

The New Trends of Global Developments and Turkish World

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Today, the way that Turkey develops and interacts with the outer world is not absolutely the same as it was some 20-30 years ago. It is not only because that Turkey itself has changed together with all its interconnections with the outer world, but also for the reasons of crucial changes incurred in the developmental processes. As the consensus view of the development process disintegrated during the 1970s and 1980s, the content of international development also began to break down. Today there are two competing idealized views of development. The first, the "traditional view," maintains that development is about economic growth, which can be distinguished from other social, cultural, environmental, and political development issues in society. The second, the "modern view," maintains that development is an integrated process of change involving intertwined economic, social, cultural, political, and environmental dimensions. These two views of development lead to different perceptions of the substantive content of development, the importance of sovereignty, and the relationship between national and international law in the law applicable to development

Not since the end of the Cold War, and perhaps not since the early days of the Turkish Republic, has Turkey's external role been characterized by so many open questions:

- What place for Turkey in Europe?
- What risks and opportunities for Turkey in a conflict-ridden Middle East?
- How will Ankara deal with a changing Russia, an unstable Caucasus, and Central Asia?
- To what extent can a traditionally competitive relationship with Greece be moderated, against

a background of successive Balkan crises?

Turkey may be a pivotal state in Western perception, but uncertainties in transatlantic relations may make the very concept of the "West" unclear as seen from Ankara.

Above all, Turkey faces daunting political, economic, and social pressures, with implications for the vigor and direction of the country's foreign and security policies. The range of possibilities is now quite wide, from a more globalized Turkey, more closely integrated in Europe and the West, with a multilateral approach toward key regions, to a more inward-looking and nationalistic Turkey, pursuing a more constrained or unilateral set of regional policies.

This article aims at describing the challenges and opportunities facing Turkey in the international environment at a time of extraordinary flux and offers some conclusions about its further possible interactions with the Turkic world. The analysis should be of interest to contribute to informed debate about the country's role in the modern stage of globalization.

As Turkey enters the 21st century, it faces a troubled environment, *domestically* and *internationally*. Uncertainties regarding the country's future and its external policies have increased significantly as a result of Turkey's own economic crises and political turmoil, troubling developments in nearby regions, and challenges further afield.

As a consequence, the task of understanding and assessing Turkey's international role has become more complex and far more difficult.

During the Cold War, Turkey acted as a bulwark against the expansion of Soviet influence into the Eastern Mediterranean and Middle East. With the end of the Cold War, Turkey has become a more assertive and independent actor on the international stage. Where once Turkey primarily looked West, today Turkey is increasingly being pulled East and South as well. As a result, Turkey has been forced to redefine its foreign and

security policy interests and to rethink its international relationships within turkic world too.

If Turkey were a small state located in Antarctica or the South Sea Islands, these changes might matter little. But Turkey stands at the nexus of three areas of increasing strategic importance to the:

- (1) United States and Europe,
- (2) Balkans, the Caspian region, and
- (3) Middle East.

Thus, how Turkey evolves is important, both to the United States and to Europe. Turkey's sheer size, moreover, gives it important geostrategic weight. Turkey's population is currently about 68 million—the second largest in Europe behind Germany—and may be close to 100 million by the middle of the 21st century.

Changes in the international environment are placing new pressures on Turkish policymakers and the Turkish public and are having important effects on Turkish policy. This is particularly true given the magnitude and rapidity of developments in adjacent regions, whether in the Balkans, the Caucasus, or the Middle East. These pressures alone would be stressful for Turkish foreign and security policymaking, which has a tradition of marked conservatism.

At the same time, Turkey confronts changes on the domestic scene that are arguably even more significant in their foreign and security policy implications. Turkey remains embroiled in a severe economic crisis that most Turks view as political at its base. *The way Turkey responds to these economic and political challenges will shape Turkish society, perhaps for decades to come.* It particularly refers to the determinations that Turkey makes in terms of Daglig Karabakh issue. The dichotomy faced nowadays in the Caspian region, nowadays is a great testimony to the situations aforementioned. The further actions do not only need fast decisions, but also the harmonised and comprehensive approaches in all matters. It will also be a leading determinant of Turkey's freedom of action and the direction of Turkish policy on the international scene during the global developments in the coming years. That is why the developmental processes, not only in the sphere of economy, but in the areas of harmonized policy pursued between domestic and foreign policies will probably explore key issues at the nexus of internal change and Turkey's foreign and security policy

behavior, against a background of economic and political turmoil. These include the future of the state, the rise of new political and economic actors, the changing role of public opinion, the primacy of internal security considerations in Turkish policy, and the future role of Turkey's Islamists and nationalists.

The relationship with the United States has been a key aspect of Turkey's foreign and security policy since 1945. Despite fears on both sides that this “strategic relationship” would become less strategic and less important with the end of the Cold War, the relationship has retained its significance for both countries. Indeed, the relationship has arguably acquired even greater significance in the post-Cold War strategic environment—a significance underscored by events since the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, and the looming confrontation with Iraq. This sustained importance reflects the unsettled character of regions surrounding Turkey and the primacy of these regions in today's security calculus. It is also a reflection of the changes in Turkish society, the influence these changes have had in the way America sees Turkey, and in Turkey's ability to play a larger regional role.

In the broadest sense, Turkey's relationship with the United States is also linked to Turkish perceptions of globalization, a phenomenon closely associated with America's political and economic role.

The bilateral relationship remains heavily focused on security matters, and for good reasons given the character of the environment facing Turkey and the proximity of areas where American security interest are engaged. This is particularly true in relation to places such as Afghanistan, the Caucasus, and Central Asia—areas at the nexus of American counterterrorism and regional security strategies.

Nonetheless, the relationship faces pressures for diversification, and there are substantial, relatively underdeveloped opportunities to extend bilateral cooperation on investment, trade, and the nonsecurity or “soft” security aspects of regional policy.

In the last decade Turkey has emerged as a more active and important actor on the international stage. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, Turkey rediscovered a world of interests and affinities stretching “from the Balkans to Western China”—areas that had been largely absent from the mainstream Turkish fore-

ign policy debate.

Recently, we have started to feel more activism on the increase of Turkish external policy. With few exceptions, this activism has been evident largely in traditional areas of interest such as Europe, as well as areas of perceived risk, above all the Middle East.

Turkey is, at base, a conservative society with a conservative approach to public policy in most spheres. Almost 80 years after the founding of the Turkish Republic this remains true. However, Turkey today is in the midst of a period of important political change that could have a profound effect on its foreign policy evolution. Azerbaijan, Middle Asia and the other Islamic countries want to more rigorously be inter-related with the socio-economic and cultural values of Turkey and Turkish world, and for that reason they are looking ahead that several significant, open questions will shape the Turkish foreign and security policy debate. They will also shape to a considerable extent the character of Turkish relations with the West. These key questions concern the future shape of Turkey as a society, Turkey's international identity, its regional behavior, and its place in a globalized world.

As a matter of fact, nowadays simultaneously with the burgeoning of Turkey's power, most of Turkey's neighbors have declined in strength. Of those that pose potentially the most immediate security problems for Turkey—Russia, Iran, Iraq, and Syria—all have seen their economic and military fortunes sink in the 1990s. Greece, Turkey's neighbor and NATO ally, probably also deserves inclusion in any list of Turkey's most immediate security threats. Although it does not fit the pattern of a declining power, Greece has a much smaller population base (11 million) than does Turkey (68 million) and thus probably would find it difficult indefinitely to maintain parity with Turkey's growing strength.

Turkey was the first state to recognize the independence of all the former Soviet states, and it did so even before the formal collapse of the Soviet Union. Ankara has not succeeded in establishing a full-blown Turkish "sphere of influence" in the Turkic states of the former Soviet Union, as initially had been envisioned. However, it has established the basis for greater influence in the region with relatively significant trade relations, energy projects, people-to-people efforts, and a

near-annual Turkic summit.

The countries of G8's concern about Balkan instability, Russia's future direction, Iranian fundamentalism, Iraqi aggression, and the durability of the Middle East peace process all create the likely situation in Turkey, especially for its policymakers to reinforce its close relations in these areas.

The military, of course, is often a dominant player in Turkish foreign policy. Institutionally, it exercises its influence primarily through the National Security Council (NSC), half the members of which are military leaders. Much of the military's authority derives from its moral leadership, particularly when military and security (including domestic security) issues are at stake, and from its ability to intimidate, based on its historic interventions in Turkish politics. It is widely assumed, for example, that the military takes the lead in decisions regarding Turkish policy in northern Iraq and the fight against the PKK.

Much of Turkish determination in foreign-policy decision-making is shrouded in secrecy. The primary reference points now seem to be the presidency, prime ministry, and military, with the foreign ministry nevertheless still an important player. Which takes the lead in a crisis seems to be a matter of personality, political circumstance, and the issue at hand to be handled in the Caucasus region.

Taken together, a post-Cold War Turkish foreign policy that is increasingly bold, multi-directional, as Turkey becomes a more prosperous, militarily formidable power among neighbors mostly in decline. But all these feature still do not exclude the conditions where Turkey should have an exceptional ability in the regional conflict management issues.

Turkey is also expected to play a worthywhile role in the Turkish world at least in two more issues—in to the "movements for redefining the internal boundaries of the nation" and "in the movements to secede from the nation-state" These both processes have their places in the current history of the Turkish world which need maximum determination and integrity form Turkey in their foreign policy support rendered to the countries to solve these problems. Daglig karabakh is also among these issues, and needs its immediate solution.