

THE HENRY L. STIMSON CENTER

**Turkey's Political and Security
Interests and Policies in the
New Geostrategic Environment
of the Expanded Middle East**

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Pragmatic steps toward ideal objectives



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About the Project

The Henry L. Stimson Center is studying factors contributing to regional demand for advanced conventional weapons, on the assumption that the canonical principles of arms control (to reduce the likelihood of war, the costs of war preparation, and the destructiveness of conflict) cannot be applied effectively to regions of tension without addressing the sources of demand for armaments. Any efforts to prevent or to mitigate regional conflicts that address the tools of war must take demand factors explicitly into account, even if they seek primarily to constrain arms supplies, because unmodified demand will seek, and inevitably find, alternative channels of supply.

Some demand for arms is driven by perceptions of external threats and some by desires to *pose* external threats in the service of any number of personal, national, or ideological agendas. When those threats abate, demand can safely plummet and may well do so (as it has in Europe since 1989).

Where demand is internally-driven, by a quest for prestige or a struggle for power, the policies, perceptions, and circumstances that must change to mitigate conflict and encourage arms restraint are internal as well, but parties to civil war can and often do have outside support, and their struggles have regional consequences. External and internal motivations for arms both coexist and interact.

Their commingling is particularly complex in states that emerge from the wreckage of empires; states that must sort out the sometimes-violent claims to political power or self-determination of racial, religious, or ethnic groups. Nowhere do more old imperial paths cross than in the part of the world stretching from the Balkans through South Asia, encompassing, since late 1991, what were the southern republics of the former Soviet Union.

This part of the Stimson Center's project on conventional weapons, supported by a grant from the Ploughshares Fund, examines the policies and perceptions of Turkey and Iran, two key players in this troubled region. Our objective is to describe and evaluate these countries' security perceptions and policies, using local and other primary sources of information where possible, as a contribution to a realistic assessment of the utility of conventional arms control and confidence-building measures in the region. This paper covers Turkey. The companion paper is, "Iranian National Security Policies under the Islamic Republic," by Dr. Ahmed S. Hashim. The project is directed for the Stimson Center by Dr. William Durch.

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**Turkey's Political and Security Interests and
Policies in the New Geostrategic Environment
of the Expanded Middle East**

Introduction

The phasing out of the Cold War and the disintegration of the Soviet Union have changed the geopolitical environment around Turkey radically. In fact, Turkey has been touched more deeply than many other countries by the sweeping repercussions of these historic developments in world politics. Its strategic location links Turkey to the northern Middle East and the Persian Gulf, as well as to the Euro-Atlantic and Euro-Asian worlds, so the twin collapses of the Cold War and the USSR produced tremors that are still felt in Ankara. Situated at the intersection of three regions where political and economic hierarchies and the territorial status quo are being reordered, sometimes violently, Turkey has moved, according to Turkish officials, from its flank position in NATO's Cold War structure to a frontline position in the new era.¹

Section I of this paper will provide the historical background within which the fundamental political and security objectives and goals of Turkey have evolved. Section II will elaborate how the momentous geostrategic changes of the last couple of years in Eurasia have helped shape new perceptions of opportunities as well as threats, and corresponding policy responses. Section III will concentrate on the new security environment in Turkey's south. Section IV will look at Turkish security and defense policies, and at the ongoing reorganization and modernization of the Turkish Armed Forces in order to meet the challenges of the post-Cold War era. The focus throughout the study will be the expanded Middle East, meaning the traditional Middle East plus the former Soviet Republics in the Caucasus and Central Asia. Turkey's political and security interests and policies and its apprehensions about the risks and threats with origins to its west, specifically, Greece and the Balkans, will be touched upon only in highly general terms in order to reflect the deep sense of exposure to unstable regions in all directions.

Finally, although the guerrilla war waged by the Marxist-oriented Kurdistan Worker's Party (PKK) since 1984 to establish an independent Kurdistan in Turkey's southeast is, without doubt, the most serious challenge to the country's political and territorial integrity, it will not be dealt with in this paper except when powerful inter-linkages with the behavior and intentions towards Turkey of other states in the region demand attention to it. The two successive Gulf Wars and the collapse of the Cold War have loosed powerful forces throughout the region and in the West in support of Kurdish nationalism in the region at large. In the case of Turkey, these external forces have directly and indirectly encouraged the escalation of the PKK's armed struggle against the Turkish state.

1. For official expressions of this assessment, see: Gen. Cevik Bir, Turkish General Staff, "NATO'nun Yeni Stratejisi" ("NATO's New Strategy"), *Savunma ve Havacilik (Defense and Aviation)* 2 (1992), p. 17; Minister of Defense Nevzat Ayaz, "Europe's New Security Architecture and Turkey," speech delivered at the Fourth Antalya Conference on International Security and Cooperation, Antalya, Turkey, 17 October 1993; and Prime Minister Tansu Çiller, "Simdi Türkiye Merkez Ülke" ("Turkey Now is a Central Front Country"), *Cumhuriyet* (major social-democratic daily), 13 January 1994.

Sources of Turkish Policy and Strategy

Modern Turkey was founded in 1923 following a four-year War of Independence against the occupation forces of the victors of the First World War in the Asia Minor core of the Ottoman Empire. While specific priorities and instruments of Turkey's security policies have been subject to change in the course of time—as they generally are for all states—one does detect continuities in how interests and goals have been conceptualized.

Three fundamental considerations seem to have had a powerful and persistent influence in shaping the mindset of Turkish foreign and security policy elites in their assessment of Turkey's security environment. The first consideration has been geostrategic; the second, historical; and the third, ideological.²

Turkey occupies a commanding position at the crossroads between Europe and Asia, athwart the land lines of communication between the Middle East and Europe and the sea lines of communication from southern Russia through the Black Sea to the Mediterranean and thence Gibraltar, and the world. The country's location has instilled in its people a strong awareness of its potential to influence regional and even global power balances.

The specific military and political implications of Turkey's geostrategic position change in response to structural changes in the international and regional political environment, and in response to changes in militarily-relevant technology. In the post-Cold War era, Turkey's precise geostrategic significance has once again been subjected to reassessment in light of the profound alterations in both global and regional power balances.

Despite the fluidity of this era of transition, there seems to be broad consensus that Turkey's potential ability to influence the course of developments in several of the world's most troubled regions confirms its considerable strategic importance. Turkish officials are explicit about the weight they attach to the geostrategic factor when thinking about Turkey's place in the larger world. Minister of Defense Nevzat Ayaz has recently reiterated that among the factors that shape Turkey's security and defense policies, "geostrategic circumstances" enjoy a primary position.³

The second consideration has been historical and has to do with the legacy of Turkish/Ottoman rule in the regions immediately neighboring Turkey. Except for Iran,

2. This analytical paradigm of the dominant influences over time on Turkish foreign and security policy thinking is based on data obtained from policy statements by public officials. One of the most important primary sources for this purpose is the official records of the Turkish Grand National Assembly (TGNA) published in the *Tutanak Dergisi* (*The Journal of Minutes*, to be cited hereafter as *TGNA-JM*). For this study, the *TGNA-JM* has been reviewed for every three-year interval between 1945 and 1990, and for every year between 1990 and 1993. See also, T. C. Basbakanligi, *Dis Siyaset Belgeleri: Demecler, Bildiriler, Teknik Anlasmalar* (*Foreign Policy Documents: Speeches, Declarations, Technical Agreements*) (Ankara: The Prime Ministry, 1976).

3. Nevzat Ayaz, "Deterrent Shield: Turkish Security and Defense Policy and Its Defense Industry," *NATO's Sixteen Nations* 38:4 (Special Issue, 1993), p. 18.

all of Turkey's current neighbors were either fully or partly under Turkish/Ottoman rule for long periods. Differing doses of resentment against this historical legacy in ex-Ottoman neighboring countries, as well as territorial, boundary, ethnic, and property questions inherited from the past have not been conducive to the establishment of unblemished mutual trust. Nevertheless, Republican diplomacy generally succeeded in introducing and sustaining an important degree of stability in Turkey's relations with the Near East, with the exception of Greece in later decades. Today, however, Turkey's immediate environment has been thrown into a new stage of instability, fuelling new tensions, mutual rivalries and perceptions of threat. For example, speculation of neo-Ottomanist and pan-Turkist aspirations by Turkey have been heard in Moscow, Athens, and even Tehran, reflecting the revival of collective memories filled with images from the past. Proud assertions by high-level Turkish officials, including then-President Turgut Ozal, then-Prime Minister Suleyman Demirel, and opposition leaders, after the breakup of the Soviet Union, about "the rebirth of the Turkic world from the Adriatic to China," might also have encouraged perceptions of Turkey in a neo-Ottomanist light.⁴

The third consideration has been ideological, addressing the felt need of the political elite to protect the internal order in Turkey, which is predicated on Western ideas and models of socio-political organization, against turbulence or, worse still, direct challenges from the outside.

Founded and led until 1938 by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, an enlightened professional soldier, the new Turkey defined its domestic order and international role in terms that were radically different from those of the Ottoman Empire. Externally, the new Turkey defined a highly limited role for itself. Largely content with the territorial boundaries established as a result of the War of Independence—except for the boundaries with Syria and Iraq—it shunned a revisionist and interventionist foreign policy. This was pragmatism at its best, for Turkey needed to devote its energies to internal development.

Domestically, the Republic replaced the monarchy; the secular state replaced the theocratic, based on Islamic law; fundamental social and political reforms laid the groundwork on which the commitment to modernization through Westernization was to be erected and sustained.

Such a thorough transformation of an essentially Islamic society on the model of the West was a formidable task.⁵ From the very beginning, the new regime had to cope

4. See, for example, Turgut Ozal, "21. Asir Turkiye'nin ve Turklerin Asri Olacak," ("The Twenty-first Century Will Belong to Turkey and the Turks"), speech at Celik Palas, Bursa, 22 May 1991; "Yeni Yil Mesaji" ("New Year Message"), Ankara, 1 January 1992; "Turkiye'nin Stratejik Oncelikleri" ("Turkey's Strategic Priorities"), Opening Statement at the International Symposium on "Turkey's Strategic Priorities," The Marmara Hotel, Istanbul, 5 November 1991; see also, Suleyman Demirel, *Basbakan Suleyman Demirel'in Turki Cumhuriyetler Gezisi ile Ilgili Olarak TBMM Genel Kurulunda ve DYP TBMM Grup Toplantisinda Yaptigi Konusmalar (Speeches by Prime Minister Suleyman Demirel Before the TGNA and the Party Caucasus on His Visit to Turkic Republics)* (Ankara: Basbakanlik Basmevi, May 1992).

5. From 1839 to 1878, the Ottoman Empire carried out its most ambitious, Western-inspired political and social reform program, known as the Tanzimat (Rules). For an important pioneering study of the leading late-19th century Ottoman intellectuals influenced by the ideas of the Enlightenment, see Serif Mardin, *The Genesis of Young Ottoman Thought: A Study in the Modernization of Turkish Political Ideas* (Prince-

with the inherent tension between the Westernizers/Modernists and the Traditionalists/Islamists. However, under the direction of one-party government the reforms ultimately prevailed, paving the way for the political and social modernization of Turkey.

Today, more than seven decades later, Turkish society is more democratic and developed. The Kemalist spirit and ideology of commitment to modernization through Westernization has enjoyed uninterrupted legitimate power within the state and broad acceptance within the society. On the other hand, the transition to multi-party politics in Turkey in 1950⁶ and the rise of Islam as a political force in southwest Asia since the 1970s have boosted the position of Islamists in the Turkish political spectrum. Their strength at the national polls has remained more or less stable at about ten percent over the last two decades. Lately, however, the tension between Turkey's westward looking domestic order and orientation and pro-Islamic pressures has been expressed in an increasingly more open and violent manner. For example, Islamic terror is widely believed to have been responsible for the assassinations of several prominent Kemalist intellectuals in the last few years.

Especially alarming to the modernists were the results of the nationwide municipal elections held on 27 March 1994. The Islamist Welfare Party (WP) of Professor Necmeddin Erbakan won one-third of the seats contested, doubling its popular vote since the last national elections held in October 1991. A number of points have made the Islamists' victory at the polls all the more meaningful. They have registered a remarkable increase since 1991 in their popularity nationwide, turning the WP into a net winner while the two mainstream coalition partners in government, the right-of-center True Path Party (TPP) of Prime Minister Tansu Çiller and the left-of-center People's Socialist Party (PSP) of Vice-Prime Minister Murat Karayalçın, have been net losers in terms of popular strength. Second, they have captured Istanbul (population: roughly 11 million) and Ankara (population: roughly 4 million), the two largest cities of self-evident strategic importance to any political party with national aspirations. Third, they have taken almost all of southeast Turkey, where the majority of Turkish-Kurds reside. This development suggests the resurgence of Islam as a source of identity for Turkish-Kurds in a region convulsed, since the late 1980s, by the ethnically-based separatist struggle waged by the PKK.

A discussion of Turkey's chosen philosophical-ideological world view as a factor in its security thinking is critical to this study because of the close interdependence between the sustainability of the socio-political order it has inspired and the nature of the external environment. This aspect of Turkish security thinking has been stressed here in more detail than the considerations discussed previously mainly because its relevance may not be as readily apparent. The Turkish case of a traditionally Muslim country choosing to modernize on the Western model through abrupt political and social engineering was

ton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1962). For one of the most penetrating and frequently cited sources on the Turkish transformation and its Ottoman antecedents, see: Bernard Lewis, *The Emergence of Modern Turkey* (London: Oxford University Press, 1960. Second ed., 1979).

6. On this seminal development in Turkish political evolution, see Kemal Karpat, *Turkey's Politics: The Transition to a Multi-Party System* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1959).

unique in its time and continues to be unmatched today in its comprehensiveness. In its turn, this singularity is inherently precarious. Turkey's great experiment needs a hospitable external environment to sustain and reinforce it. Singularity breeds systemic international vulnerabilities by depriving Turkey of a clearly defined socio-cultural identity that would be a source of strength in resisting external challenges and a basis of solidarity and affiliation with others like it in the international arena. In other words, because Turkey is neither a fully Westernized nor an orthodox Islamic society but a modernizing, Europe-oriented country with an Islamic substratum, its domestic regime has been inherently exposed to shifting counterpressures from the external environment. The ideology of Westernization and pro-Westernism has been anathema in the regions surrounding Turkey for a very long time—except belatedly in Greece—which has made the Turkish task of safeguarding its internal system against external challenges all the more difficult.

Turkey's domestic socio-political order has been tested severely by these external forces. The first test originated in Moscow. The export of Communism was a major threat to the Turkish domestic order for seventy years, until the ideological drive of Soviet foreign policy was formally denounced by General Secretary Gorbachev in 1987. The growing political power and geographical spread of Islamic radicalism presents a second test. Particularly as embodied in the anti-Western policies of Iran under the Mullahs since 1979, it increases the strain on, and the vulnerability of, Turkey's domestic regime.

Accordingly, the preservation of Turkey's unique domestic order and socio-political identity has been a fundamental element of Turkish foreign and security policy thinking. This ideological imperative is almost invariably present in the process of Turkish decision-making—promoting or constraining the country's relations with other actors, especially in the region immediately around her. For example, the initial Turkish decision to join the Western Alliance after World War II was driven as much by this ideological preoccupation as it was by the Soviet threat. More recently, the same impulse has been at work in Turkey's approach to the newly independent republics in post-Soviet Central Asia as well as some of the post-Communist states in the Balkans.

Northern Neighbors: Old Risks and New Instabilities

The most dramatic changes in Turkey's geostrategic environment derive from the end of Communist rule in eastern and southern Europe and the USSR, and from the breakup of the Soviet Union itself. This section examines the implications of these changes for Turkish interests and security, considering first the retrenchment of Soviet/Russian power, then the roles of the newly independent states of the Caucasus and Central Asia, and finally the risks posed by continuing instability and war in the Balkans.

The Retrenchment of Soviet/Russian Power

The retrenchment of Soviet/Russian power in its military, political and ideological manifestations has been the paramount development that has redefined the geopolitical environment around Turkey. Gorbachev's New Thinking in foreign and security policy and its realization in the Intermediate-range Nuclear Forces Treaty (1987), the Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) Treaty (1990), and the Soviet commitment to unilateral cuts in manpower and heavy weaponry, had already greatly moderated Turkish perception of the Soviet threat. The subsequent dissolution of the Soviet Union redrew the

political map in a way that eliminated Turkey's common borders with Russia for the first time in four centuries, a development of historic importance. On the other hand, the precariousness of the new buffer states in the Caucasus is evident from recent developments in Georgia and Azerbaijan, which will be discussed in more detail shortly.

The Soviet threat impelled Turkey's post-Second World War foreign and security policies of alliance with the West. However, the inter-war years in Turkish-Soviet relations had been a remarkably peaceful experience. In contrast to the historical pattern of adversity, the 1920s and 1930s were years of mutual confidence and friendship. They seem a positive aberration when one recalls that for the Ottoman Empire, Russian expansionism in the Balkans and around the Black Sea and the Caucasus had been a deadly threat to its territorial integrity and internal cohesion from the mid-eighteenth century onward. The Western powers stood by the Ottoman Empire—"The Sick Man of Europe," in the words of Tsar Nicholas I—during its slow but persistent decline in order to keep Moscow from controlling Constantinople and the Mediterranean, which was then the lifeline of several far-flung European empires. In broad terms, therefore, the collapse of Communism and the decline of Soviet/Russian power in Turkey's immediate neighborhood have removed a major source of threat to its socio-political order and territorial integrity.

In addition, the liberation from Soviet/Russian sovereignty of an expansive area—from Ukraine to the borders of China—has opened up numerous societies and countries previously unable to interact with the international community in their own right. Turkey has an active interest in these new post-Communist and post-Soviet polities, which share with it such politically significant values as history, ethnicity, and culture.

However, the ultimate nature and direction of the new order in the Russian Federation and in the outlying lands freed from Soviet/Russian rule remain unresolved. Domestic and regional instabilities in former Soviet lands have replaced the general social and political stability of the Soviet era, warning of possible dangers ahead to which Turkey, so close to the Russian Federation, may be especially sensitive for two interrelated reasons.

First, no one seems to have a clear idea of how long it will be before Russia manages to stabilize its domestic political system and economy. Prolonged domestic instability, it is feared, might increase the chances of a return to dictatorship, especially of an ultra-nationalistic type. The results of the national elections held in Russia on 12 December 1993 seem to have validated Turkish concerns by making the far right populist, Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, the leader of the Liberal Democratic Party, the second most powerful politician in the Russian Duma. The seriousness of domestic developments had been incontrovertible, however, even before the national election results. President Yeltsin's ultimate reliance on military power to settle his scores with the hard-line parliamentary opposition, which he provoked into rebellion by closing down the parliament, already had raised grave questions about the commitment of the Russian leadership to democratic rule and about the growing entanglement of the Russian military in politics.

Second, Russia's residual mix of conventional and nuclear arsenals is sufficiently formidable to allow Russia to exploit windows of opportunity against weaker neighbors.

The risk of such action would rise if that formidable force fell into the wrong hands inside Russia as a result of increasing social unrest and political instability engendered by persistent economic failures.

There is also a longer-term dimension to any assessment of potential security risks from Russia. Given its geographical size, its large, skilled work force and trained brain power, resource abundance, and the Western determination to underwrite its transition to a market-economy, Russia could achieve a level of development that would permit it to recapture its super power status in the first decades of the twenty-first century. Reorganized and modernized, Russian armed forces could then be in a position to help implement the foreign policy of a newly invigorated Russian Federation, which might possibly want to reclaim the old Russian Empire.

Writing in mid-1992, Henry Kissinger expressed concerns about the nature and direction of Russian power and foreign policy in the near future. Mr. Kissinger noted then that hundreds of thousands of former Red Army troops remained on the territories of the former Soviet Republics. They came and went and maneuvered without asking the permission of the newly independent countries. Moreover, he argued, the presence of at least 25 million Russians as minorities in these countries could easily provide the pretext for Russian intervention in inter-ethnic conflicts. Finally, he warned that the eventual recentralization of the historic Russian empire—involving the reassertion of Russian control over the Black Sea and the Caucasus and a drive once again for access to the warm waters of the Mediterranean—should not be ruled out.⁷

About a year later, President Suleyman Demirel of Turkey, in a major speech before the Turkish Grand National Assembly on September 1, 1993, at the beginning of the parliamentary year, expressed almost identical concerns:

The disintegration of the Soviet Union has eliminated a big threat but ushered in a period full of uncertainties. The world has not achieved stability. It is true that Turkey has been freed from a 400-year old threat. On the other hand, instability in Russia continues to be of imminent concern to Turkey. The Russian Federation claims responsibility over the destiny of the 30 million Russians living in other republics. Is the Russian Federation uneasy about the breakup of the Soviet Empire? Are local conflicts there going to be pretexts for the reconstruction of the Empire? To what degree is Russia behind these conflicts?

The priorities of the Russian foreign-policy debate in 1992-93 concerning, in particular, the “near abroad”, the nature of the role of the Russian Federation within the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), and Russia’s increasingly intervention-

7. Henry Kissinger, *International Herald Tribune*, 6 July 1992, editorial page.

ist behavior in the conflicts in former southern Soviet Republics, have spurred deep Turkish apprehensions.⁸ In Moscow, the “near abroad” countries, meaning the former Soviet Republics, have come to be viewed by both the government and the opposition to hold utmost importance for Russian foreign policy and security interests. Moscow has given increasing signs of its intention to influence the nature of the developments in these countries. Armed conflicts in Tajikistan, Georgia, Azerbaijan and Moldova have given it reasons to seek wider legitimacy for its involvement. In February 1993, President Yeltsin appealed to the international community to grant Russia the authority to act as the peacekeeper in the former Soviet Republics.⁹ Throughout 1993, Russian commentators expressed dissatisfaction with the restrictions the CFE treaty placed on Russian forces in the North Caucasus, and President Boris Yeltsin sent shock waves through Turkey when, in a letter addressed to President Demirel in late September 1993, he reportedly declared that force ceilings established by the CFE Treaty for the North Caucasus District were beginning to fall short of responding to Russia’s needs, adding that they faced the risk of non-implementation.¹⁰ Apparently Russia also notified NATO Secretary General Manfred Woerner of its dissatisfaction with the force ceilings in that part of Russia that adjoined the troubled Caucasus.

The Russian initiative on the CFE Treaty seems to have convinced the Turkish security establishment that Russia is resolved to reassert its influence, if not control, over the former Soviet lands to its south, and to back up this intention by force. According to Turkish press reports, Ankara has informally notified Washington that Turkey would take its own “measures”—meaning the redeployment of Turkish forces withdrawn under the CFE Treaty from eastern Anatolia—in the event that Mr. Yeltsin’s new proposals were given a green light.¹¹

In a skeptical analysis of Russian attitudes toward the new republics to its south, Turkish Chief of General Staff General Dogan Gures articulated evolving Turkish perceptions on 15 October 1993 before the 4th Antalya International Conference on International Peace and Cooperation, organized by the Turkish Atlantic Council:

8. For highlights of the debate in Russia on these questions, see, “A Call for an Assertive Russian Foreign Policy,” *Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press* XLIV:32 (9 September 1992), pp. 1–5; John Lough, “The Place of the ‘Near Abroad’ in Russian Foreign Policy,” *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (“RFE/RL”) Research Report* 2:11 (12 March 1992), pp. 21–23; “Breakup of USSR Viewed as ‘World Geopolitical Catastrophe,’” in United States, Foreign Broadcast Information Service, *Daily Report, Central Eurasia* (hereafter, “*FBIS-SOV*”), vol. 93, no. 97 (28 July 1993), pp. 84–86.

9. To one observer, this move was tantamount to a declaration of a “Monroe Doctrine” for Russia. See, Leslie Gelb, “Yeltsin As Monroe,” *New York Times*, 7 March 1993, editorial page.

10. “Rusya AKKA’ya Karsi Cikiyor” (“Russia Objects to CFE Treaty”), *Cumhuriyet*, 23 September 1993; and “Rusya’dan Tehdit” (“Warning from Russia”), *Sabah* (major daily newspaper), 25 September 1993.

11. “AKKA Konusunda Amerika’ya Isaretler” (“Signals to the US on the CFE Treaty”), *Milliyet* (major daily newspaper), 27 September 1993.

The policy pursued by the Russian Federation which constituted the core of the former Soviet Union and which is the leader of the CIS has lately displayed disturbing signals. The Russian Federation considers itself responsible for the fate of 30 million ethnic Russians living in the rest of the former Soviet Republics.... Developments in the Caucasus give the impression that Russia has an unfavorable attitude towards countries that are not members of the CIS.... I find it difficult to understand the real meaning behind the initiatives to increase the ceilings established by the CFE Treaty, especially when viewed in the light of historical facts.

In summary, the relative demise of Soviet power and the disintegration of the Soviet Union have been a mixed blessing from Turkey's perspective. For, while the clearly defined and colossal Soviet threat has disappeared, the deep tensions permeating the politico-military environment vacated by Soviet/Russian rule have made this environment a breeding ground for potential new risks and threats. Against the background of this power vacuum, the system of externally imposed constraints that have for long managed to suppress potential local conflicts have disappeared, paving the way for the violent resurfacing of some of the old ethnic, national, and territorial feuds and disagreements.

Turkey's physical proximity to the various theaters of tension and conflict, as well as its special ties with some of the parties to those conflicts, for example, Azerbaijan in its conflict with Armenia (which has irredentist claims on Turkey), have raised serious questions about the prospects for Turkey's continuing ability to remain uninvolved.

The New States of Central Asia and the Caucasus

The disintegration of the Soviet Union opened up a vast space in the Caucasus and Central Asia of great interest to Turkey, fundamentally because of common ethnic, linguistic and cultural bonds. The walls that for centuries had cut off the larger Turkic world from Turkey had disappeared, or at least seemed to, paving the way to a new era of bonding. Such bonds have value in and of themselves, creating a sense of community and mutual responsiveness. However, in international relations as in domestic politics they might also provide a firm basis for coalition-building for political and economic gains. Upon the withdrawal of Soviet/Russian power, Turkey saw an historic opportunity to cultivate political, economic, and ideological ties with the Turkic world, a world that is both vast and rich in natural resources.

The exact mix of goals in Turkey's present policy is difficult to determine. However, the intensity of the emotions manifested at the outset of the Turkish-Turkic embrace beginning in late 1991 leads one to argue that the sense of belonging to common roots and the desire to revive an awareness of common bonds have exerted powerful influence. The Turks of Turkey customarily define their ethnic identity and lineage by reference to their Central Asian roots. Waves of emigration outward from the "Central Asian Motherland" ultimately resulted in the establishment of Turkish rule in Asia Minor beginning in 1071, when the Byzantine Empire was defeated at the Battle of Manzigert by the Seljuk Turks.

The same enthusiasm seems to have had a negative resonance in Moscow, which apparently has viewed it as the first step towards a united Turkic world along its borders.¹² Turkish officials' two-pronged strategy of claiming a legitimate right to cultivate special relations among Turkic countries while disclaiming any intention to dominate them seems not to have persuaded important Russian circles that Turkey's intentions are not pan-Turkist.¹³

Turkey's ideological motive should also be kept in mind when trying to understand the forces behind Turkish foreign policy at any time in the Republican period. Turkey may have felt that the extension of its domestic socio-political order, where democracy and secularism are central organizing concepts, would be reinforced and protected if the new Turkic world could be helped to develop along similar lines. By posing as a westernizing, democratic, and secular role-model to the new Turkic states engaged in the search for non-Communist political alternatives, Turkey apparently hoped to help shape a group of mutually reinforcing, like-minded states situated not too far from its borders. Important circles in the West, official and private, encouraged Turkey to assume such a leadership role, presumably in order to undermine the potential power of the Iranian alternative.¹⁴

The Turkic Republics in Central Asia and Azerbaijan had their own pragmatic reasons to seek close ties with a country like Turkey—a settled member of the international community, but more significantly, an ally of the West. Newly independent, with a recovered sense of national identity, these young states felt the need to reach out to new friends, supporters, and role-models to help them to define and then attain a proper place for themselves in the global system.

Central Asia: Growing Contacts, Bearish Prospects. Between autumn 1991 and spring 1992, the leaders of all the Turkic Republics paid official visits to Turkey. From 27 April through 4 May 1992, Turkish Prime Minister Suleyman Demirel returned these visits, pledging financial assistance of approximately \$1.2 billion.¹⁵ In April 1993,

12. For expressions of Russian uneasiness about Turkey's new activism in the former southern Soviet republics, see, "Collective Security Treaty Seen as a Russia-Central Asia Pact..." *Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press* XLIV:19 (10 June 1992), p. 4; "Military Alliances: NATO and Nakhichevan," *Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press* XLIV:21 (24 June 1992), pp. 15–16; "Middle East: Turkey," *Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press* XLV:19 (9 June 1993), pp. 16–18.

13. Prime Minister Demirel's thoughts provide a perfect expression of this double-pronged strategy. See his, "Speech Before the TGNA..." *op.cit.*, pp. 30–31; "Demirel Interviewed on Bosnia, Terrorism, Germany," *FBIS-WEU-93-043* (6 March 1993), pp. 54–55.

14. For samples of editorials and opinions in Western media in support of Turkey's potential to act as a role model, with special emphasis on its unique position in the Islamic universe, see, "The Importance of Being Turkey," *Economist*, 24 August 1991, pp. 13–14; "Star of Islam," *Economist*, December 14, 1991; Editorial, "The Sick Man Recovers," *Times* (London), 28 January 1992; "The Turkish Model on Display," *Newsweek*, 3 February 1993, pp. 23–25; "A Gathering of Ideas: Special Report," *Newsweek*, 3 February 1992, pp. 16–21.

15. Of this amount, \$822.63 million was allocated as of 30 June 1993; see, Turk Isbirligi ve Kalkinma Ajansi (TIKA) (The Turkish Cooperation and Development Agency, founded by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to coordinate relations with the newly independent countries in Eurasia), *Expenditures Within the Framework of Assistance by Turkey to the Newly Independent Countries*, Mimeo. Ankara, 1993, p. 2.

Turkish President Turgut Ozal went on an official tour, stopping in Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Kyrgyzstan and Azerbaijan. In 1992 and 1993, a series of inter-governmental meetings culminated in numerous cooperation agreements between Turkey and the various Republics.¹⁶ The Summit Meeting held in Ankara from 29 October through 2 November 1992, by the Heads of State of Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan and Turkey—politically the most important meeting to date—pledged to institutionalize contacts at all levels and to establish Joint Working Groups in several functional fields. The Second Summit, originally planned to be held in Baku in December 1993, and rescheduled to February 1994 due to domestic problems in Azerbaijan, seems to have been postponed indefinitely. The momentum for Turkic cooperation is being forced to the background as Moscow steadily recovers its former influence in these regions.

Another development of major significance that offered substance to the (so far) rather vague concept of the “Turkic World” was the agreement reached on 10 March 1993 among the six on the creation of a Common Turkish Alphabet based on the Latin Alphabet. The further decision reached at the Conference on Eurasian Economic Cooperation held in Ankara on 6–7 May 1993, to found the “Eurasian Chamber of Commerce and Industry,” is another milestone measure. Moreover, within the next few years, Turkish universities will have admitted 10,000 students from the Turkic republics.

Finally, Turkey hosted the Second Summit Meeting of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) in Istanbul on 6–7 July 1993. The ECO, founded in the 1960s by Pakistan, Iran and Turkey and largely dormant since the revolution in Iran, was enlarged at the First Summit held in summer 1992 by the admission of all Muslim republics of the former Soviet Union, together with Afghanistan. The diplomacy behind the enlargement decision was a sensitive one initially due to the subtle rivalry between Iran and Turkey for the sympathies of the newly independent Turkic countries whose Muslim identities seemed to be as strong as, if not stronger than, their ethnic identities as a basis for inter-state cooperation. At first, then-Prime Minister Demirel refused to describe the enlarged ECO as a “Muslim Common Market,” insisting that it had only an economic cooperation dimension, not political.¹⁷ At the Second Summit, however, he ascribed a much expanded regional role to it, one that would meet a void in Eurasia and contribute to regional peace and stability.¹⁸

On the other hand, in the two years since the breakup of the Soviet Union in December 1991, early mutual enthusiasm and high expectations have had to be scaled down. The most important and outwardly perceptible obstacle to closer Turkish-Turkic cooperation was the relatively weak resource base of the Turkish economy. Turkey was simply not in a position to deliver economic and technical assistance on a scale needed by the Republics. Turkish strengths largely lay in educational and cultural domains,

16. The texts of most agreements can be found in mimeographed form at TIKA, Ankara.

17. Prime Minister Suleyman Demirel, *Basbakan Demirel'in 3. Basın Toplantısı (The Third Press Conference of Prime Minister Demirel)*, mimeographed, Ankara, 24 February 1992.

18. “Summit Ends: Communique Issued,” FBIS, *Daily Report, Western Europe (FBIS-WEU)*, vol. 93, no. 129 (8 July 1993), p. 6.

whose fruits could be collected only in the long term. A change from the Cyrillic to the Latin alphabet, for example, where Turkey could be helpful, could facilitate the Republics' communication with the Western world as well as Turkey, but the benefits to Turkey of such an enterprise would come painfully slowly. Iran's physical contiguity and oil revenues, as well as the growing political power of Islam in some of the Republics, seem to have greatly expanded Iran's involvement in both bilateral and multilateral cooperative schemes. Iranian President Rafsanjani's successful visit to all these countries in October 1993 suggests further inroads.

The second important constraint has been the economic dependence of the former Soviet Republics on the Russian Federation. The high degree of dependence inherited from the Soviet period allows Russia to retain substantial influence on the strategies and tools available to the Republics for economic, and by extension, political development. Moreover, Moscow is visibly uncomfortable with the gravitation of the Republics towards Islamic and Turkic cooperation. For example, in the wake of the announcement in early July 1993 of an agreement between Russia, Belarus and the Ukraine for economic union, Russian Federation Deputy Prime Minister Aleksandr N. Shokhin sent the following veiled warning:

Our friends from the Commonwealth who, looking for better fortunes, are turning to the south should choose between closer economic integration with Russia and with their southern neighbors... Clearly, one country cannot be a member of two customs unions.¹⁹

Mr. Shokhin's implicit reference was to the Second Summit of ECO held in Istanbul on 6-7 July, at which Kazakhstan's President Nursultan Nazarbaev declared his conviction that a Central Asian common market would one day come into being.²⁰ A random survey of statements by the leaders of the three Slavic states of the newly formed economic union suggest that the tri-partite meeting might have been knowingly timed by Moscow to coincide with the ECO Summit in Istanbul.²¹

Azerbaijan: The Focus of Special Interest. Azerbaijan has enjoyed a special position of importance in Turkey's approach to the new world emerging to its east. Azerbaijanis' highly developed sense of national identity based on their Turkish ethnicity operates as a powerful source of attraction for the Turks of Turkey. An active Azeri community in Turkey has contributed to a rich ethno-cultural life. The republic's proximity to Turkey, separated only by Armenia; its rich oil and natural gas reserves; its position as a bridge to the other Turkic countries of Central Asia; and possibly above

19. "Three Slavic Ex-Soviet Lands to Press Economic Union," *New York Times*, 15 July 1993, p. 15. On same point, see also, "Central Asia to Decide Where to Join," *FBIS-SOV-93-133* (14 July 1993), p. 6.

20. "Further Reportage on ECO Summit in Istanbul," *FBIS-WEU-93-129* (8 July 1993), p. 5.

21. "Economic Agreement Viewed," *FBIS-SOV-93-133* (14 July 1993), p. 4; "Premier Kebich on Slavic, Islamic Unions," *FBIS-SOV-93-134* (15 July 1993), p. 1.

all else, its post-Soviet commitment to secularism, democracy, and full independence, made Azerbaijan a key focus of Turkish policy.

Turkey's interest in Azerbaijan was enhanced especially by President Abufaz Elchibey's commitment to a secular and democratic internal order. In a speech before the Turkish Grand National Assembly on 26 June 1992, during an official visit to Turkey, President Elchibey expressed admiration for Atatürk and declared his resolve to implement the Turkish model of development.²² But Azerbaijan under Elchibey implicitly challenged regional stakes as well, both Russian and Iranian. His ardent Turkish nationalism irritated both countries, who have historically been uncomfortable with expanded Turkish influence in their backyards. Iran had all the more reason to be irritated by a secular-minded, pro-Turkish Elchibey, who at the same time made it known that he was not neutral about Iranian Azerbaijan.

President Elchibey's downfall at the end of June 1993 has meant the suspension of Turkish-Azerbaijani cooperation and, possibly, the beginning of Baku's return into the Russian orbit. The new President, Mr. Gaidar Aliyev, a former Soviet Politburo member and a KGB general, took Azerbaijan into the CIS presumably in order to persuade Moscow to weigh in against Armenia in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. Moreover, to win Moscow's favors he is reported to have put on hold the preliminary Turkish-Azeri agreement reached on 13 March 1993 for a pipeline that would transport Azeri oil from Baku through Turkey to the Ceyhan Terminal on the Mediterranean.²³ He is instead expected to award the lucrative pipeline deal to Russia.

The five-year war between Armenia and Azerbaijan over Nagorno-Karabakh has been heavily responsible for the failure of the budding democracy in Azerbaijan to take root and for the failure of Turkish diplomacy to contribute to regional stability in any meaningful sense. Turkey is one of eleven members of the Minsk Group (among which are the United States, Russia, France and Italy) mandated by the CSCE to broker a peaceful resolution to the conflict. In this diplomatic tangle, Turkey sought a special dialogue with Russia within the trilateral subgroup, composed of the United States, Russia and Turkey, to prepare a peace plan acceptable to all the contending parties. For a short while in early 1993, Moscow seemed to go along with the idea of a joint Russian-Turkish approach, but eventually changed course. Russian officials must have hoped to impress on Turkey, as well as on everyone else, that Russia would not share its "prerogative" to be the peace broker among the "near abroad."

Several reasons account for Turkey's failure to be an effective mediator. As previously discussed, Russia was basically unwilling to concede a constructive role to Turkey in a region that Moscow still saw as a Russian sphere of interest. Secondly, given

22. For the text, see *TGNA-JM*, Vol. 14, Period 19, Legislative Year 1, 30 June 1992, pp. 177-178.

23. BOTAS, the state enterprise in charge of the transport of petroleum by pipelines in Turkey, has represented Turkey in the international consortium that has been negotiating with Azerbaijan over oil prospecting rights. For its views on the advantages of the Turkish route for the transport of Azeri oil to Western markets, see BOTAS, *Azerbaycan-Turkiye Ham Petrol Boru Hatti Projesi (Azerbaijani-Turkish Crude Oil Pipeline Project)*, Ankara, July 1993.

the historical hostility of Armenia towards Turkey, Yerevan found it difficult to accept Turkey as a mediator—even though normalization of Turkish-Armenian relations seemed possible and even mutually desirable in the first year of Armenian independence. Turkey not only moved swiftly to extend diplomatic recognition but provided generous humanitarian assistance, also allowing huge Western assistance to reach Armenia through Turkey.²⁴

Turkey started from a policy position which ruled out change of borders by use of force, a principle also endorsed by the CSCE. In this spirit, it recognized Nagorno-Karabakh as an integral part of Azerbaijan at the same time as it refused to assist Azerbaijan militarily as the latter was losing territory to the Armenians throughout 1992-1993. Turkey's balanced policy eventually played into the hands of President Elchibey's opponents and may have indirectly contributed to his ouster. The beneficiary of Armenia's anti-Turkish sentiments has been Iran, viewed both in Russia and Armenia as a counterbalancing force against Turkey.²⁵

Due to the powerful pro-Azeri leanings of Turkish public opinion, Turkish governments have been caught in an especially delicate position on questions relating to Azerbaijan. Officials have had to defend the Turkish policy of not assisting Azerbaijan more effectively and of desisting from a more coercive policy towards Armenia, arguing that Turkish coercion would hurt Turkey's interests even more than inaction.²⁶

Georgia: Under Pressure. His country torn by internal war, Georgian President Eduard Shevardnadze joined the CIS in the hope of winning Moscow's support against the Abkhazian separatists, thus completing the process of reassertion of Russian pre-eminence in the Caucasus. For months before he finally acceded to the CIS in October 1993, Mr. Shevardnadze had publicly accused hard-liners in the Russian military of channeling support to the Abkhaz in a deliberate attempt to undermine Georgian independence.²⁷ As all three small countries in the Caucasus reenter the Russian sphere of influence while suffering from deteriorating domestic conditions imposed by several years of fighting, the prospects for their continued independent statehood seem to deteriorate. Clearly, such gloomy prospects make Turkey highly nervous.

Georgia is a highly important country for Turkey for reasons other than security. Several million Turks are known to be the descendants of people from the northern and southern Caucasus, including Georgians and Abkhaz, who migrated to Turkey in the

24. For an account of Armenian charges of "genocide" by Ottoman Turks and Turkish responsibility to acknowledge it and for Armenian territorial claims, see, "Turkey, Azerbaijan Ask Karabakh Talks with Armenia, Iran..." *Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press* XLIV:8 (25 March 1992), p. 13. See also, Carol Migdalovitz, *Turkey: Ally in a Troubled Region* (Washington, D.C.: The Library of Congress, Congressional Research Service, 4 September 1993), p. 25.

25. "Peace in the Transcaucasus to the Rumble of Cannon," *Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press* XLIV:11 (15 April 1992), p. 16.

26. "Demirel Denounces Serbian Leaders as 'War Criminals,'" *FBIS-WEU-93-041* (4 March 1993), p. 43.

27. Elizabeth Fuller, "Eduard Shevardnadze's Via Deloroso," *RFE/RL Research Report* 2:43 (29 October 1993), p. 21, and Fuller, "Russia's Diplomatic Offensive in the Transcaucasus," *RFE/RL Research Report* 2:39 (1 October 1993), p. 31.

second half of the nineteenth century to escape Russian invasion.²⁸ Many have high public profiles. This human factor and the absence of any serious conflict of interest between the two countries make Turkish-Georgian relations the most stable in the region. It might be reasonable to argue that mutual fear of an imperial Russian resurgence reinforced these relations. President Shevardnadze's enthusiastic support for the eleven-member Black Sea Economic Cooperation Zone—a regional free trade zone established at the Istanbul Summit in June 1992 at the initiative of Turkey—and his proposal to give it a security role as well, may be indicative of his felt need to broaden his country's options by developing various multilateral networks.

Is The Historical Russian-Turkish-Persian Rivalry Back? The historical rivalry among Russia, Turkey and Iran appears to have been revived. When Turks moved in from Central Asia to make their homeland in Anatolia, they not only confronted Byzantium but the Safavids as well. As they proceeded in a westwardly direction under the House of Osman, they fought with the Safavids for control over eastern Anatolia, the Caucasus, and Baghdad in order to secure their rear and assert the power of the Sunni over the heretical Shiite. The Russian Empire was the latecomer to this power game. By the end of the 19th century, however, Russia had effectively rolled back Turkish power from the Caucasus and northern Black Sea, while Persia fell under the British sphere of influence.

The civil war in Georgia and the war between Armenia and Azerbaijan over Nagorno-Karabakh have effectively contributed to the entanglement of Turkey and Iran in the regional power game to some degree, but it is the Russian Federation which has already regained much of its older influence and authority with the help of Russian troops and Russian minorities. Early in the post-Soviet era, an anti-Turkish entente between Moscow and Tehran based on their mutual fears of the "Turkic world" also seemed possible, but Russia's increasing reassertiveness in the "near abroad" appears to have ruled it out.

The following statement made in 1992 by Andranik Migranyan, Director of the CIS Center of the Russian Academy of Sciences Institute of International and Political Research, reflects views not uncommon in Russia concerning the triangular dynamic:

Russia's long-term interests require that Turkey's advance into the Transcaucasus, and from there into Central Asia, be halted. This advance could disrupt the balance of power on Russia's southern borders and create a potential threat to its interests. Providing military and political support to Iran and Armenia is in Russia's interest.²⁹

28. Paul B. Henze, *Turkey: Toward the Twenty First Century* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 1992), p. 29.

29. "Migranyan: Russia Has Vital Interests in Entire Ex-USSR..." *Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press* XLIV:32 (9 September 1992), p. 4.

There is also a tendency to perceive Turkey's active interest in the Turkic Republics as part of a larger American strategy that is:

...aimed at pitting the countries of the "Turkic belt," on the one hand, against Shiite Iran—the "bulwark of Muslim fundamentalism"—and on the other hand, against Russia, with the aim of disrupting and severing traditional Russian-Iranian commercial and economic ties and forcing Russia to end its profitable military-technical cooperation with that country, thereby depriving it of access to the Persian Gulf via Iranian territory. Thus, the main objective of this neo-pan-Turkic strategy is to impede Russia's economic and political efforts with respect to the Southern sector and to deprive it of profitable commercial and economic partners and access to world markets for goods and raw materials and to international shipping lanes.³⁰

While Turkish policies and positions towards the former Soviet Republics in the south appear to have caused much consternation in Russia, Moscow seems to be considerably less worried about Iran. Notwithstanding the professed Russian apprehension about the destabilizing role of Islamic fundamentalism and radicalism along its southern rim, especially in Afghanistan and Tajikistan, Moscow has maintained good political and commercial relations with Iran. During a visit to Tehran in 1993, Russian Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev and his Iranian counterpart Mr. Ali Akbar Velayati signed two agreements, one envisaging regular political consultations, the other cooperation in economic, military and nuclear matters.³¹ Arms sales are also an important element of the Russian-Iranian cooperation, and Russia has recently been reported to be helping Iran with the construction of a nuclear power plant.³²

By October 1993, Russian influence was back in the Southern Caucasus, embodied in Russian "peacekeeping" forces. The rise to national power of the far right leader Vladimir Zhirinovskiy might eventually deepen this role, with, however, no guarantee that Russia could restore regional stability without first stabilizing the Russian Federation itself—a goal that has proven elusive. The crystallization of extreme nationalist and imperial sentiments during the December 1993 national elections in Russia might have introduced another new element into regional politics in that, by intimidating both Iran and Turkey, Mr. Zhirinovskiy may have engendered a Turkish-Iranian rapprochement. December 1993 and January 1994 witnessed a marked improvement in the frequency of

30. "Middle East: Turkey," op. cit. note 12, p. 17.

31. "Iranian Ambassador Grants Interview," *FBIS-SOV-93-142* (27 July 1993), p.10; "Russian Radio Says West Trying to Exploit 'imaginary nuclear threat' from Iran," BBC, *Summary of World Broadcasts, Part 4: The Middle East*, ME 1897 MED (14 January 1994), p. 4.

32. Citing Iranian newspaper *Cumhuri-Islami* as its source, Turkish newspaper *Hürriyet* reported on 16 April 1994, that Russian experts have started the construction of a 1,000-Megawatt nuclear reactor at Bushehr, to be completed in four years.

high-level contacts between Turkey and Iran as well as in their approach to substantive issues.

Instability and War in the Balkans

To the northwest and west of Turkey, the Balkans are Turkey's opening to Europe.³³ Two and a half million Turkish citizens reside in western Europe, which is also Turkey's number one trading partner. An important portion of its foreign and security policy throughout the Cold War years was woven around ties with western European countries, surpassed only by its ties with the United States within the Atlantic Alliance. Today, Turkey is a member of the European Council, the OECD, and the CSCE, and an associate member of the Western European Union and the European Community. Hence, it has high stakes in maintaining stable, peaceful relations with western Europe, for which a prerequisite is peace and stability in the Balkans.

Yet the post-Communist and post-Soviet Balkans are also filled with uncertainty and strife. While the transition to democracy in eastern Europe and the Balkans, and the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact, have removed a combined ideological and military threat to Turkey of more than four decades duration, the Balkans have fallen into deep political and military turmoil. The war in the former Yugoslavia, in particular, has destabilized and will continue to destabilize the region because it has mobilized—on a regionwide basis—ethno-national, religious, and interstate distinctions and rivalries that have long been part of the Balkan legacy.

In the early 1990s Turkey viewed the possibility of Yugoslavia's disintegration with trepidation, due to its anticipated consequences. Once the process seemed irreversible, however, Turkey extended recognition to Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia, and Slovenia, in February 1992. The subsequent war in Bosnia-Herzegovina led Turkey to take a strong diplomatic stand in support of the independence of that Republic, a fellow member of the United Nations. Turkish interest in Bosnia-Herzegovina was as much historical and psychological as geopolitical. The Bogomils, the ancestors of Bosnian Muslims, had converted to Islam soon after the conquest of their land by the Ottoman Turks in late 15th century. Currently, Turkish officials put the number of Turks of Bosnian descent (called "Boshnaks") at between two and four million.³⁴ Turkey's historical sense of affinity with these people, the pressure from the domestic Boshnak community and, more critically perhaps, the politicization of the issue by the Islamist Welfare Party, which has called for an active Turkish role in defense of "the Muslims,"

33. For official statements on Turkish interests in the Balkans and policies towards the Yugoslav crisis, see the statement by Deputy Prime Minister Erdal Inonu at the Extraordinary Session on Cyprus and Bosnia-Herzegovina, *TGNA-JM*, Vol. 16, Period 19, Legislative Year 1, 18 August 1992, pp. 23–113; the statement by Foreign Minister Hikmet Cetin at the 47th Session of the United Nations General Assembly, New York, 25 September 1992, mimeographed; the statement by Ambassador Mustafa Aksin (Permanent Representative of Turkey to the United Nations) at the United Nations Security Council, New York, 13 November 1992, mimeographed; and the statement by Prime Minister Demirel, *Hersey Turkiye Icin (Everything For Turkey: A Report On The Performance of the 49th Government)*, Ankara, 24 August 1992, mimeographed, p. 37.

34. *TGNA-JM*, Vol. 16, 94th Session, Extraordinary Session on the Question of Cyprus and Bosnia-Herzegovina, 25 August 1992, Ankara, p. 92.

have turned the question of Bosnia-Herzegovina into an equally pressing domestic and foreign policy issue for the Turkish government.

Turkey has consistently ruled out the threat of a unilateral use of force in Bosnia-Herzegovina—about which there was widespread speculation in Greece as well as some other Balkan countries. But it has urged strong multilateral action to deter Serbian aggression. On 7 August 1992 Turkey proposed an Action Plan which advised joint use of force if Serbian aggression continued, under United Nations authorization.³⁵ Since April 1993, a squadron of 18 F-16s have been serving in the NATO force put together to enforce the no-fly zone over Bosnia-Herzegovina. Acceptance of its offer of Turkish troops to serve in the UNPROFOR took awhile to be approved by the United Nations, partly due to strong Greek and Serbian opposition. As of late June 1994, however, 1,450 Turkish troops were bound for central Bosnia.³⁶

The crisis in the former Yugoslavia also raises several other crucial questions about the prospects for Balkan peace. The more immediate ones concern the future evolution of the status of Kosovo and Macedonia. The nature of the evolution of regional politics concerning those countries, and by implication Albania, will have a direct impact on Turkish interests. For, at a minimum, both Albania and Macedonia offer Turkey a window of friendship and predictability in relations in a region where archaic thought systems militate against such qualities in interstate relations.

The US-sponsored agreements of 1 March 1994 to establish a federal state of Croatian and Muslim peoples in Bosnia-Herzegovina offer grounds for cautious optimism that a peaceful, multi-ethnic Bosnia-Herzegovina might once again be reconstituted, especially if the Bosnian Serbs can be drawn into the arrangement. Subsequent developments, however, not only in Gorazde but in the northern part of the country, suggest that this is highly unlikely.

Two final points should be emphasized before concluding this short analysis of the impact of the Balkan crisis on Turkish interests. First, the crisis has played a powerful role in exacerbating the Greek-Turkish rivalry. Mutual suspicions about each other's goals have now expanded from the Aegean to include the Balkans, leading the two countries to side with opposing parties in Balkan politics and war. Clearly, a further polarized and radicalized Balkans is in progress.

The second point concerns its impact on Turkish domestic politics. Radical Islam, in particular, has benefitted significantly from the Bosnian war in its campaign to humiliate the Western-inspired political and social system in Turkey. The image on CNN of the death and misery of helpless civilian Muslims, including the rape of their women, as the West watched on the sidelines for two years, until February 1994, has probably been more effective in undermining the confidence of the population in the pro-Western

35. *Ibid.*, pp. 95–96.

36. "Greece Fights Turkish Offer," *The European*, 25–31 March 1994; "Turkey Sends Troops to UN Bosnia Force," *New York Times*, 19 June 1994, p. 6.

essence of the Turkish state than any amount of subversive assistance from radical movements in the Middle East might have been.

Southern Neighbors: New Risks and Old Instabilities

While the dramatic change in the Arab-Israeli conflict from confrontation to a search for negotiated solutions marks a whole new era for regional peace and stability, the Middle East/Gulf region still seems likely to face several fundamental challenges in the 1990s. Some of them will have direct implications for Turkey's political and security interests.

From a Western perspective, apart from the Arab-Israeli conflict, the multiple sources of regional tension and instability in this part of the world tend to be lumped together under "Gulf Security." Gulf security and stability are of paramount importance for Turkey, too. Every serious hegemonial aspiration, for example, Iraq's occupation of Kuwait in August 1990, is a challenge to Turkish security interests in the broadest sense. By siding with the anti-Saddam coalition in the second Gulf War, Turkey demonstrated unequivocally that Turkish interests and positions on Gulf security subsumed Western interests and positions. Turkey allowed US planes to use NATO and Turkish air bases to launch attacks on Iraq. But while the crisis and the war highlighted Turkey's strategic location and importance as a Western ally, they also cost Turkey \$5.6 billion in 1990 and 1991, according to World Bank estimates, in lost revenues from trade with Iraq, lost tourism, and other war-related expenditures.³⁷

But Turkish interests can also be further refined. They concern the pervasiveness of authoritarian regimes in the region; the unsettled nature of Iraq's role and status and its potential to press for regional hegemony once again if and when international sanctions are lifted; the continuing rivalry between Iran and Iraq; Islamic fundamentalism and radicalism and its proclivity to feed terror and train terrorists; Syrian irredentism over Lebanon; water scarcity and the resulting tensions over the transboundary water systems of the Jordan River and the Euphrates and Tigris; regionalization of the Kurdish question; and, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems.

These issues have traditionally been interactive and interrelated. The second Gulf War has reinforced the linkages among them, thereby enlarging the scope of their potential impact on regional stability and security.

For Turkey, three of them are of special importance: the regionalization of the Kurdish question; proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems; and, Islamic radicalism and fundamentalism. They more or less link the other sources of insecurity mentioned above to create a highly insecure larger regional environment in the south for Turkey.

37. Carol Migdalovitz, *Greece and Turkey: Current Foreign Aid Issues* (Washington, D.C.: The Library of Congress, Congressional Research Service, 27 December 1993), p. 3.

Regionalization of the Kurdish Question

In the new era, the more or less traditional interstate conflicts of interest between Turkey and its three southern neighbors—Syria, Iraq, and Iran—have been interlocked more forcefully than ever before with what is essentially an internal problem for Turkey, namely, the separatist armed struggle waged by the PKK since 1984 against the unitary Turkish state. This linkage was perhaps unavoidable as Iraq's defeat by the coalition forces and its continued isolation have disrupted the regional balance of power and created an extremely fluid political environment. This fluidity, together with the political geography and demography of the region, have allowed Turkey's neighbors to exploit the anti-Turkish activities of Kurdish groups to gain leverage in contentious bilateral issues with Turkey.

High-ranking Turkish officials have forcefully argued over the last several years that the Kurdish separatist armed struggle led by the Marxist-oriented PKK has found sanctuary in, and worse still, been assisted by Iran, Syria, and post-Gulf War Iraq.³⁸ Officials have paid visits to Tehran and Damascus to secure the two capitals' cooperation in arresting the PKK's supporters in their respective countries. In the wake of a new round of ambushes of civilians by the PKK in the southeast in late October 1993, Turkish Prime Minister Tansu Çiller dispatched her special envoy to Syria, calling on "Turkey's neighbors to show whether they are friends of Turkey or not by taking all measures necessary against the PKK's use of their territories as sanctuary, training ground, and source of weapons."³⁹

The Kurdish question has adversely affected Turkey's relations with its allies as well. The United States and Germany in particular have incorporated into their overall approach to their relations with Turkey a substantial human rights dimension concerning Turkish-Kurds. The protection of Iraqi-Kurdish autonomy in Northern Iraq by coalition forces stationed at the Incirlik Airbase at Adana and the United Nations embargo on Iraq have also contributed to tensions in Turkish-American relations largely because of their high political, economic, and social burdens on Turkey. As mentioned previously, Turkey has lost annual revenues of around \$250–300 million from the oil pipeline that pumped Iraqi oil to the Mediterranean, in addition to several billion dollars in bilateral trade with Iraq lost due to the UN embargo. These losses have in turn contributed to high rates of unemployment in southeastern Turkey, where social tension and political violence have escalated dramatically since the end of the Gulf War. The deteriorating social and economic context has provided a most fertile ground to the cause of the PKK.

The question of the future status of Iraq is, therefore, of utmost relevance to Turkish interests in terms of the stability of its democratic regime, its economic well-being, its foreign relations, and even its territorial integrity. The international

38. Prime Minister Demirel raised this tricky problem publicly at almost all his press conferences. For example, see Demirel, *Third Press Conference*, also, *Basbakan Demirel'in Dorduncu Basın Toplantısı (The Fourth Press Conference of Prime Minister Demirel)*, Ankara, mimeographed, 28 March 1992.

39. *Cumhuriyet*, 28 October 1993.

community's failure to bring about a democratic Iraq has been undermining Turkish domestic and foreign policy interests enormously.

Water and Subversion

Both Iraq and Syria are believed to be supportive of the PKK in retaliation for the water loss they have suffered since Turkey's huge new Atatürk Dam, not too far from the Turkish-Syrian border, began drawing water from the Euphrates River in January 1990.⁴⁰ Turkey is the upstream country for the Euphrates and Tigris river systems. It has honored a pledge made in 1987 to release a minimum of 500 cubic meters of water per second from the Euphrates where it crosses the Turkish-Syrian border. Turkey tries to assure Iraq and Syria that it will not use the water as a political weapon. However, both countries insist on an agreement based on their terms, which seek a return to the pre-1990, de facto regime of unobstructed flow into Syria or, failing that, the apportionment of the waters among the riparians. President Saddam sent warning signals to Turkey in spring 1990 to intimidate Turkey into restoring the status quo ante.

Post-Gulf War Iraq has an additional grievance against Turkey, namely the active Turkish contribution to the US-led coalition against Iraq. Syria, which has lost Iraq as an ally on the water issue, is in a position to harm Turkish interests more by indirect means in peacetime. As noted previously, the Turkish security establishment seems to be convinced that the PKK would not survive without tacit but extensive Syrian support. The state of Turkish-Iranian relations on the subject is not much different.

Proliferation and the Absence of Regional Arms Control

These tensions in Turkey's relations with its southern neighbors occur in the context of major efforts by each one of them to acquire weapons of mass destruction of various sorts, including possibly the qualitatively different nuclear weapons capability. During the second Gulf War, Turkey was potentially vulnerable to chemical-weapon-armed Iraqi Scud missiles while at the same time it lacked a modern chemical defense capability. Two Patriot missile interceptor units were briefly deployed in southeastern Turkey during the war to assuage fears of Scud attacks. Syrian and Iranian tactical ballistic missiles (TBMs) and chemical weapons pose equally dangerous potential threats. Nor can one dismiss lightly developments that might be interpreted as signs of Iran's interest in acquiring a nuclear weapons capability.

Turkey seems to have shunned the TBM option in the 1980s, when its southern neighbors were aggressively pursuing it, in order to discourage missile proliferation in the Balkans. For, given the Greek-Turkish conflict, Turkish procurement of TBM systems would probably have fueled a qualitatively new arms race in southeastern Europe. Moreover, some defense analysts argue that a TBM capability would not offer Turkey deterrence against the TBMs of its southern neighbors.⁴¹ It is possible that

40. For a review of the water issue from the Turkish perspective, see Ali Ihsan Bagis, "The Euphrates and Tigris Watercourse Systems: Conflict or Cooperation? The Turkish View with Special Reference to the Southeastern Anatolia Project," *Turkish Review of Middle East Studies* (Annual), vol. 7 (1993), pp. 215-237.

41. Sitki Egeli, *Taktik Balistik Fuzeler ve Turkiye (Tactical Ballistic Missiles and Turkey)* (Ankara:

Turkey has chosen to counter the TBM threat to its south by going for a modernized air force, as described in the next section .

Turkey, a party to the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), has sustained its rejection of the nuclear weapons option despite the general post-Cold War erosion of confidence in the safeguards system of the international non-proliferation regime. In the new environment a number of states (for example, pre-Gulf war Iraq and North Korea) have been identified as having come dangerously close to a weapons capability. Moreover, Iran is suspected of entertaining nuclear weapons aspirations while Ukraine's pledge to join the NPT has not yet been ratified. In a trilateral agreement it signed on 14 January 1994 with the United States and Russia, Ukraine has committed itself to eliminate nuclear weapons from its territory. On the other hand, so long as Russian-Ukrainian relations are dominated by mistrust, Ukraine may find it difficult to completely ignore the nuclear weapons option.

In short, Turkey is surrounded by a new situation in which several regional players have demonstrated considered interest in nuclear weapons capability as an instrument of state policy. While admittedly the situation is still evolving, the long-term implications of current trends would be highly destabilizing if they indeed resulted in nuclear weapons proliferation to Turkey's south and north. Turkey strongly feels that the strengthening of IAEA safeguards and security assurances to non-nuclear weapon states are a matter of urgency in the new international environment.⁴²

For long, energy-deficient Turkey was undecided even about the merits of developing nuclear energy for civilian use—in contrast to Iran, an oil-rich country which embarked on an ambitious civilian nuclear energy program in the 1970s.⁴³ The Turkish Atomic Energy Authority, established in 1956 under the authority of the Prime Ministry, has been mandated by law to oversee the use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes.⁴⁴ The idea of meeting the country's energy needs at least partly by reliance on nuclear energy has been debated on and off for the last twenty-five years. Recent governments seem to have taken a more committal stand, as evident in the following statement by the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources:

Undersecretariat for Defense Industry, 1993), pp. 91–99.

42. Interview with Turkish Foreign Ministry Officials.

43. Reza Amrollahi, head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran, said that his country has purchased two 300-megawatt reactors from China and had "signed documents with Russia on two 440-megawatt V.V.R. plants." Amrollahi noted that although there were 424 nuclear power plants worldwide in 1993, there was little nuclear power generation in the Third World. Iran, however, seeks to "derive 20 percent of its electric power from atomic energy" by the year 2005. "Nuclear Energy Chief on Iran's Program, Israel," *FBIS-NES-93-166* (30 August 1993), p. 75.

44. For the complex distribution of responsibility on nuclear energy among the various branches of the Turkish bureaucracy, see Yalçın Sanalan, "Role of the Turkish Atomic Energy Authority in Nuclear Power," *Proceedings of the International Nuclear Technology Forum*, organized by The Chamber of Mechanical Engineers (Ankara, 12–15 October 1993), pp. 128–135.

Demand in Turkey for electric energy increases by eight to ten percent annually. It will not be able to meet its energy needs by the year 2000 unless additional measures are taken... The Atomic Energy Authority is studying the suitability of three localities as possible sites for nuclear energy plants.⁴⁵

The problem of armaments and arms races in the Middle East confronts Turkey not simply as a question requiring a major review of national defense and procurement policies but as a systemic problem as well. Turkey is subject to an interlocking and highly comprehensive system of arms control and confidence-and-security-building-measures (CSBMs) within the framework of the CSCE. In contrast, the Middle East/Gulf region to the south has been politically and legally unconstrained in armaments acquisitions and financially capable of engaging in a process of uninhibited arms buildup. To compensate for this imbalance, Turkey has kept parts of its southeastern region outside the CSCE's zone of application. Despite this, however, the fact that Turkey's southern neighbors are not subject to any meaningful arms control or CSBM regimes places Turkey at a structural disadvantage when considering its security priorities and options in the region.

Islamic Fundamentalism and Radicalism

Radical Islam is a potential threat that goes to the very heart of Turkey's domestic socio-political order. Ever since Ayatollah Khomeini's revolution took hold in Iran in 1979, Turkey has been apprehensive about Iran's declared goal of exporting the revolution to other Muslim countries. Iranian foreign policy has become more pragmatic under President Rafsanjani. Still, the power of domestic fundamentalists and Islamic radical forces in Turkey has been much strengthened under the impact of both regional and domestic developments, and the regional developments are generally believed to have been controlled by Tehran.

Turkish concerns about present-day Iranian policies notwithstanding, the history of modern Turkey's relations with Iran under the Pahlavis was one of friendship and close cooperation, and the positive legacy of that period and the need for prudence in a highly volatile region will probably lead Turkish decision-makers to maintain a dialogue with Tehran to help defuse tensions. For Iran, too, has security concerns about Turkey, the most important of which is Turkey's alliance with the United States and its membership in NATO. The United States and Iran view one another as principal threats to their respective interests and security. As seen from Tehran, therefore, a Turkey closely allied to the United States is inherently a threat to Iranian interests. Conversely, Turkey derives an element of security from its alliance with the US and NATO in a region where bilateral tensions and regional instabilities seem to have the potential to explode into aggression.

45. *Sabah*, 19 March 1994.



The first section of this paper emphasized the importance that Turkish security thinking has historically attached to the country's geostrategic location as a guide to security and defense policies. In addition to the vulnerabilities inherent in its location at the dividing lines between East and the West, North and South, Turkey shares mutual borders with seven countries. The Russian Federation, separated from Turkey by an inherently fragile Georgia, is in reality the eighth neighboring country. Under the combined impact of the overpowering legacy of several centuries of Turkish rule in the neighboring regions and contemporary tensions, the nature of Turkey's relations with its neighbors can best be described as normal but subject to wide fluctuations over time.

The second and third sections of the paper analyzed how post-Cold War developments in the former Soviet Union, the Balkans, and the northern Middle East have touched on Turkish interests and helped spur new initiatives and policies. Turkey went through an early stage of euphoria about anticipated new opportunities and a peace dividend that the phasing out of the Cold War and the disintegration of the Soviet Union initially seemed to promise. Prompted by a desire to take advantage of the new openings in Eurasia, in particular, Turkey engaged in an active diplomacy with the former southern Soviet Republics and the post-Communist Balkans. A series of adverse developments and trends, and Turkey's own limitations, eventually forced a more sober assessment of what the post-Cold War world had to offer in terms of opportunities, risks, and threats. Among developments that have spurred a renewed sense of insecurity about the emerging new external environment, the following rank at the top of the list: the unsettled nature of Russian domestic politics in which ultra-nationalists and Communists have been gaining strength; Russia's re-embrace of an imperial foreign policy towards the former southern Soviet Republics; the threat of a Balkan war as a result of the acute instabilities generated regionally by the Yugoslav war; the political and military conflicts that have seized the northern Middle East; and the intense emphasis on military power among Turkey's neighbors to the south. How is Turkey moving to meet these security concerns?

Turkish Security and Defense Policies

This section will focus on the military dimension of Turkish policies designed to cope with the risks and threats perceived to exist in the new political-military environment around Turkey. First, it will present a more focused review of post-Cold War perceptions of risks and threats. Second, it will discuss the reorganization and modernization plans of the Turkish Armed Forces for the 1990s.

Perceptions of Risks and Threats

Risk and threat perceptions of Turkish officials provide the key to understanding the rationale behind Turkish security and defense policies. Deep instabilities in the regions directly adjoining Turkey have contributed to a general decline in mutual perceptions of security regionwide, and in Turkish security perceptions in particular. The country has, in turn, given priority to enhancing its ability to deter aggression and to defend its territorial integrity in the event that deterrence fails. Turkish officials have approached the question of Turkey's defense capability with a persistent sense of urgency

especially since the Gulf War. The late President Turgut Ozal, the bold architect of Turkish solidarity with the anti-Saddam coalition in the second Gulf War, outlined his view of the new security environment, and the appropriate defense policy, in a major speech before the War Academies in Istanbul on 15 February 1991:

First look around Turkey. There are eight countries... If the Soviet Union somehow disintegrates in the future, the numbers will increase. The Caucasus is a problem region. The Balkans is a problem region. These are historical facts. In our South, too, there is turbulence. A revolution has taken place in Iran. It is a Shiite state. It looks threatening. It sends threatening signals. In the Arabian peninsula, where there is no democracy, the likes of Saddam may emerge. Turkey is situated at a very critical piece of (political) geography. Therefore, we need an armed forces which possesses deterrent power.

Military officials have echoed similar views persistently throughout 1992 and 1993. At the heart of the Turkish threat perception lies the theme that Turkey sits at the center of the “Region of Crisis” where potential risks bred by local conflicts radiate toward Turkey.

The Ministry of Defense has recently articulated a highly coherent view of the new security environment and the possible sources of threats:

The threats and risks confronting or threatening the security of Turkey today, which has become a frontline state instead of its old flank status, are substantially different from those in the past. They no longer are merely the military forces of countries that could be potential threats, as in the old days. At the same time they include political, economic and social instabilities, class conflicts, religious national and ethnic conflicts, domestic or regional struggles for power and influence, religious fanaticism, and terrorism. On the other hand, because its geopolitical and geostrategic location places Turkey in the neighborhood of the most unstable, uncertain and unpredictable region of the world, it has turned into a frontline state faced with multiple fronts. It is at all times possible for the crises and conflicts in these regions to spread to and engulf Turkey.⁴⁶

In an unclassified study of post-Cold War threats reportedly undertaken by the office of the Chief of General Staff and made public in early November 1993, one meets with greater precision in the elaboration of Turkish perceptions.⁴⁷ After drawing

46. Foreign Minister Hikmet Cetin, *Statement Before the TGNA, The Commission on the Plan and the Budget*. Mimeographed. (Ankara, 17 November 1993), p. 3.

47. T.C. Milli Savunma Bakanligi (Ministry of Defense), *Savunma Politikasi ve Turk Silahli Kuvvetleri—*

attention to the global and regional instabilities and uncertainties that have increased since the end of the Cold War, the study cites region-specific sources of concerns, among which are the revival of Russian nationalism, Russian-Ukrainian tensions with respect to the Black Sea Fleet and the Crimea, the civil war in Georgia, the Armenian-Azeri war, Russian intervention in local conflicts, the continuing role of the Middle East in promoting international terrorism, and “the excessive arming by and hegemonial aspirations of Middle Eastern countries.”⁴⁸

This list of security concerns is not substantially different from those that General Cevik Bir, Chief of Operations at the General Staff Headquarters, elaborated earlier in 1993, when he stated that,

Iraq, Syria, and Iran are countries that need to be followed with careful attention. One observes that Syria is bent on arming herself rapidly. Iran, determined to consolidate its Revolution by increasing its armed power, is expected to complete this program by the year 2000. Moreover, it is common knowledge that some countries in the region possess weapons of mass destruction (chemical weapons and ballistic missiles) and are engaged in efforts to own nuclear weapons. As they support terrorism, they also extend support to PKK terrorism against Turkey and are lax about drug trafficking.⁴⁹

Although Greek-Turkish relations fall outside the focus of this study, a brief look at the role of the “Greek threat” in Turkish armaments programs and force modernization would offer a more thorough picture of the dynamics behind the Turkish effort. Even during the Cold War, Turkey felt that risks and threats to its security were multi-directional, a situation that became more acute in the post-Cold War environment. Greece stands out as only one among the many security risks and threats. Accordingly, the ongoing Turkish modernization program has been driven by the perceived need to meet greatly increased multi-directional security challenges. The desire to maintain a naval balance in the Aegean has probably been the only area where the “Greek threat” has been heavily responsible for most of the proposed modernization effort for the Turkish Navy. In contrast, the threat for Greece is perceived to emanate from “the East,” meaning Turkey. Since 1984, this has been incorporated into the official Greek defense doctrine. In the post-Cold War era, Greece perceives potential Macedonian and Bulgarian irredentism and the fate of the Greek minority in Albania as possible long-term risks and threats. Aware that the ability of those post-Communist states to pose a military challenge to Greece will remain very limited for a long time, Greece has concentrated on a combination of diplomatic and economic pressures against Albania and Macedonia, for example, imposing a total blockade on the latter in March 1994. The “Turkish threat,”

Beyaz Kitap 93 (*Security Policy and the Turkish Armed Forces—White Book 93*), (Ankara. 1993), p. 25.

48. Reported in *Cumhuriyet*, 3 November 1993, p. 6.

49. General Cevik Bir (Office of the General Staff), “NATO’nun Yeni Stratejisi ve Turkiye,” *Savunma ve Havacilik (Defense and Aviation) 2* (1992), pp. 17–18.

on the other hand, continues to dominate Greek military thinking to a degree possibly unknown in Cold War years, operating as the single most important driving force behind Greek armaments programs.

Briefly, then, Turkey perceives itself “to be surrounded by much instability (and to be) faced with potential security challenges of great complexity and diversity.”⁵⁰ The measured ambiguity in the description of the risks and threats indicate that Turkish officials prefer not to sound provocative or adversarial. This careful language may be explained also by the difficulty in specifying sources of threats to one’s security when instability and fluidity are the main features of the external environment. It is the dangerous potential of local conflicts to get out of control and to spill into Turkey that makes the pervasive instabilities in the neighboring regions and states of so much concern.

Defense Policy Making

A brief description of the political and institutional framework within which decision-making on security and defense policies takes place may be helpful in understanding the domestic context of Turkish policy, starting with conceptual clarification. A close reading of the literature suggests that the Turkish national security establishment employs the term “defense policy” to refer to a set of broad political goals, guiding principles and preferences which in the American sense would more appropriately be termed “security policy.”⁵¹ Defense policy, as is traditionally understood in American literature, is more or less implicitly derived from a reading of the organization of the armed forces and from their operational posture. This study will attempt to use the terms “security policy” and “defense policy” with their American meanings as much as possible when discussing the equivalent phenomena in Turkey. Some ambivalence will still be unavoidable because of the limited amount of primary sources available to the public.

As fitting any liberal parliamentary political system, the government in power is the highest authority that decides on Turkish security policy. The National Security Council is the key organ; it is mandated by the constitution to deliberate and make recommendations to the government on security policy and its implementation. It is chaired by the President and includes the Prime Minister, the Chief of the General Staff, the Ministers of National Defense, Interior and Foreign Affairs, and the commanders of the three armed services and of the Gendarmerie. The government is also constitutionally responsible for the preparation of the Turkish Armed Forces for the defense of the country in support of the goals established by the security policy.

The Chief of the General Staff has constitutional authority to make a major input into civilian decision-making. Not only is he, along with the three chiefs of the services,

50. Chief of the General Staff General Dogan Gures, “For Justice and Civilization—The Strategic Involvement of Turkey and Restructuring of the Turkish Armed Forces,” *NATO’s Sixteen Nations*, 38:4 (Special Issue 1993), p. 16.

51. The Ministry of Defense, *White Book 93*, pp. 25–35.

represented on the National Security Council, but he is directly responsible to the Prime Minister and thus has easy access to the highest office of executive power.

On the basis of the security and defense policies established within this political and institutional framework, the General Staff develops appropriate defense plans. A vital phase in defense planning is the elaboration of the Strategic Target Plan (STP), a classified document which sets out the kinds of weapons to be procured for the Turkish Armed Forces (TAF), and their missions, for ten-year periods.⁵² The STP comes under review every two years in order to accommodate possible changes in defense requirements in response to changes in the security environment. The ten-year plan is used as the basis for budgetary requests.

Turkish security and defense policies continue to be guided by the country's position as a member of the North Atlantic Alliance and its integrated military wing. The decision by NATO at the Rome Summit in November 1991 to revise its military doctrine and force posture has found its reflection in Turkish thinking and planning as well, contributing to a major restructuring of the Turkish Land Forces. Turkish officials reiterate that "taking part in collective defense systems and carrying out the responsibilities entrusted to it in this context" forms one of the basic principles of Turkish security policy.⁵³

Turkey is unique in NATO, however, because no other ally is surrounded by all three of the world's most unstable and conflict-ridden regions. The Gulf War was the first post-Cold War crisis to bring the winds of war to Turkey's doorstep in summer 1990; no other NATO ally faced the threat so directly. A short while later, the Balkans and the Southern Caucasus turned into theaters of armed conflict. Consequently, even though NATO's new defense concept has advocated "reduced forward presence," Turkey has decided to uphold the older concept of forward defense.⁵⁴

It is important to remember that while the Atlantic Alliance forms the principle pillar of Turkish security policy, NATO's deterrent and defense roles have undergone drastic changes in the post-Cold War era. Turkey formally expresses confidence in NATO's deterrent power against the new types of risks outlined in NATO's New Strategic Concept. It seems to believe, or at least hope, that in a regional crisis in which Turkish security might be jeopardized, NATO solidarity would operate, at a minimum to the extent that it did during the Gulf crisis. On the other hand, Turkey seems to be aware of the serious erosion in NATO solidarity in the post-Cold War era. More specifically, the nature of the Turkish-American security relationship, the pivotal element for Turkey in NATO, has changed drastically.⁵⁵ Turkish-German defense

52. *Ibid.*, p. 35.

53. Minister of Defense Nevzat Ayaz, "Deterrent Shield—Turkish Security and Defense Policy and Its Defense Industry," *NATO's Sixteen Nations* 38:4 (Special Issue 1993), p. 19.

54. Bir, "NATO'nun Yeni Stratejisi...", *op. cit.* note 49, p. 18.

55. The post-Cold War era has forced a redefinition in US-Turkey relations away from an almost exclusive preoccupation with defense cooperation to a strong emphasis on non-military issues such as democratization and human rights. Several communication facilities and bases under American command in Turkey have been phased out and grant assistance has been terminated, to be replaced by loans at scaled

cooperation, also of immense value to Turkey's efforts to fulfill NATO tasks, is being phased out.⁵⁶ Against this background, the direction in which the Turkish Armed Forces expect to evolve becomes all the more important for Turkish security.

The following pages will focus on the military force that Turkey plans to maintain and/or develop by the year 2000 in the context of the new security environment.

Turkish Armed Forces

The TAF have been undergoing major restructuring and reorganization since November 1991 when NATO formally decided at the Rome Summit to redesign its force structure within the context of the New Strategic Concept. The ultimate goal envisions substantially reorganized and modernized armed forces by the year 2000.⁵⁷

Revised threat perceptions drive the political-military logic behind the reform in the TAF. The General Staff has apparently concluded that in view of the political and technological developments in the world, the possibility of aggression by surprise attack has decreased. It takes additional comfort in the fact that Europe has been transformed into a monitored security zone with an unprecedented degree of transparency in military affairs.⁵⁸ On the other hand, the new security environment breeds numerous threats from multiple directions, as previously discussed. These changes in the nature of risks and threats in the external environment have led Turkey to restructure its land forces and to undertake an ambitious modernization program in all three services.

Both programs, initiated during the Ozal regime, have been pursued with a sense of urgency. Like her predecessors, Prime Minister Tansu Çiller, who came into power in July 1993, pledged to intensify modernization of the TAF in order to enhance their deterrent and defensive capabilities.

On the other hand, modernization has proved to be enormously costly. Unofficial estimates of the modernization bill for the next ten years range from \$10 to \$20 billion. The armaments burden comes at a time when the United States, the major source of military assistance to Turkey throughout the Cold War years, has been cutting and restructuring foreign aid and military assistance in order to reduce the federal budget deficit. Beginning in 1993, grant military assistance to Turkey ceased and was replaced by concessional loans. The following table indicates current trends:

down levels. At the same time, the United States has urged Turkey to improve its human rights record concerning Turkish-Kurds. (See, "Christopher Gives Turks Plan to End Rights Abuses," *New York Times*, 13 June 1993, p. 11.) Recent reports in the Turkish press point to the growing criticism in the American Congress about Turkey's handling of Kurdish separatism, intimating a possible linkage between future military assistance and human rights practices in Turkey. The general decline in the relationship notwithstanding, the United States appears to recognize that Turkish cooperation would be extremely useful, if not at times indispensable, in coping with issues of security and stability in the broader Gulf region, as it has been in the enforcement of the no-fly zone in Northern Iraq since May 1991.

56. From interviews with Turkish Foreign Ministry officials.

57. "2000'li Yillarin Profesyonel Ordusu" (The Professional Army in the Year 2000), *Savunma ve Havacilik (Defense and Aviation)* 1 (1992), pp. 76-78.

58. Ayaz, "Deterrent Shield..." op. cit. note 3, p. 16.

**Table 1: American Military Assistance to Turkey
1990-1994**

Year	Amount (in \$US millions)	Type
1990	412.2	Grants
1991	500.0	Grants
1992	475.0	Grants
1993	450.0	Loans
1994	405.0	Loans

Source: Carol Migdalovitz, *Greece and Turkey: Current Foreign Aid Issues* (Washington, D.C.: Library of Congress, Congressional Research Service, December 27, 1993), p. 13.

Nearly ten years earlier, then-Prime Minister Turgut Ozal established the Defense Industry Support Fund (DISF Law No. 3238, 7 November 1985). It was designed to generate new resources to pay for the TAF's modernization needs while laying the foundation for an indigenous defense industry. It is administered by the Undersecretariat for Defense Industry (UDI) within the Ministry of National Defense. The Defense Industry Executive Committee, the core group composed of the Prime Minister, the Chief of the General Staff and the Minister of National Defense, serves as the executive body. The DISF's funds come from various state and semi-official sources, among which are levies on cigarette and alcohol consumption and the net revenue of the publicly-owned National Lottery. Between 1986 and November 1993, the Fund's income reached roughly \$5 billion, of which \$3.8 billion was spent on weapons procurement as well as on projects tendered to the representatives of the infant defense industry.⁵⁹ The six areas to which funds have been allocated and commercial orders have been awarded are: guided missiles, defense electronics, aviation, armored-vehicle, ship-building and conventional weapons and ammunition industries.⁶⁰

Finally, advanced equipment acquired from NATO allies (primarily the United States and Germany) under a redistribution made possible by the CFE Treaty—an arrangement known as cascading—has been an invaluable external source of equipment modernization. Turkey has received 922 tanks (100 Leopards and the rest M-60A3s and -A1s), 550 armored fighting vehicles, 72 artillery systems, and 46 RF-4 aircraft in 1993 within this framework.⁶¹

Turkish Land Forces. The Turkish Land Forces (TLF) consist of four army commands, reflecting the country's long, widely separated borders. The First Army is located in the area of Turkish Thrace and the Turkish Straits, the Second Army in the southeast, and the Third Army in the east along the former Turkish-Soviet border. The fourth, the Aegean Army, is situated in the west, and while Turkish authorities declare

59. From interviews with UDI officials.

60. For a general statement on the state of the defense industry, see, Vahit Erdem (then-Undersecretary of UDI) "Constituting A Defense Industry Infrastructure," *NATO's Sixteen Nations* 38:4 (1993 Special Issue), pp. 89-95; Ministry of National Defense, Undersecretariat for Defense Industry, *Turkish Defense Industry Product Catalogue*, in Turkish and English, 231 pages (Ankara, 1993).

61. From interviews with Turkish Foreign Ministry officials.

Table 2: Major Weapons Procurement and Co-Production Projects, Turkish Land Forces

Quantity	Description	Comment
1698	Armored Combat Vehicles.	Turkish-American co-production in Turkey. 400 delivered.
2936	HF/SSB wireless radios.	Turkish-British co-production in Turkey.
14	Mobile radar complexes.	Turkish-French co-production.
18	C3 systems.	Turkish-American co-production.
95	General purpose helicopters (Black Hawks and Super Pumas).	45
120	Attack helicopters (Cobra and Super Cobra).	110 to be supplied by US assistance; 10 through direct procurement.
	Stinger missiles and modern anti-aircraft artillery.	Co-production.
822	M-60 A3 tanks.	Delivered by the US under cascading arrangement within the CFE ceilings.
100	Leopard tanks.	Delivered by Germany under cascading arrangement within the CFE ceilings.
174	35mm anti-aircraft guns and fire control systems.	Co-production.
36	Multiple Launch Rocket Systems.	Direct procurement of launchers from the US. Co-production of missiles in Turkey. 12 MLRS have been procured.
22	Unmanned aerial vehicles.	Direct procurement.
	Military 4x4 and 6x6 trucks and vehicles.	Local production.

it to be a training command, Greece sees it as a threat to the Greek islands facing the Turkish coast in the Aegean.

The TLF are now based on smaller, more capable, mobile and flexible units. Brigade/battalion formations have replaced the old division/regiment structure. Restructuring has resulted in a substantial decrease in overall personnel strength and, therefore, in the number of units. The quantitative decrease has been planned to be offset by qualitative improvements. Together with personnel reforms, these innovations are designed to transform the army into a professional one within a few years.⁶²

The modernization program has been designed around several key capacities deemed to be required by the TLF in the new security environment. Heading the list of priorities are greater mobility, higher firepower, reliable C3 (command, control, and communications) systems and facilities, and air defense. While the inherent value of these capabilities for an army is self-explanatory, the need for enhanced mobility and mobilization capacity deserves to be strongly stressed in the Turkish case, owing to the

62. For the restructuring and modernization of the Turkish Land Forces, see General Muhittin Fisunoglu (then-Commander, Turkish Land Forces), "Türk Kara Kuvvetlerinin Reorganizasyonu, Dis Takviye Kuvvetleri ve Evsahibi Destegi," ("The Reorganization of the Turkish Land Forces, Reinforcement Forces and Host Country Support,") *Savunma ve Havacilik (Defense and Aviation)* 6 (1992), pp. 24-27; General Ismail Hakki Karadayi (Commander, Turkish Land Forces), "The Turkish Land Forces—Duties, Responsibilities and Organization," *NATO's Sixteen Nations*, 38:4 (1993 Special Issue), pp. 29-34.

Table 3: Major Procurement and Co-Production Projects, Turkish Air Forces.

Quantity	Description	Comment
240	F-16s.	Turkish-American co-production in Turkey. 130 delivered.
10	Airborne refuelling aircraft.	Direct procurement.
282	Electronic warfare suites for F-16s.	Turkish-American co-production. 27 delivered.
40	SF-260 D basic trainer aircraft.	Turkish-Italian co-production.
4	AWACS.	Direct procurement.
	F-4 and F-5 modernization.	Local.
40	F-4G aircraft.	US assistance.
50	A-10 aircraft.	US assistance.
	RF-4E aircraft.	German assistance.
90	Low level air defense systems.	Turkish-French-Euromissile Consortium co-production.
52	CN-235 Light transport aircraft.	Turkish-Spanish co-production. 5 delivered.
95	Multi-purpose helicopters.	45, direct procurement from US (Sikorsky); remainder to be Turkish-American co-production in Turkey.
10	Advanced Hawk air defense missile systems	
12	Oerlikon air defense systems	
40	Stinger portable air defense missiles.	
	AMRAAM (AIM-120) air-to-air guided missiles.	Under study.
10	Patriot missile systems.	Under study.

acutely unstable regions and generally untrusting neighbors abutting Turkey's disjoint borders. Army aviation and target recognition, identification and acquisition are other capacities that have been emphasized in the modernization program.

Table two describes the major weapons procurement and co-production projects currently in progress for the modernization of the TLF under the sponsorship of the Ministry of Defense and the DISF.

Turkish Air Force. The defining role of modern air power and air defense systems in major war has possibly been the single most important lesson derived from the second Gulf War by the Turkish military. Coupled with the regional proliferation of tactical ballistic missiles, the war's lessons have convinced Turkish officials to pursue advanced capabilities in air power and air defense.⁶³

The Turkish Air Force (TAF) has been undergoing major modernization since mid-1984 when Turkey and the United States agreed on the co-production of 160 F-16

63. For the modernization of the Turkish Air Force, see Hakki Aris, "Türkiye'nin Hava Savunması: İhtiyaçlar ve Çalışmalar," ("The Defense of Turkish Air Space: Needs and Efforts,") *Savunma ve Havacılık (Defense and Aviation)* 1 (1993), pp. 72-74; General Halis Burhan (Commander, Turkish Air Force), "The Turkish Air Force: Restructuring and Modernization in the New Era," *NATO's Sixteen Nations*

C/D aircraft in Turkey by 1994. The original plans called for the manufacture of 152 aircraft in Turkey and eight in the United States. To date, 130 aircraft have been delivered. A second agreement reached in 1992 calls for the co-production of another 40 F-16s in Turkey by the end of 1996. There is anticipation that an additional 40 F-16s might need to be procured, depending on the circumstances prevailing after 1996. Needless to say, the F-16s constitute the main strength of the TAF. In March 1994, Turkey delivered the first two of the 46 F-16s that Egypt has decided to purchase from Ankara.

The F-16 program indicates the kind of capacities that the air force is seeking through modernization. Forward defense capability, to be used "if and when needed," seems to be a fundamental objective. Other capacities being sought as a matter of priority are electronic warfare systems, high-altitude air defenses, in-flight refuelling and advanced C3I.

Major weapons procurement and co-production projects in progress for the modernization of the TAF under the sponsorship of the Ministry of Defense and DISF may be found in table three.

Turkish Naval Forces. The Turkish Navy's maritime role has been enhanced greatly in the post-Cold War era. Traditionally its mission was primarily conceived of in terms of the security of sea lanes in the Aegean and the eastern Mediterranean. While the Soviet threat was the prime concern, the Greek-Turkish conflict over the Aegean and Cyprus saw the navy, together with the air force, assigned a prominent deterrent role against this Balkan neighbor and nominal NATO ally. The opening up of the former Soviet republics in the Caucasus and Central Asia to world trade, in particular, and regional initiatives such as the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Zone, have endowed the Black Sea with a new potential to serve as a major route for commercial navigation between the region and western Europe. The possibility of an increase in the use of the Turkish Straits and Turkish seaports for the transport of petroleum and natural gas, for example, has already spurred the Turkish Naval Forces (TNF) to begin to think in terms of a new maritime strategy.⁶⁴

A review of the modernization projects for the TNF indicates that Turkey has chosen to replace a force consisting largely of old-vintage assets with new ones that would give the navy increased survivability against most regional opponents. Modernization is expected to provide strong air defenses, over-the-horizon firing capability, reliable C3 systems, electronic warfare capability, and long endurance.

Major procurement projects in progress that have been sponsored either by the Defense Ministry or the DISF for the modernization of the TNF are listed in table 4.

38:4 (1993 Special Issue), pp. 39-42.

64. For the modernization of the Turkish Naval Forces, see, Admiral Vural Bayazit (Commander, Turkish Naval Forces), "The Turkish Naval Forces—Changing Tasks," *NATO's Sixteen Nations*, 38:4 (1993 Special Issue), pp. 45-61.

Table 4: Major Weapons Procurement and Co-Production Projects, Turkish Naval Forces.

Quantity	Description	Comment
4	MEKO 200-class frigates.	German-Turkish co-production.
5	DOGAN-class fast patrol boats with guided missiles.	German-Turkish co-production.
4	AY-class submarines with Harpoon guided missiles and Tigerfish torpedoes.	German-Turkish co-production. US missiles
6	Mine hunter vessels.	Co-production.
8	KNOX-class frigates	US assistance.
	Navy helicopters.	Co-production.
	Support vessels.	Possibly local production.
24	Patrol boats.	Local production.
	Landing craft.	Local production.
	Auxiliary oil replenishment ship.	
	Modifications of S-2E anti-submarine aircraft.	

Conclusions

It should be clear by now to readers of this study that Turkey has an acute sense of being encircled by regions troubled by a range of tensions and conflicts. The possibility of these tensions and conflicts engulfing Turkey is not ruled out.

Most of the local strains and conflicts have a life of their own. In other words, they take place irrespective of Turkey, Turkish interests or Turkish policies. Yet some of them invoke, directly or indirectly, powerful Turkish interests. The status of Iraq, the future of Azerbaijan, the role of Iran, the future evolution of Russia, domestically and in its foreign policy, and the future of Turkey's relationship with NATO and the West are cases in point.

Iraq and Azerbaijan

How Iraq's future will evolve is of direct interest to Turkey because, first, it will affect the possible ways that the Kurdish question might unfold; and second, it will determine the outlines and nature (i.e., authoritarian or democratic) of the new power balance directly to Turkey's south.

The kind of domestic regime and foreign policy that Azerbaijan ultimately adopts, and whether it will be able to regain the twenty percent of its territory lost to the Armenians, are of utmost direct importance to Turkey because the final resolution of these issues will determine the structure and nature of the new power balance in Turkey's northeast and east. An Armenia much enlarged by the eventual incorporation of Nagorno-Karabakh and some core Azeri territory, and one inherently in a position to play off two regional powers, Turkey and Iran, against each other, would not serve Turkish interests. Moreover, Armenia still has not formally denounced its irredentist claims on parts of Turkey.