for years had been a “reluctant democratizer,” can be cited as successful application of political conditionality of the EU and the power of external agents of democratization.⁴⁴

AKP Foreign Policy Principles

Short after the AKP came to power in 2002, and the Turkish Parliament refusal to the US troops was the precursor of a new direction in foreign policy of Turkey. The shift in Turkish foreign policy after AKP coming to power could be describe as “Neo Ottomanism” or “re-Islamisation” or as “Eastenisation of Turkey” by some analyst.⁴⁵ Since it legitimizes Turkish outreach to a distinctly Ottoman geopolitical space in accordance with the conceptualisation of Prof. Ahmet Davutoglu the chief foreign policy adviser of Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan presently foreign minister of Turkey.. Prof. Davutoglu classified neo-Ottomanism, he thinks , first of all, Turkey instead of dissociating itself from the past, should embrace its rich and diverse Ottoman past and combine it with contemporary Republican values. As far as foreign policy is concerned, Davutoglu relates to the concept of “Strategic Depth” where he tackles the historical and geographical depth of Turkey as source of political capital that can transform it from a “wing” into a “pivotal” country to finally become a global actor in the post cold war era.⁴⁶ Davutoğlu argues that, unlike earlier static and mono-dimensional strategy, Turkey is currently following a “vision based” strategy in the making of the Turkish foreign policy.

⁴³ Ziya Onis, (2003), “Domestic Politics, International Norms, and Challenges to the State: Turkey-EU Relations in the post-Helsinki Era,” in Rubin and Çarkoğlu, p. 13.

⁴⁴ For comparative looks at recent EU efforts to promote democracy that include Turkey, see Paul Kubicek (2003), (eds) *The European Union and Democratization*, London: Routledge.

⁴⁵ Ahmet Sozen, (2010), “A Paradigm Shift in Turkish Foreign Policy: Transition and Challenges”, *Turkish Studies*, Vol.11, No.1, March, p.107

⁴⁶ FusunTurkmen, (2009), “Turkish-American Relations: A Challenging Transition’, *Turkish Studies*, Vol.10, No.1, March, p.119

“Strategic Depth” is mainly based upon Davutoğlu’s geo-political and historical analysis of Turkey’s international position. It is a re-interpretation of Turkey’s history and geography in accordance with the new international context. Davutoğlu systematically collected his theoretical and conceptual arguments in his academic work titled “Strategic Depth: Turkey’s International Position”, firstly published in September 2001. Strategic Depth has been the main reference book addressed to understand the basics of Turkey’s foreign policy vision up till now. Especially after Ahmet Davutoğlu’s appointment to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, “Strategic Depth Doctrine” has been the concept used to express the strategic roadmap followed in Turkey’s foreign policy practices.⁴⁷

According to Davutoğlu, the current Turkish foreign policy making is based on five fundamental foreign policy principles:

1. Balance between freedom and security.
2. Zero problems with the neighbors.
3. Multi-dimensional and multi-track policies.
4. A new diplomatic discourse.
5. Rhythmic diplomacy⁴⁸

Balance between Freedom and security

When the Berlin Wall fell down and the Cold War ended freedom landed on the focal point of the dominant international discourse. However, since the tragic events of 11 September 2001 9/11, security issues have gained more importance and priority over many other issues. Security has occupied the focus of the international discourse. Accordingly, in order to prevent terrorist activities similar to the 9/11, many countries have been boosting their security arrangements which automatically curtailed the domain of individual freedoms. In some countries, with the adoption of special anti-terrorism precautions laws, some individual freedoms have clearly been traded in for more security.

⁴⁷ Sozen, “A Paradigm Shift”, p.112.

⁴⁸ Quoted in Sozen, “A paradigm Shift”, p.110.

Turkey is truly an exceptional case in the post-9/11 era. Contrary to many countries, Turkey continued to increase the domain of individual freedoms after 9/11 in accordance with its political reforms in order to satisfy the Copenhagen political criteria for the EU. On the one hand, Turkey has been continuing its armed struggle against the violent Kurdish separatist PKK attacks, while on the other hand, expanding the scope of individual freedoms by granting the Kurdish people of Turkey broadcasting and education rights in their mother tongue. Moreover, the AKP government seems to have established a balance between security and freedom. Prime Minister Erdoğan made it very clear that there would be “no stepping back from the Copenhagen criteria in the fight against terror.”⁴⁹

As far as the balance between freedom and security is concerned, the series of reforms adopted in light of the EU-inspired Copenhagen political criteria reflects the new priority granted to freedom along with security matters that still remain important in the wake of September 11, 2001, and the invasion of Iraq.

Zero Problems with neighbours

Turkey’s relations with its neighbors, such as Bulgaria and Russia (former-Soviet Union) until the early 1990s, and Greece, Iran, Iraq, and Syria until the late 1990s, had been quite problematic. However, one has witnessed dramatic enhancement in the relations with Bulgaria and Russia in the early 1990s after the end of the Cold War. Currently, the Russian-Turkish relations are moving on a very positive platform where the trade volume between the two countries has reached to over 15 billion per year. Bulgarian-Turkish relations, especially since the Turkish minority in Bulgaria has been represented in the coalition governments, are taking place in an excellent atmosphere.⁵⁰

Relations with Syria and Greece started to improve towards the end of the 1990s, especially after PKK leader Abdullah Öcalan was forced to leave Syria and later caught in Kenya after being hosted in the Greek embassy. Today, the Greek-Turkish and Syrian-Turkish relations are by and large moving on a very positive platform. Relations with Iran has always been mostly balanced and on a rational level.

⁴⁹ Sozen, “Changing Fundamental Principles”, p.18.

⁵⁰ Sozen, “A Paradigm Shift”, p.115

Relations with the former- Soviet state of Georgia, since its independence, have always been extremely positive.⁵¹

Turkey's relations with Iraq in the 1980s and 1990s have been a bit ambivalent. Saddam Hussein played the Kurdish card pretty good against Turkey. It is clearly known that PKK has been stationing in and using northern Iraq as a base since the 1980s for its insurgency in Turkey.⁵² However, the AKP government has already established constructive relations with the different religious and ethnic groups in Iraq, such as the Kurds, Turcomans and the Sunnis. It is no secret that Turkey played an active role in motivating the Sunni groups to participate in the latest election in Iraq, whereas they previously boycotted the constitution referendum. This also shows another fundamental Turkish foreign policy principle at work where Turkey used multi-dimensional and multi track policies.⁵³

There are two exceptions to Turkey's positive relations with its neighbors: Cyprus and Armenia. Turkey's relations with the (Greek Cypriot) Republic of Cyprus since 1963 have not been normalized. Although Turkey actively supported the UN-sponsored Cyprus peace plan known as the Annan Plan that called for the unification of the island in the 2004 referenda, the Greek Cypriot side refused the plan with a 76% and prevented the normalization of the relations between Turkey and united Cyprus. Turkey's relations with Armenia deteriorated when Armenia occupied Nagorno-Karabakh (in Azerbaijan) in the early 1990s.⁵⁴ Although Turkey was among the first countries which recognized Armenian independence in 1991, Turkey closed its border to Armenia and suspended its diplomatic relations. Today, any Turkish policy move towards Armenia is a hostage to Turkey's relations with Azerbaijan. Currently, Turkey follows an isolationist policy towards Armenia in order not to jeopardize its excellent relations with Azerbaijan.

¹ Türkmen, Füsun (2009) 'Turkish-American Relations: A Challenging Transition', *Turkish Studies*, Vol.10, No.1, p.120.

² Alexander Murinson (2006), "The Strategic Depth Doctrine of Turkish Foreign Policy", *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol.42, No.6, November, p.954.

³ Sozen, "Paradigm Shift", p.116.

⁴ Süha Bolukbasi, (1993); "The Johnson Letter Revisited", *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol.29, No.3, July, pp. 505-510. Further Details also see, Ziya Onis, (2007), "Conservative Globalist versus Defensive Nationalists: Political Parties and Paradoxes of Europeanization in Turkey", *Journal of Southern and the Balkans*, Vol.9, No.3, December, p. 254

“Multi-Dimensional” and “Multi-Track Policies”

During the Cold War era where static polarization was the main characteristic of the international system, Turkey by and large followed a *mono-dimensional* and *monotrack* foreign policy. The main focus of Turkish foreign policy was security (monodimensional) which was conducted by the state (mono-track).⁵⁵ However, the end of the Cold War has expanded the Turkish foreign policy horizons. The playing field of maneuver for Turkish foreign policy, in terms of geography, number of issues and tools, has dramatically expanded.

During the post-Cold War era where international system became more dynamic and issue-wise more diversified, besides security, Turkey started to put more emphasis on economic and cultural relations. Turkey's trade volume has increased dramatically with the EU, the US and the Middle East. In addition, with the opening of new playing fields for Turkey in the post-Cold War era, Turkey, besides political and military relations, has entered into intensive economic and cultural relations with the newly independent states of Caucasus, Central Asia and the Balkans. Hence, Turkish foreign policy had to diversify and become multi-dimensional.⁵⁶

The traditional mono (or first)-track Turkish foreign policy became quite obsolete in fully exploiting the potential of the new opportunities and furthering the Turkish national interests in the post-Cold War era. In that sense, the Turkish foreign policy started to benefit from the involvement of powerful Turkish individuals and NGOs in the Turkish foreign relations. For example, such powerful NGOs like TUSIAD, IKV and TOBB played a very constructive role in lobbying to start the accession negotiations of Turkey with the EU.⁵⁷ Many big businesses, such as Koç Grubu and Anadolu Grubu opened huge factories in former-Soviet states. ENKA and

⁵⁵ For details see, Article by, H.E. Ahmet Davutoglu Published in Daily Newspaper, Lebanon, 31 July 2009, *Republic of Turkey Ministry of Foreign Affairs*, available at, <http://www.mfa.gov.tr/article-by-he-ahmet-davutoglu-published-in-daily-starnewspaper-lebanon-on-31-july-2009.en.mfa>.

⁵⁶ See For Details “Turkish Foreign Policy: from Status Quo to Soft Power”, *European Stability Initiative*, Picture Story, April 2009.

⁵⁷ Sozen, “A Paradigm Shift”, p.117

Alarko Şirketler Topluluğu are involved in enormous construction projects in former-Soviet states. Turkish universities have expanded their cooperation agreements and joint projects with the universities in the EU and former-Soviet states. Turkish academicians, prominent writers, artists and NGO leaders are now participating in thousands of international projects, conferences and seminars. In other words, they are a kind of academic, cultural and so forth “ambassadors” of Turkey. Their work in different tracks can be termed as complimentary to first-track foreign policy.

Clearly, the unidimensional character of Turkish foreign policy led through diplomatic channels is rapidly changing along with the development of cultural and economic ties established through non-state actors such as professional associations, NGOs, think-tanks, prominent media figures, academics, and businessmen. They all play a constructive role in promoting Turkey’s EU membership and better ties with the United States and throughout the surrounding region.

A New Diplomatic Discourse based on “Firm-Flexibility”

During the Cold War security focused era, the discourse of the Turkish foreign policy was also security focused and hence more “masculine” and harsh. During the 1980s and a good part of the 1990s, especially when Turkey was fighting intensely against PKK, the discourse of Turkish foreign policy was shaped by “win-lose” type of security focused mentality. However, as the war against PKK eased, international economic relations expanded, democratization reforms implemented and, more importantly, Turkey-EU relations deepened, Turkish foreign policy discourse started to mellow down.

During the AKP government, Turkey silently stopped using “*casus belli*” and projected the idea of bilateral dialogue and even international arbitration in solving the problems in the Aegean with Greece. This was a big shift from the traditional Turkish foreign policy towards Greece. Turkey’s change of foreign policy discourse can be best observed in the Cyprus case. AKP’s Cyprus policy has showed a big change from the traditional Turkish foreign policy. AKP came to power with an election program in which “no solution is the solution in Cyprus” or “status quo in

Cyprus is the solution” policies were rejected.⁵⁸ Moreover, Prime Minister Erdogan repeatedly stated that Turkey’s Cyprus policy was based on the “win-win” philosophy.⁵⁹ During the New York negotiations in early 2004 before the Cyprus referenda, Erdogan even went so far to say that “Turkish side will always be one step ahead” in the Cyprus negotiations signaling the new Turkish foreign policy on Cyprus. This was a clear sign of a new principle of Turkish foreign policy at work: *firm-flexibility*. Davotoglu explains firm-flexibility principle as “knowing what you want and being *firm* on this issue, yet being as *flexible* as possible in demanding and negotiating on this with the other side.”⁶⁰

Turkey’s response to the most recent cartoon crisis resulted from the publication by a Danish newspaper a series of cartoons portraying Prophet Mohammad in offensive situations, can also be considered as an example to the changing discourse of the Turkish foreign policy. There were lots of demonstrations against this in many Muslim countries which ended with violence and casualties. However, the Turkish government officials have approached the issue with calm and called for moderation. As the co-chairs of the UN initiated Alliance of Civilizations, Prime Minister Erdogan and Spanish Prime Minister Zapatero made a joint declaration to the world on the cartoon crisis inviting the international community to be calm and act rationally and responsibly.⁶¹

“Rhythmic” Diplomacy

During the Cold War international politics was taking place in a context based on static bi-polarity, whereas after the end of the Cold War, international context became pretty dynamic. However, Turkey continued its Cold War adapted static policies during the 1990s without successful adaptation to the post-Cold War dynamic and fluid environment. Chief advisor to Prime Minister, Erdogan, Prof. Davotoglu argue that “if the conditions are dynamic and one stands static, then one cannot adapt to the conditions. One needs to have a constantly moving diplomacy. That’s why I

⁵⁸ Ahmed Sozen (2004), “Cyprus: From a Strategic Military Base to A Basin of Cooperation and Integration in the Mediterranean”, *Cyprus Policy Centre*, p.10, available at, www.cypruspolicycenter.org., accessed on 18 June 2011.

⁵⁹ Turkmen , “Turkish-American Relations” , p.120,

⁶⁰ Ibid..117

⁶¹ Sozen, “Changing Fundamenta Principles”, p.23.

call it rhythmic. In other words, even if nothing happens, one has to be active when standing.”⁶²

During the AKP government since November 2002, Turkey witnessed a record high number of high level visits to Turkey as well as a record number of visits by Turkish high level officials to abroad. Davutoglu observes “Look at last year, despite all the crises management and the domestic economic crisis and so forth, Foreign Minister and other Ministers visited more than 60 countries. The Prime Minister and the Foreign Minister visited more than 40 countries during 2003, 9 Presidents, 14 Prime Ministers and 25 Foreign Ministers came to Turkey for official visits.”

In 2005, next periphery countries, such as Russia, Israel, Palestine, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Albania, Serbia, Georgia, Azerbaijan and so forth were visited by the Turkish Prime Minister and Foreign Minister. Towards the end of 2005, as a new opening in Turkish foreign policy, Prime Minister visited a series of countries from East Asia to Africa (New Zeland, Australia, Indonesia, Tailand, Srilanka, Maldives, Oman, Quatar, Bahreyn, Ethiopia, and so forth). Most of these were the first official Turkish high level visits. In 2006, the Foreign Ministry is planning to have a new opening towards Africa and Latin America, especially for the purpose of seeking support for Turkey’s membership to UN Security Council for 2009.⁶³

Turkey’s West Asia Policy

Turkey’s geostrategic location as a land bridge to the West Asia from Europe and Russia, along with its Islamic and Secular identity, enables it to play a pivotal role in the region. However, since the foundation of the Turkish Republic, Turkey’s foreign policy remained deeply rooted in the legacy of its founder Kemal Ataturk, who redirected it towards the West , making Turkey an important ally of the US and EU. Since the inception of the Republic of Turkey, given its official secularism and a

⁶² Sozen, “ A paradism Shift”..p.118

⁶³ Ufuk Ulutas (2010), “Turkish Foreign Policy in 2009: A Year of Pro-activity”, *Insight Turkey-Commentaries*, Vol.12, No 1, p.2, Further Details also see, Ahmet Sozen, “A Paradigm Shift in Turkish Foreign Policy: Transition and Challenges”, *Turkish Studies*, Vol.11, No.1, March 2010.

west-oriented foreign policy, the country best remained a marginal player in the West Asia.⁶⁴

However, in the last decade Turkey's foreign policy has undergone a profound change. It is believed that unsettled by the end of the cold war and in search of a new role in the emerging world order, Turkey's foreign policy has recently moved towards a proactive engagement with its diverse neighbourhood. The concept of Turkey's "Strategic Depth" laid down in 2001 by Ahmed Davutoglu, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Turkey, has provided the intellectual background to this new policy orientation.⁶⁵

Turkey's foreign policies towards the West Asia and its corresponding role have been changing considerably over the last eight years. Already certain changes began during the tenure of Foreign Minister Ismail Cem (1997-2002), as he improved relations with Turkey's West Asian neighbours, and put in place the foundations on which the AKP government has continued to build upon. However, the most dramatic changes occurred as of since 2002-2003.⁶⁶ Until recently, Turkey's neighbours have been seen it as a reluctant regional actor.

The context in which the transformation has taken place is shaped by three factors:

1. There has been a rapid change in the geopolitical environment of the West Asian regions since the invasion of Iraq.
2. There have been domestic changes in Turkey, which can be characterised as political reform and democratization in EU accession process.
3. There is new foreign policy approach of the AKP, the Islamic rooted party of Turkey.

Consequently above all this led to Turkey becoming an important player in the West Asian regions. Turkey is once again becoming an important player in this

⁶⁴ For Details See, Sarah Akram, " Turkey and the Middle East".

⁶⁵ Alexander Murinson (2006), The Strategic depth doctrine of Turkish foreign policy, *Middle Eastern Studies*, 42, (6), pp.952-953.

⁶⁶ Volker Perthes (2010), "Turkey's role in the Middle East: An Outsider's Perspective, *Insight Turkey*, Vol.12, No.4, p.1.

region due to its new foreign policy activism. Although Turkey has ever in the past made efforts to optimize its policy options with neighbouring countries on the one hand, and with great power player on other, its recent involvement in the West Asia is noteworthy and reveals a reorientation of its foreign policy.⁶⁷ Furthermore, Turkey's bid to become a member of the EU, and at the same time making efforts to improve its relationships with Cairo, Damascus, Baghdad, Tehran and Riyadh, show the extent to which Turkey is trying to become an important player in the region. The Turkish government under the leadership of the AKP defines its Foreign policy as one of having "Zero problems with neighbours".⁶⁸ Briefly, Turkey has shown a growing willingness to mediate in the Aran-Israeli conflict, attended Arab league conference, contributed to UN forces in Lebanon and NATO forces in Afghanistan, assumed a leadership position in the Organisation of Islamic conference and established closer ties with Syria, Iran and Iraq.⁶⁹

Policy towards post Saddam Iraq

Before the 1991 Gulf War, Turkey had friendly relations with Iraq than with any other West Asian neighbour except Jordan, and the two frequently cooperated on the Kurdish problem. Relations worsened with the onset of the war, when Turkey supported the embargo against Iraq. Today, the Kurdish issue, ironically, unites more than divides them, since both countries want to contain Kurdish separatism. Other prominent factors that shape Turkish-Iraqi relations include the oil pipeline (which may also induce cooperation since both countries suffered economically from its closing) and the attitude of the West, particularly the United States, which would be extremely uneasy about any Turkish attempt to improve relations with Iraq.

The Kurdish question is a driving force in the formation of Turkey's regional foreign policy towards Iraq. The past years have witnessed the Kurdish issue gain an international dimension and also an important factor influencing Turkey's relations with Iraq. With regard to Iraq, Turkey's new approach has been primarily an

⁶⁷ Gercer Ozcan (2004) "Turkey's changing Neighbouring policy" *Turkish Year Book*, vol.xxxv, p.2.

⁶⁸ Sarah Akram, "Turkey and the Middle East", Further Details See, Cigdem Nas(2005), "Turkey's International Role as a Democratic Model in the Middle East", *Turkish Review of Middle East Studies*, No.16. pp. 245-249.

⁶⁹ Omar Taspinar (2008), "Turkey's Middle East Policies Between Neo-Ottomanism and Kemalism" ,*Carnegie Papers*, p.2

enormous accomplishment for its business sector.⁷⁰ It has also led to substantially improved political relations since Turkey began to undertake radical shift in its policies towards the Kurdish Regional Government in 2009. However, the long term success of Turkey's policy toward Iraq depends to a large degree of the domestic political stability and unity of Iraq after the US withdrawal.

The AKP policy towards Iraq after Saddam Hussein regime was driven by traditional security considerations, sought to gain influence on events in Iraq by a largely antagonistic approach towards the emerging Kurdish political entity in northern Iraq. Turkey's continuous efforts at rallying Iraq's neighbours behind a policy of security the country's territorial integrity was much less driven by an effort at creating a peaceful and stable regional order including all relevant political actors but much more influenced by national security policy concerned with regard to Iraq issue.⁷¹

However, Turkey is more concerned about the Iraqi statehood after the US withdrawal. Therefore, the newly elected AKP government also established closer ties with the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) besides its continuous efforts at fostering reconciliation and cooperation between feuding Arab factions in Iraq. Furthermore, strengthening ties with the KRG was also instrumental in curbing the role of the PKK which had re-established itself as a force of permanent terrorist irritating in Turkey's south-eastern provinces. Besides that, better relations with the KRG greatly contributed to boost regional trans-border trade and other economic activities thus helping to ameliorate economic and social problems in Turkey's south-east. Relations with Iraq, too, improved steadily, the normalization reaching its peak in September 2009 when both states established a high-level strategic cooperation council and signed more than 40 bilateral agreements on a broad variety of issues. In early 2010 Turkey opened a consulate general in the KRG's capital of Erbil.⁷² Turkish foreign policy towards Iraq under the AKP government was at least as much driven

⁷⁰ William Hale, "Turkish Foreign Policy and the Middle East: Explanations, Assessments and Questions", pp.5-6 and also see, Sarah Akram, "Turkey and the Middle East".

⁷¹ Heinz Kramer (2010), AKP,s "new" foreign policy between vision and pragmatism, *Working paper*, FG2/01, June, P.12

⁷² Kemal Kirisci, Tocchi Nathalie, Joshua Walker (2010), "A Neighborhood Rediscovered. Turkey's Transatlantic Value in the Middle East, *Brussels Forum Paper Series*, pp.4-6.

by events on the ground, decisions by US administrations and traditional national security concerns then by a conscious effort at implementing a policy of ‘Strategic Depth’ and only rather late reached a level that can be termed “Zero Problems among neighbours”.

Policy towards Iran

Although Turkey and Iran are historical rivals they have enjoyed relatively good relations in this century, in part because of their mutual hostility to communism. The relationship was damaged by the 1979 Iranian revolution, but it has steadily improved since then, as the two countries have put aside ideological differences and as Turkey has sought to restrain the polarization between Islam and the West unleashed by the 1979 events. Turkish Iranian relations took yet another turn in the late 1980s as the two countries competed for influence in the former Soviet republics of Central Asia and the Caucasus. However, both Turkish and Iranian hopes have been dashed by the economic and political realities of Central Asia, and competition there is no longer as important a source of tension between them.

Turkey and Iran have shared a neighbourly relation of convenience with ups and downs since long but there was never a feeling of “brotherhood” or friendship between Turkey and Iran.⁷³ In more recent time, relations have been dominated by mutual security considerations with regard to the Kurdish issue and keeping Iraq’s territorial integrity, economic relations, mainly in the field of energy and issues of regional stability in the context of Iran’s nuclear policy. However, the new engagement of Turkey with Iran can be seen from their agreement on security. In February, 2008, both countries signed a memorandum on security cooperation including the sharing of intelligence between their armed forces engaged in the fight against the Kurdish terrorist organisations. These efforts went along with continued cooperation in the framework of the “Iraq Neighbours Group” created by Turkey in early 2003 that tries to coordinate political measures among West Asian states to prevent the dismemberment of Iraq.⁷⁴

⁷³ Bulent Aras, (2001) “Turkish Foreign Policy towards Iran: Ideology and Foreign policy in Flux” *Journal of Third World Studies*, Vo.18, no.1, pp.109-116

⁷⁴ William Hale (2009), Turkey and the Middle East in “New Era”, *Insight Turkey*, Vol.11, No.3, pp.145-148.

Turkey has a much closer relationship to Iran than any of the other NATO members have. Compared to the other members, Turkey is fairly relaxed over the prospect of Iran acquiring nuclear weapons. This is particularly noteworthy, as Turkey occupies the frontline in any NATO confrontation with Iran. Turkey's close economic and political ties with Iran makes Turkey a leading beneficiary of a détente between Washington and Teheran. The AKP government in Turkey kept remarkably quiet during the protests over Ahmedinejad's re election in June 2009.⁷⁵ Although the AKP is nominally Islamist, the Turkish secularist charge that they have Iran as a model does not stick. The lack of response was more likely to be strategically than ideologically founded.⁷⁶ The AKP government in Ankara wants to continue conducting business as usual with Iran. One of the important benefits of this has been coordinated efforts against Kurdish insurgents, which actually entails direct cooperation on the tactical level between the Iranian and the Turkish armed forces. This cooperation has made it impossible for insurgents to merely slip across the border when one side is conducting its military offensives.

Rapprochement with Syria

Relations between Turkey and Syria, on the other hand, have been clouded by general Arab suspicion dating back to the Young Turk era and institutionalized during the Cold War, when the two were positioned on opposing sides. Syria has always suspected Turkey of being a gendarme, serving western interests in the region. Antagonism between the two heightened in the 1970s, when the Turks began construction of the Guneydogu Anadolu Projesi (GAP), the large dam project on the Euphrates River that, when completed in the mid-1980s, restricted the flow of water into Syria. Tensions since then have been compounded by Turkish claims that Syria gives safe haven to the PKK—claims that Syria officially denies. Furthermore, there remains the sleeping issue of Alexandretta (or Hatay, as the Turks call it), a contested area on the border that became part of Turkey in 1939, over Syrian opposition. Water issues are particularly contentious with Syria. Turkey claims that the Euphrates and

⁷⁵ For Details see, Turkey and the Middle East: Ambitions and Constraints , *Crisis Group Europe Report N°203*, April , p.16

⁷⁶ Einar Wigen (2009). "Turkish Neo-Ottomanism: A Turn to The Middle East? , *Norwegian Institute of International Affairs*, Security Policy Library (3), p.18.

Tigris Rivers are “transboundary”⁷⁷ water courses that belong to one country while the river flows through it and become the property of another after crossing the border. Syria, however, views these vital arteries as international waterways belonging to no one. Syria claims that Turkey drains off an unfair share of the water before it crosses the border and charges that Ankara lacks the political will to reach an equitable agreement on sharing water rights. Turkey, for its part, believes that Syria is harbouring PKK terrorists as a weapon in the water dispute. As long as these mutual accusations persist, Turkish- Syrian relations are likely to remain tense.⁷⁸

The two countries came to the brink of war when Turkey threatened military action if Syria continued to shelter Abdullah Öcalan in Damascus, his long-time safe haven. Relations have improved since October 1998, when Öcalan was expelled by Damascus and Syria pledged to stop harbouring the PKK rebels. The 1999 signing of the Adana agreement, following his subsequent capture in Kenya, promised security cooperation between the two countries.⁷⁹

The Turkish Parliament’s refusal to cooperate militarily with the 2003 US invasion of Iraq was a turning point in Syrian-Turkish bilateral relations as Syria’s perception of Turkey as incapable of acting independently of NATO was altered. In late 2004 Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan flew to Damascus to sign a free trade agreement in the follow-up to former Turkish President Turgut Özal’s high-level trade negotiations with Syrian authorities, which included the first ever visit to Turkey by a Syrian President. In the 1990s and Erdoğan’s own recently successful bid

⁷⁷ Transboundary water courses occur whenever demand for water is shared by any sets of interests, be they political, economic, environmental, or legal. Conflicts over shared water resources occur at multiple scales, from sets of individual irrigators, to urban versus rural uses, to nations that straddle international waterways. Transboundary waters share certain characteristics that make their management especially complicated, most notable of which is that these basins require a more complete appreciation of the political, cultural, and social aspects of water.

⁷⁸ Patricia Carley,(1995), Turkey’s Role in the Middle East, *A Conference Report* , United States Institute of Peace. Washington DC,p.16, and also see Introduction.

⁷⁹ Turkey and the Middle East: Ambitions and Constraints ,*Crisis Group Europe Report N°203*, April, p.3.

to initiate a Turkish EU accession which would allow Europe, “to extend its reach to the borders Syria, Iraq and Iran.”⁸⁰

The recent signing of a free trade agreement between Turkey, Syria, Lebanon and Jordan during a Turkish-Arab forum in Istanbul envisages the dropping of all trade and visa restriction between these countries. This move reflects Turkey’s will to strengthen cooperation within the region and the promotion of regional cooperation. Although much of Turkey’s foreign policy in the region is dictated by geostrategic and economic imperatives, it still remain a traditional ally of the West, and also a candidate for EU membership, while maintaining a rising profile in the region. Water issue, energy policies, economic stakes, the Kurdish challenge and its diplomatic role are the drivers behind Turkey’s pursuits in the region.⁸¹

In 2008 Turkey was, as a sign of mutual trust in Damascus and Tel Aviv, invited to play the role of facilitator between Syria and Israel to solve their dispute over control over the Golan Heights. These talks were abandoned following the deterioration in Turkey-Israel relations after Turkish Prime Minister Erdoğan criticised Israel’s conduct of the 2008-2009 Israel-Gaza conflict as a “crime against humanity.” Further, the relationship between the two countries gained considerable improvement of economic exchanges, including plans for energy cooperation, especially by extending the “Arabian Gas Pipeline” from Syria into Turkey.⁸² Even the long time contentious issues of the use of the Euphrates waters and status of the Turkish province of Hatay do not seem to be real stumbling blocks for a continuation of broad based good neighbourly relation any longer. As a result of these developments, the AKP government in less than a decade successfully turned a national security problem into a positive element in its attempts at stabilizing the regional order in the West Asian region.

⁸⁰ Einar Wigen (2009). “Turkish Neo-Ottomanism: A Turn to The Middle East?” , *Norwegian Institute of International Affairs*, Security Policy Library (3), p.16

⁸¹ Morton Abramowitz and Henri J. Barkey, “Turkey’s Transformers”, *Foreign Affairs*, November/December 2009, p. 120.

⁸² Heinz Kramer (2010), AKP,s “new” foreign policy between vision and pragmatism, *Working paper*, FG2/01, June, P.13.

Deterioration of Relations with Israel

During the period of 1990, the relations between Turkey and Israel were regarded as positively outstanding in a more gloomy picture of West Asian Affairs. Turkey's relations with Israel are of prime importance and had greatly deepened in the 1990s when a unique alliance was forged between the two countries.⁸³ Their close ties with the United States created a new triangular strategic alliance in the post-Cold War era, and high-level political visits, intelligence sharing and joint military exercises became a permanent feature of this relationship. It is noteworthy that Turkey was the first West Asian State to recognise Israel diplomatically, in 1949, soon after its creation. In the 1950s, Turkey entered into a secret strategic pact with Israel, intending to pose a counterweight to growing Arab nationalism.

After the 1967 Arab-Israeli war, Turkey began to tilt towards the Arab side and, in 1969, started attending the newly-constituted Organisation of Islamic Conference. The 1970s marked the beginning of Turkey's increased attention towards building relations with the West Asia. As a result, Ankara's pro-Palestinian sympathies began to affect its relationship with Israel. However, despite periods of unease, Turkey continued its cooperation with Israel in the military and economic spheres.

Strategically, the Turkish-Israel alliance sent a powerful message to their potential West Asian adversaries, like Syria, Iran and Iraq. Specifically, Turkey's military cooperation with Israel was intended to discourage Greek and Syrian relations, concluded in 1995. The close alliance between Turkey and Israel also affected intra-Arab alignments to a certain extent, and at the same time made it difficult for Turkey to resolve its problems with its other West Asian neighbours, such as Iran and Syria, both of which remained hostile towards Israel. It may be noted that Israel has been a supporter of Turkey's EU integration.⁸⁴

The ascendance of the Justice and Development Party (AKP) government in 2002 has marked an important turning-point in Turkey's relations with West Asian

⁸³ Meliha Altunisik (2000), "The Turkish-Israeli Rapprochement in post -cold war Era", Middle Eastern Studies, Vol.36, No.2, April, p.172.

⁸⁴ For Details See, Sarah Akram, " Turkey and the Middle East".

neighbours as well as Israel. Recently, a number of factors have been instrumental in increasing the distance between Turkey and Israel. Some critics point to the Islamist roots of the AKP government as a reason behind cooling relations between Turkey and Israel. Turkey's improving relations with the Arab world come in tandem with its cooling relations with Israel. The present Turkish government has been extremely critical of Israeli actions vis-à-vis Palestinians and has been a harsh critic of Israeli actions in Gaza in the winter of 2008 and has also criticized illegal Israeli settlements. The Turkish government has time and again criticised Israel on the latter's using disproportionate force against the Palestinians, and has also called on the UN Security Council to put some pressure on Israel regarding nuclear arms as it does on Iran. A number of incidents between Turkey and Israel have been a source of continued tension between the two problematic allies.⁸⁵

In January 2009, Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan was publicly critical towards Israel and staged a walkout from the World Economic Forum Summit in protest against Israel's Gaza policies, and later, also excluded Israel from a multinational air defence exercise. These incidents marked a low point in relations between Turkey and Israel. Similarly, a recent incident, during which a Turkish diplomat faced humiliation at the hands of Israel's deputy foreign minister, is an example of the rift, and Israel has also been criticising a Turkish television series in which Israeli soldiers are portrayed killing Palestinian children ruthlessly.⁸⁶ Therefore, it is seen that Turkey is a notable exception these days, as far as Israeli policy towards the Palestinians is concerned.

Moreover, under the AKP government Turkey-Israel relationship continued with some ups and downs mostly influenced by the state of Israeli-Palestine affairs. In November 2007, a meeting of Israeli president Shimon Pares with Palestinian president Mahmoud Abbas in Ankara who both addressed the Turkish Parliament invoked the image of Turkey as a seriously concerned regional mediator. Relations however steadily deteriorated, especially after Israeli attack on Gaza at the beginning of 2009 and the attack on "Gaza Flotilla" in 2010. So, the events of "Gaza

⁸⁵ Heinz Kramer (2010), AKP,s "new" foreign policy between vision and pragmatism, *Working paper*, FG2/01, June,p.18.

⁸⁶ Kirisci, and others, "A Neighborhood Rediscovered." , pp.7-9.

Flotilla” can largely be characterised as an example of the new Turkish foreign policy of “Zero Problems with the neighbours”.

Relationship with US

Since the establishment of the Turkish Republic, Turkey has cooperated with the US in economic, military and social matters. Besides taking an active role in all NATO missions including Bosnia, Turkey has closely engaged with the US in regional matters. The US remains one of the biggest trade partner of Turkey, and has been politically supportive of Turkey in regional matters.⁸⁷ During this period most of the foreign policy activism of Turkey with the Western countries. However, it is believed that the, US invasion of Iraq in 2003, one of the important factor which forced Turkey to rethink its West Asian policy. However, the 1 March 2003, failure of the Turkish government of the proposals of the US war plan against Iraq become the Turning point of Turkish foreign policy. It severely damaged relations with the US and at the same time improved Turkey’s standing in the Arab regional policy by freeing it from the image of being Washington’s “Poodle” in West Asia, thus opening the path for a greater Turkish political activity in the region.⁸⁸

The changing dynamics in the region being a catalyst for change.⁸⁹ The shift in Turkish policy placed a priority on bilateral relations with countries in the region and also an improvement in ties. Therefore, the changing perceptions can be attributed to the changing circumstances and political crises in the region, The AKP government’s over tunes towards West Asia can also be attributed to Turkey’s new and more proactive stance on West Asian policy. This assertive stance is viewed in the West Asia by some as a consequent of AKP Islamic roots: especially as some had believed that the secularization of Turkish republic had resulted in a loss of its Islamic identity.

Since the Justice and Development Party (AKP), came to power, an eastward orientation has become prominent. The bilateral relations between Turkey and its

⁸⁷ Arda Baykal, (2010), Where are Turkey’s new international relations taking it?, International Affairs and Defence Section, 5 February, pp.1-4

⁸⁸ Hale, Turkey and the Middle East in “New Era” , pp. 146-147, and also see Ziya Öniş and Şuhnaz Yılmaz, Between Europeanization And Euro-Asianism: Foreign Policy Activism In Turkey During The AKP Era, p.5

⁸⁹F, Stephen Larabee, Ian O Lesser, (2003); *Turkish Foreign Policy in an Age of Uncertainty*, Pittsburgh, Rand, p.15

West Asian neighbours clearly define Turkish changing foreign policy towards West Asia, which is seen as a major blow to the US. Being a Muslim country and the long standing ally of the West, the changes in Turkey foreign policy appears worrisome for the US.⁹⁰ While, the Turkey-US relations deteriorated following US war on Iraq, the recent changes in Turkish Foreign Policy behaviours, specially its stand on Iran nuclear policy, expansion of relationship with revisionist power like Syria, and anti-Israeli criticism have together increased the distance between the two countries, notwithstanding the Turkish leaders pronouncement to the country.

All the same, what seems intriguing to many outside observers is whether the Arab leaders are prepared to accept Turkish leadership role somewhat similar to Egypt in 1950s. Further, Turkish political and diplomatic weightage whether in West Asia and Central Asia is less due to its “Soft Power” as projected by the Turkish media and intellectuals then its NATO membership and EU candidate country status. To sum up, Turkish scope for playing an pre eminence what Davutoglu, Foreign Minister called ‘central actors’ in West Asia will remain limited unless its role in the area blessed by US the lonely superpower.

⁹⁰ Quoted in Baykal, “Where are Turkey’s new international relations taking it?”.

CHAPTER-V

CONCLUSION

The relationship between Turkey and US has stood the test of time right from the heyday of the cold war to present times, despite there being many areas of convergence and divergence from time to time. Turkey and US have common goals and shared ideas in a broad range of issues. During the period of cold war, the US was proved to be the main guarantor of Turkish security because of threat from Soviet Union and the Turkey –US relations have evolved substantially since then. The relationship between Turkey and US has been based mainly on security, geostrategy and economics. Turkey played an important role in the US strategy of containment during cold war. Turkey's entry into NATO and Trueman Doctrine formalized the alliance between the Turkey and United States. As a member of NATO, Turkey acted as one of the first line of defence against the communist threat. Turkey role in NATO was to resist Soviet expansionism by serving as NATO's southern flank. Turkey emerged as a natural bulwark against Soviet expansionism due to its control of the strategic area between the Black sea and the Mediterranean, its border with the Southern republic of the Soviet Union, its proximity to the West Asia, and its dominance over major air, land and sea routes for the Soviet Union to the West Asian oil fields.

At the same time, Turkey also served as gateway to the Muslim World and its non Arab profile was a useful tool for the US to prevent the emergence of a monolithic Muslim World and act as a counter force to the Arab Muslim World. Turkey on its part received economic and military aid from the US through there were many low points in the relations like, for instance the "Johnson Letter" of 1964 and the Cuban missile of 1962-63. During the Cyprus crisis of 1964 and 1974, the lack of support of US forced Turkey to improve its relations with the Soviet Union. However, the Islamic Revolution in Iran followed by the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979 reemphasized Turkey's strategic importance to the US and revitalized relations between the two countries. Thus, it is evident that the Turkey's strategic importance for the US remained the main reason which capitalized their relations throughout the Cold war period.

Consequently, the end of the cold war did not diminish Turkey's strategic importance to the US. During this period, the first major challenge to the US after the cold war, i.e., the Gulf war of 1991, Turkey proved to be of invaluable support to the US. The cooperation during Gulf war between Turkey and US thus bolstered relations

between the two countries. The Gulf war refocused US attention on Turkey, but like the Cold war context of containment of Soviet Union, it did not so in a derivative way. Turkey's role in both the regional and international systems was recognised to be crucial in dealing with the problems and challenges of the post-cold war era. Turkey has now become the key "Front Line" state in confronting the dominant dangers of the post cold war period like, terrorism (as embodied by the guerrilla war being waged by the Kurdish Nationalist Workers Party, the PKK, on Turkey's south Eastern border with Iraq), and radical Islamic fundamentalism. Turkey's location at the centre of an unstable geostrategic and geopolitical scenario involving the World's most unstable regions the Balkans, the Caucasus, the West Asian regions, and the Eastern Mediterranean increased its importance to the US and in cooperation is assumed to be vital in achieving US goals in these regions. It was in this context, President Bill Clinton in his address to the Turkish Parliament in 1999 declared Turkey to be a strategic partner of the US. During this period, Turkey's foremost foreign policy goals to become member of European Union. The United States fully supported the Turkey's quest for EU membership due to its national security interests in West Asia. Again the cooperation between could be seen when the Turkey faced the biggest economic crisis in its history in 2000-01, the US supported the IMF's bailout plan to revive the Turkish economy.

During the post cold war period, the Kurds issue constituted the most importance threat to Turkish sovereignty and integrity. Turkey has been repressive of the Kurdish nationalist struggle. US has been supporting of Turkey's policy towards the Turkish Kurds. While EU was critical of Turkey's human rights record, the US has adopted a more conciliatory stand towards the issue of human rights violations against Kurds. In fact, it turned a blind eye to Turkey's repeated incursions into Iraqi territory in pursuit of Kurds who had sought refuge there, when the no fly zone was being enforced by the US. It also helped Turkey to capture the head of the PKK, Abdullah Ocalan.

In the post cold war period Turkey and US both decided to fight against Terrorism. After the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks on the World Trade Organisation towers, the US identified terrorism as the new global threat replacing communism. Fighting terrorism at home and abroad become the primary focus of the Bush administration. Turkey, due to its status as a democratic, Muslim but secular

country in a predominantly non democratic region now assumed more significance for the US. Since eighties, Turkey has been fighting PKK terrorism. Turkey was one of the first countries in the World to express its condolences and support to the US war on Terror. Turkey could emphasize with the US as Turkey itself had been a target of terrorism for many years.

Turkey, the only Muslim country in NATO, participated in Bush administrations campaign against Afghanistan. Joining the “War on Terrorism” in Afghanistan was, for Turkey a useful means to enhance its influence in Central Asia and to have a say in the political future of not just Afghanistan but Central Asia as well. Turkey’s strong ties with the Northern Alliance helped the US campaign against the Taliban. It assumed leadership of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan twice. Turkey’s role in the war on terror was critical to the US as the fight against terrorism was increasingly being perceived as a fight against Islam. The participation of Turkey, a Muslim nation, helped in assuaging such fears in the minds of Muslims around the World. It recognition of Turkey’s contribution to the war President Bush described Turkey as a frontline state in the fight against terrorism.

However, the disagreement over the War on Iraq brought about a major crisis in the Turkey-US alliance after the Cyprus crises in 1964 and 1974. The US wanted to open up new front in the north to attack Iraq. Like many countries around the World Turkey believed that the War on Iraq unjustified. It therefore refused to permit the US to use its bases for launching strikes against Iraq. This move was prompted by Turkey’s fear that the US would help establish an independent Kurdish state in Northern Iraq which in turn would encourage Turkish Kurds to secede. The AKP an essentially Islamic party which had come to power in Turkey in late 2002 did not want to be seen as supportive to attacking another Muslim country. Moreover public opinion in Turkey was overwhelmingly against the War. Turkey was also align its policy with that of Europe. Turkey was also concerned about the regional implications of another war in Iraq in the context of rising Islamic fundamentalism and anti-Americanism in the region and feared that the war was a new strategy by the US to dominate the West Asian regions.

Subsequently, after some time Turkey permitted the US military to use the Incirlik air base in Southern Turkey to fly troops in and out of Iraq. But the

Sulaimeniyah incident in which Turkish troops were arrested by the US army on charges of conspiring to assassinate elected Kurdish officials in Northern Iraq once again visited the atmospheres. So the Iraq crisis irreparably destroyed the Turkey-US alliance, the long time ally as a Muslim country and Western counterpart.

After the Iraq war the divergence of interests and objectives become the main cornerstone of their relationship between Turkey-US. Moreover, the divergence of interests between Turkey and US over the post cold war states significantly undermined their strategic partnership. This development was surprising to many observers because traditionally there had always been a high degree of convergence between Turkey and US foreign policy objectives over regional security issues. More specifically, the divergence of interest between Turkey-US regarding occupation of Iraq determined their future relationship. The divergence begins with the aftermath of Iraq led to their personal interests and animosity. The main divergence of interests and objectives between Turkey-US notably, promotion of democracy in Iraq, its stability and the war against Terror. Both countries want to see a unified Iraqi government but their interest clash with their personal interests and objectives. Turkey fears that the further instability in Iraq could be a threat to her territorial integrity and further gained momentum of aspiration of Kurdistan. The United States on the other hand very much concern about the natural resources of West Asian regions like oil and gas and any fear of any Fundamentalist activities towards the US. Although Turkey-US agreed on the long-term stability of Iraq, they differed on the future shape of Iraq.

Despite, some divergence of issues, Turkey remains important to the US vis-a-vis Iraq because Turkey is an essential element in the stabilization process that is instrumental to the entire regions; it is in the US national interest to stabilize the border regions around Iraq. Both the Turkey and US share an interest in preserving Iraq's territorial integrity and unity. Turkey's democratic political system could also act as a model for the fledging Iraqi democracy. Notwithstanding the disputes over the Iraq war, Turkey and US continue to need each other and their alliance is in the mutual interests of both the countries. Both the Turkey-US needs each other for different purposes but these purposes are not incompatible and in fact converge and diverge on many issues.

From the 1990s onwards, Turkish foreign policy has entered into a process of adaption to the changes in internal and international conditions. During the AKP government nearly for a decade, this process of change has appeared with its theoretical and practical reflections. In international context, the post-Cold War international systemic ambiguity has been more deepened with the September 11 events, and forced Turkey to revise foreign policy vision. In domestic sphere, advantages of one party government through a large public support especially when compared to weak coalition governments of the 1990s, gains attained through the EU integration reform process and lessened influence of military on civil government have all prepared adequate conditions for designing and performing a new foreign policy vision of Turkey. Further, changes in Turkish foreign policy brought about by the September 11, 2001, attacks to the international order, Turkish position in its neighbouring region cope up with peaceful cooperation of the different cultures and civilizations.

Turkey's foreign policy under the AKP government was mainly confronted with the some challenges that had also been faced by its predecessors. The response, however, was different because of a different ideological basis of its policy. The vision of "Strategic Depth" developed by Ahmed Davotoglu abolished the prevailing domination of a "Western" Orientation and accompanying threat perception which tended to securitize relations with all "non-western" neighbours. Under the new vision it was, therefore, easier for the AKP governments to approach the newly arising challenges in the regional neighbours as well as at the global level. Throughout the new vision, Turkey firstly aims at eradication of the ambiguities and realization of peace in its region. The first condition, to this end, what Turkey's foreign policy is in pursuit of today, is to obtain independence and security for the neighbouring countries. Consolidation of Turkey's own political and economic stability, democratic reforms through the EU integration, Kurdish issue and harmonization of secular state with its Muslim identity are all constitutes domestic challenges for a strong and sustainable foreign policy vision. In addition, Turkey's unsettled neighbourhood and future of West Asia, conflict of Iraq, issues related with Turkey's national interests which determined its foreign policy behaviours.

However, Turkey's foreign policy under AKP is much more a policy of "visionary pragmatism" than of "visionary idealism". The new foreign policy developments are really characterized by a turning away from the "west". It can be seen from Turkey's successful brokering in Iraq, Iran, Syria and its diplomatic efforts especially in the West Asian regions. It is believed that the new Turkey's foreign policy activism towards West Asian neighbours is finally finding its voice in international politics, but this may be weakening its ties with US and EU. These traditional partners are now just one pillar in Turkey's new so-called multidimensional foreign policy. On the other hand, Turkey's diplomatic efforts in its immediate neighbourhood often appear to be influence seeking for its own sake. It is, however, early to predict if Turkey can eventually realize its dream of a 'Central Power' in West Asia only through its 'Soft Power' without the US blessings, let alone antagonising the only super-power in the post-cold war global politics.

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