

Shifting of Turkish foreign policy

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Executive summary

The Turkish Republic has a great history with major defeats and victories in its past. Since the fourteenth century Turkey was part of the Ottoman Empire. During the following centuries, the Empire expanded and covered areas which are nowadays known as Europe, Asia and North Africa. The twentieth century was a difficult period for the Ottoman Empire. During this century, the Empire lost much of its territory in Europe. In the same century, the Ottoman Empire fell, which caused an independent country to rise in 1923 which is still now known as the Republic of Turkey. The founder of the Republic of Turkey was Mustafa Kemal Pasa, who later became known as Atatürk. Turkey was now an independent and secular state which made many reforms in order to 'Westernize' the state.

Surely, the foreign policy of a state may change due to different factors. During the Atatürk government, the main goal of the foreign policy was to introduce the new Turkish State internationally. After crucial developments and reforms, Turkey established close ties with the West. For instance, close relationships were established with the European Union and the United States. In addition, Turkey became member of the NATO in 1952.

However, since the end of the Cold War, a kind of rethinking has begun in the field of Turkish foreign policy. The change in the political system had a great influence in decision making processes. The end of the military coup in 1980 was an opportunity for Turkey to enhance its relations with the West. In 1983 became Turgut Özal Prime Minister and the relations with the West strengthened. However, the rise of Erbakan in 1996 changed the idea of Turkish foreign policy due to its Islamic orientation. The ideas of Erbakan was to further the relations of Turkey with the Arab nation. The term regionalization started with his administration.

With the rise of AK Party in 2002, the shift of Turkish foreign policy is continued. This shifting behaviour is associated with the name of Ahmet Davutoğlu, which he explains in his book 'Strategic Depth'. The new introduced foreign policy 'zero problems with neighbours' also assumed as the use of soft power has a great role in Turkish foreign policy. For instance, the attempts of Turkey to solve conflicts with Syria ended in hard power. Almost the same situation happened in the case of Israel. Turkey chose to support its Arab neighbours and downgraded its diplomatic ties with Israel. Although, in what extent the policy is successful is questioned by world leaders.

The regionalization of Turkish foreign policy is also applied in the Central Asian region. After the dissolution of the Soviet Union became Turkey a role model in the region. Turkey was secular, modern, democratic and had a free market economy, despite it was a Muslim country. The core values of Turkish foreign policy in Central Asia and Caucasus are to maintain balanced relations

with regional countries, create stability and security in the region and last managing transport of energy resources in the region.

So, the shift in Turkish foreign policy from West to East is obvious. There are many factors that have a great influence on the policy. For instance, the creation of new independent states in Central Asia after the collapse of the Soviet Union, the rise of the Islamic-oriented party AKP and the prolonged accession to the European Union. Turkey is since 1999 engaged with negotiations and is several times rejected. The negative results of negotiations to the membership of the European Union provoke Turkey to drift away from Europe. However, the changing Turkish foreign policy to the East does not mean that Turkey is turning its back on the West.

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List of abbreviations

AKP	Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi (Justice and Development Party)
BDP	Barış Ve Demokrasi Partisi (Peace and Democracy Party)
CHP	Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi (Republican People's Party)
ECO	Economic Cooperation Organization
EEC	European Economic Community
EU	European Union
KRG	Kurdistan Regional Government
MENA	Middle-East and North-Africa
MHP	Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi (Nationalist Movement Party)
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
PKK	Kurdistan Workers' Party
SU	Soviet Union
TFP	Turkish foreign policy
UN	United Nations
US	United States

Introduction

One of the main issues in world politics nowadays is Turkey's shifting foreign policy. Governments in Europe are worried that Turkey leaves the West and looks for new partnerships with Iran and the Islam world. As Stefan Nicola, UPI Europe Correspondent mentions, "not long ago, Turkey was considered a steadfast U.S. ally, situated geographically near Asia and the Middle East, but much closer to Europe when it comes to politics" (Nicola, 2010, para. 1-2). Turkey chose to focus on the Western world and the relations with the Islamic regions were at low level. Contrary, the new principles of Turkish foreign policy could increase Turkey's strategic importance to NATO and upgrades US-Turkish relations in the Euro-Atlantic setting (Rennick, et al., 2010, p.5).

Nowadays, Turkish foreign policy is in transformation. This change is mainly due to the rise of the Islamic-oriented party AKP and the prolonged accession to the European Union. After the creation of new independent states in Central Asia had Turkey more possibilities and options to focus its foreign policy.

For Turkey, the end of the Cold War produced dramatic changes in its neighbourhood. Turkey applied a different foreign policy than nowadays. Under the leadership of Atatürk, Turkey had a foreign policy focused on the West. During the Cold War, this behaviour continued. The collapse of the Soviet Union created a shift in the Turkish foreign policy and continued under the leadership of the AKP government. Not directly in 1989, but with the current ruling AKP government this shift started slightly. Obviously, one of the main reasons of the shift in foreign policy is the changing political situation. Turkish politics saw different political parties with different ideologies in the past years. In addition, the ongoing negotiations between the European Union and Turkey have great influence for the shift of Turkish foreign policy. The relation between Turkey and the EU decreased and is analyzed from Turkey's and EU's perspectives simultaneously in this dissertation.

The 'new' Turkish foreign policy applies new principles in order to achieve its foreign goals. In this case, the 'zero problems with neighbours policy' of Ahmet Davutoğlu, the 'Turkish role model' and 'soft power' is crucial. He explains those principles in his book 'strategic depth'.

The change of the foreign policy of a country has influences worldwide which leads to my central question:

"What are the external reactions against Turkey that focuses more on the Middle-East?"

This question is researched in order to explain the foreign relations of Turkey with the Middle East, European Union, the United States and the former Soviet Republics. All these relations are linked together and have many impacts on Turkish foreign policy decisions. The research method to carry out the research for this thesis is mainly desk-research. Literature is studied in books, reports, institutional papers and news articles. Also, an interview is held with Mr. Ali Yazgili, one of the representatives of the “Turkije Instituut” in The Hague.

Chapter 1. History of the Turkish Republic

Since the end of the Cold War, the foreign policy of Turkey changed gradually. To understand the differences in foreign policy between the past and today, one first has to look at the history of Turkey. Therefore, the developments and changes in Turkey's politics and international relations are briefly explained.

1.1 The Ottoman Empire

The history of the Turks begins with the migration from Central-Asia to the Middle-East. The 'original' Turks are the descendants of the Oghuz Turks. The Turkish Republic nowadays was in the earlier centuries under the name of the Ottoman Empire. The Ottoman Empire extended from the fourteenth to the sixteenth century to the East and the West. About 200 years after the founding of the Ottoman Empire, the Turkish capital moved in 1453 to Constantinople, which known as Istanbul. Constantinople increased into the largest metropolis in Europe and the Mediterranean region ("Het vroege Osmaanse Rijk, 1300-1683", n.d., para. 2).

The Ottoman Empire was during the nineteenth century known by European countries as 'the sick man of Europe'. After a defeat in the Russian-Turkish war of 1877-1878, the Ottoman Empire lost at the Congress of Berlin one-third of its territory and one-fifth of its population. The empire was under Russian pressure forced to give up Bosnia and Herzegovina, Romania, Serbia, Bulgaria, Cyprus and other areas.

During the First World War, the Ottomans chose the side of Germans and had to sign the treaty of Sèvres. Istanbul and parts of Anatolia came under the control of a foreign occupation force, consisting of British, French, Italians and Greeks. Signing the Treaty of Sèvres was a disadvantage for the Ottoman Empire. The Turkish army under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal Pasha (later Atatürk) gained a victory in the final war against Greece, in Turkey known as the Turkish War of Independence (1921 -1922). After the Turkish conquest, the borders of Turkey determined and the Treaty of Sèvres cancelled and was replaced by the Treaty of Lausanne (1923). ("Modernisering en Ontbinding van het Rijk", n.d. para. 1&5).

1.2 The Turkish Republic

After the fall of the Ottoman Empire, the Republic of Turkey was founded in 1923 by Mustafa Kemal Pasa. Later, 'Atatürk' was added to his name, which means the father of the Turks. At the Conference of Lausanne, new borders were established after the expulsion of the Greeks from Western Turkey. In the same year became Turkey officially a republic, with Atatürk as its first president. After, Mustafa Kemal unfolded his vision, Kemalism. According to Zürcher (2004) is the term Kemalism a flexible concept. "It never became a coherent, all-embracing ideology, but

can best be described as a set of attitudes and opinions that were never defined in any detail" (p. 181). Atatürk did many reforms in order to westernize the country. These reforms included the introduction of the Latin alphabet and the separation of religion and state (Zürcher, 2004, p. 206).

1.2.1 The Turkish political developments

After Atatürk's death in 1938, he was succeeded by İsmet İnönü. In 1945, when the Second World War ended, Turkey's political system, economic policies and foreign relations undertook a major change (Zürcher, 2004, p. 206). The changes in the history of Turkish politics had a major effect on the shift of Turkish foreign policy. However, the changes in the past 10 years also play a major role.

Politics in Turkey is governed through a multi-party system. In this system multiple political parties are allowed to control the government. Until the 1950s, the CHP was the only party in the government. From 1950 to the military coup in 1960, the Democratic Party governed the Turkish Republic. This party was a right wing and the first opposition party against the CHP. After the military coup in 1960, the Democratic Party was banned and the military decided to write a new constitution to withdraw from politics. The military coups in the history of Turkey had significant impacts on the political parties and elections. Due to the coups in the past years, the constitution of Turkey changed. The new constitution in 1960 contained the creation of a National Security Council (MGK). According to Zürcher (2004), "the NSC gradually extended its influence over government policy and became a powerful watchdog, sometimes replacing the cabinet as the centre of real power and decision-making" (p. 303). The National Security Council is one of the most important actors involved by the Turkish foreign policy. After the military coup in 1960, new political parties arose and the Justice Party came to power with success till the second military coup in 1971. The Justice Party was seen as the continuation of the Democratic Party. The period 1971-1980 was a changing period between the Justice Party and the CHP. The political situation was unstable during and after the military coup in 1980. Several political parties were banned from the elections and the Welfare Party by Necmettin Erbakan was established. However, because of the Islamic ideology, this party was also banned from the elections in 1983. The first party that came to power after the military coup was the Motherland Party with Turgut Özal as Prime Minister. This change in 1983 was of great importance for the West relations of Turkey. "Turkey's progression in establishing inner stability and creating an open market economy brought Turkey closer to the West" ("Losing Democracy: Turkey under the AKP", 2012, para. 4). The party governed from 1983 until 1991 with other Prime Ministers. The True Path Party came to power in 1991 after a break of almost 10 years, because of political disturbances in Turkey. The party was excluded from the elections in 1983 due to its conservative ideology as the terminated Justice Party.

In 1996, Erbakan became Prime Minister in coalition with the True Path Party. The idea of Erbakan was to enhance the relations of Turkey with the Arab nation. The term regionalization started with his administration. The main foreign policy objective of Erbakan was to achieve a strong unity among Muslim countries. Therefore, he created the Developing Eight which stands for the improvement of member states' position in the global economy (Developing8, 2012). Other examples of anti-Western attitude of Erbakan were the pro-Islamic changes, such as building mosques in Istanbul, lifting bans on the wearing of religious head wear (Çelik, 1999, p. 91). According to the NSC, the Welfare Party was a threat for Turkey's stability and security. The party banned in 1997, because of the too Islamic ideas and activities. In 1999, the National Assembly changed again in a centre left government with the Democratic Left Party (Danilkina, I. A., 2000). Furthermore, since 2002, the AKP governs the Turkish Republic under the leadership of Erdoğan. "The AKP portrays itself as a pro-Western party in the Turkish political spectrum that advocates a conservative social agenda and a liberal market economy" ("Justice and Development Party", 2012, para. 1). Furthermore, the AKP is a centre-right conservative and more Islamic-oriented political party.

1.2.2 Contemporary politics in Turkey

The Grand National Assembly of Turkey consists of several political parties. The 3 main parties are the AKP, CHP and MHP. The BDP has a small number of seats in the Turkish government.

Political party	Number of deputies
Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi (AKP)	326
Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi (CHP)	135
Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi (MHP)	51
Barış Ve Demokrasi Partisi (BDP)	29

Figure 2: division of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey (2012).

The Republican People's Party was founded by Atatürk in 1923. It is the oldest political party since the establishment of the Turkish Republic. The main ideology of the CHP is Kemalism and which is therefore faithful to the founding principles and values of the Republic. The CHP is the main opposition party in the Grand National Assembly. The position of this party is considered as left of centre, thus in opposition with the AKP's centre-right vision. "Throughout the 1970s, CHP defined its ideology as the "democratic left" and aimed to "change the order" through social reforms" (Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi, 2010).

Another major political party is the MHP, Nationalist Movement Party. The MHP was founded in 1969 by Alparslan Türkeş and is a far-right political party. After the military coup in 1980, the

party was banned and many leading members were imprisoned. After this, members joined various Islamist parties because of their conservative attitude, like the Anavatan Party. The end of the military coup ensured the reform of the political party. The main ideologies of the MHP are nationalism, social conservatism and idealism. The term idealism is associated with the 'grey wolves' also known as the idealist youth. This organization is an ultra nationalist wing of the MHP, with the ideology of achieving a nationalist, conservative and idealist Turkish youth (Ülkü Ocakları Education and Culture Foundation, 2012). The MHP is also considered as an anti-capitalist and anti-communist political party.

The AKP, Justice and Development Party governs the Turkish Republic under the leadership of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan. The AK Party was founded in 2001 and with its 326 members in the modern government, it is the largest party in the Turkish government. It is established by a wide range of politicians of various political parties and a number of new politicians. In the general elections of 2002, the party had the majority of the votes by winning two-thirds of parliamentary seats. In the same year became the present President Abdullah Gül prime minister, however, in 2003 he was appointed as the president of Turkey. In the general elections of 2007, the AKP won again with 47% of the votes. The second cabinet was formed again under leading of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan. The outcome of the general elections in 2011 was not a surprise for the AKP. They won again with 49,8% of the votes ("Justice and Development Party", 2012, para. 1). With this victory, the AKP started its third consecutive term and governs for 10 years the Turkish politics.

Election date	Party leader	Number of votes received	Percentage of votes	Number of deputies
November 3, 2002	Recep Tayyip Erdoğan	10,763,904	34.26%	363
July 22, 2007	Recep Tayyip Erdoğan	16,327,291	46.58%	341
June 12, 2011	Recep Tayyip Erdoğan	21,442,206	49.83%	326

Figure 1: general elections

1.3 Criticism

The Republic of Turkey made an enormous change in the last 10 years, the country's economy grew rapidly and became a global player in the twenty-first century. All this improvements and reforms came in the Erdoğan government. Despite the AKP government gave the country a high status, it is still criticized by various parties, politicians and the Turkish society. First of all, the main opposition party CHP is the largest criticizing party. According to Kayaoğlu, "CHP is struggling to present itself as a viable alternative to Mr. Erdoğan's AKP" (Kayaoğlu, 2011, para. 8). As earlier mentioned, the CHP has secular ideas and wants to continue the philosophy of Atatürk. They see only themselves as the children of Atatürk. The supporters of the CHP are anti-AKP and blame the party as "new generation of grassroots leaders, influenced by Islamic ideas"

(Metz, 1995, para 5). The Islamic political parties were established after the military coup, because during the military government it was unauthorized to form political parties. When AKP came to power in 2001, it did many democratic reforms to join the EU. The anti-AKP supporters argued that this transformation of the AKP was just a trick to deceive outsiders. The 'Kemalist' part of the society asserts that the AKP is too Islamist and has a hidden agenda. For example the author Ergun Poyraz wrote various books arguing that both Prime Minister Erdoğan and President Gül were secret Jews in order to destroy the Republic of Turkey created by Atatürk (Akyol, 2012, para. 77). Ergun Poyraz always criticized in his books right-wing parties from the Erbakan government. In 2010, he wrote the book 'Takunyali Führer' criticizing the actions and expressions showing Erdoğan as Hitler.

Secondly, the AKP is also criticized by the Turkish society with their Islamic roots. In the past, when the government suspected that a party had Islamic tendencies, the military intervened with a military coup as in 1960, 1971 and 1980. However, those coups are no longer an issue, because of the changed influence of the military. In the period when the interventions occurred, demonstrations and criticized ideas were forbidden. Today, it is easier to criticize a political party or its ideas. For example before the elections in 2007, many anti-AKP supporters demonstrated in Ankara because Erdoğan is affiliated with an Islamist party. The criticism is just for Islam, the society argues that Erdoğan will change Turkey's system into an Islamic Republic like in Iran. One of the demonstrators in 2007 said: "We don't want to lose secularism. He's going to destroy the secular regime," Muge Kaplan said of Erdogan. "We don't want to become Iran." (Borg & King, 2007, para. 8).

Another aspect of the criticism in Turkey was the relation between Turkey and the United States. The government was criticized that Turkey became too dependent on the US and the NATO. The Turkish citizens became more anti-American and with several incidents, like the Cuban missile crisis and the Cyprus crisis in the period 1960-1980, Turkey decided to diversify its foreign policy. Therefore, the period after 1960 was in the case of relations between Turkey and the United States kind of cooling down.

Chapter 2. Time flow in Turkish foreign policy

According to Prof. F. S. Northedge, “Foreign Policy is the use of political influence in order to induce other states to exercise their law-making power in a manner desired by the states concerned: it is an interaction between forces originating outside the country’s borders and those working within them” (Rizwan, 2009, para.1). Turkish foreign policy has many changes and developments in its history. This chapter is an chronological overview of Turkish foreign policy through the years. The main focus is in the last part of this chapter. The current foreign policy concepts will be described in combination with the relation between Turkey and Middle East, the Caucasus, the US and the European Union.

2.1 1900 - 1950

As Zürcher (2004) mentions: “the Turkish Republic’s foreign policy throughout the period from 1923 to 1945 can be characterized as cautious, realistic and generally aimed at the preservation of the status quo and the hard-won victory of 1923” (p. 200). In this period Atatürk governed the Republic and had its own ideas of foreign policy. The main goal was to introduce the new Turkish State internationally. This idea was one of the principles of foreign policy during the establishment of the Republic of Turkey, which was driven during the Atatürk era from the Kemalism ideology. The most important of these ‘Peace at home and peace abroad’ is considered as the foundation of Turkish foreign policy (Criss & Bilgin, 1997, para. 8).

In 1932 became Turkey member of the League of Nations. Although, “Turkey’s policies during the Second World War have often been seen as immoral, but keeping out of the war was a great success” (Zürcher, 2004, p. 202, 205). Despite of this neutral standing, Turkey became after the Second World War and during the Cold War an important ally of the West. In 1945 Turkey joined the United Nations, in 1949 they became a member of the Council of Europe and in 1952 member of the NATO. Before the rise of the AKP in 2002, the Middle Eastern countries had a critical attitude towards Turkey. This was mainly due to the western-oriented foreign policy of Turkey. Also, since the establishment of the Turkish Republic, Atatürk claimed that Turkey should limit its ties with the Middle East due to the too Islamic identity of the area.

As Zürcher (2004) describes: “The United States of America, a pluralist, capitalist democracy, emerged from the war as the dominant world power and its example could not fail to impress many in Turkey, just as it did in countries all over the world” (p. 208). He points out with the war, the Second World War. This impression also affected the Turkish Republic in the mid twentieth century. During the Second World War, Turkey remained neutral. This was mainly because of the defeat of the Ottoman Empire in the First World War. However, after World War II, Turkey became an important ally of the US. In particular, when the Soviet Union became a threat for

Turkey this ally enhanced. The USSR was making allies in the Middle East against the West. So, it was obvious for Turkey to make allies in the same way. As it was clear that a nation could not maintain relations both with the US and the SU, Turkey “concluded that Washington should become its most important ally” (Çelik, 1999, p. 35). The relation with the Soviet Union in the 1920s and 1930s was of great importance for the Turkish foreign policy. However, the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact and the neutral standing of Turkey in the Second World War weakened the relations. In 1945, the Soviet Union notified that the friendship treaty with Turkey would not be renewed, unless Turkey met some conditions. Turkey did not accept the conditions and with the support of the US, it refused the Soviet demands (Zürcher, 1999, p. 208-209).

Since the friendship treaty did not renew, Turkey changed their position towards the Soviet Union and broke its close ties. However, trying to keep the tensions down, Turkey did this in conciliatory terms. When the Iron Curtain emerged during the Cold War, Turkey was surrounded by allies of the Soviet Union. Therefore, in 1950, Turkey applied for NATO membership and this is one of the reasons why Turkey aspired to membership. Certain West European countries argued that Turkey could not be a member of the organization. Reasoning that Turkey is not an Atlantic or a democratic country. However, Turkey wanted to become a part of the NATO and proved its loyalty to the West in the North Korean invasion of South Korea. Turkey sent 25,000 soldiers to the UN force in South-Korea and convinced the countries. In 1952 became Turkey a member of the NATO and “was celebrated by Turks as a great foreign policy success” (Çelik, 1999, p. 307).

After the Second World War was the westernization of Turkey intensive and one-sided, because of the pressure coming from the Soviet Union. Actually, the cooperation with Western institution, like the NATO, Council of Europe and the Marshall Plan was not only to enhance the security of Turkey against the Soviet countries. Those partnerships were useful for Turkey’s economic growth and development. Therefore, the foreign policy of Turkey in the period of 1945-1960 was more focused on the economy and how the country could develop in short time. This idea was first succeeded with the inclusion of the Truman Doctrine in 1947. With this inclusion, Turkey received foreign aid and military assistance from the US and was included in the Marshall Plan, “which was to provide massive financial support to European countries to help them rebuild their war-ravaged economies” (Çelik, 1999, p. 36).

Furthermore, with the insistence of the US, Turkey made regional alliances with its neighbours. As mentioned in the previous chapter, the Baghdad pact was one of the examples of the alliances. This pact was signed by Britain, Pakistan, Iraq, Iran and the US acted as an observer. Another example of a regional ally was the Balkan pact. Again under the guidance of the US, Turkey entered into the Balkan pact together with Greece and Yugoslavia. As the Baghdad pact, the Balkan pact was ineffective (Çelik, 1999, p. 37).

So, it can be concluded that Turkey made several foreign policy decisions with the interest of the United States. Mainly during the Cold War, Turkey was of great importance because of the geostrategic factor. Turkey bordered the Soviet Union and the Incirlik Air Base in Turkey could be used to gain information from the Soviet Union along the Black Sea region. In addition, As Çelik (1999) mentions, “American forces stationed in the Middle East used Turkish bases as a staging area during the U.S. intervention in the war in Lebanon in 1958” (p. 43).

2.2 1950 – 2000

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, Turkish policy makers assumed that the strategic importance of Turkey was in decline in the eyes of the Western world. Turkey’s full membership application to the EU was rejected. Because of this, TFP gained new perspectives. The collapse of the Soviet Union in 1989 created many Republics in the Caucasus, Central Asia and East Europe, and Turkey was surrounded by the new independent states. Turkey was now ‘safe’ to enhance relations with the Turkic-speaking republics like Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan. It was safe, because in the Cold War period, Turkey did not want to endanger its relations with Moscow. The alliances with those countries were strongly supported by the Turkish society, because of the shared ethnic, religious, cultural and linguistic ties. For example with Azerbaijan, “a feeling of pan-Turkic solidarity has prompted Turkish interest in expanding ties with the countries of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan” (“Turkey-Dissolution of the Soviet Union Foreign Relations”, n.d., para. 6).

The change in the international system, like the collapse of the Soviet Union emerged questions about the relevance of the NATO for Turkey and vice versa. In addition, the rejection of the application for membership to the EU in 1989 reinforced Turkey to define new foreign policies. Another reason to define new foreign policies was the power gap in the former Soviet territories (Aras, 2008, para. 3). The new foreign policy goal in the period of the Özal government and after his successor Demirel was for Turkey to act as a model for the countries of Central Asia and the Caucasus. Turkey was secular, modern, democratic and had a free market economy, despite it was a Muslim country (Çelik, 1999, p. 120-122). In 1992, Prime Minister Demirel visited the region to promote Turkey as a model country. The main idea of the visit was showing Turkey as an appropriate model than the Islamic alternative Iran. Turkey wanted to strengthen its oriental ties (Turkije Instituut, para. 3). With the rise of Prime Minister Erbakan in 1996, this idea was created. Erbakan was the leader of the Islamist, Welfare Party. His ideas were anti-Western. For instance, “he declared that he wanted to withdraw Turkey from NATO, end military ties with Israel and cancel agreements that allowed Americans to operate in northern Iraq through Turkish bases” (Çelik, 1999, p. 83). In the later decades, a part of this idea was followed by Davutoğlu. A major

power struggle between the Russian Federation, Iran and Turkey arose in the mid-1990s because of the power competition in Central Asia (Aras, 2008, para. 3).

The good relations with the new independent states started with the cultural, economic and technical aid agreements. The Central Asian countries and Azerbaijan was sponsored by Turkey for full membership in the Economic Cooperation Organization, which is a regional trade pact. However, in the mid-1990s, the economic resources of Turkey and Iran were not enough to play a pivotal role in the region. Therefore, Russia had a dominant political force in Central Asia. On the other hand, Turkey strengthened its bilateral cultural ties and diplomatic relations with the Turkic Republics and encouraged Turkish entrepreneurs to invest in the region. ("Turkey-Dissolution of the Soviet Union Foreign Relations", n.d., para. 6). In these years, the former Soviet Republics was a loss in Turkish foreign policy.

2.3 2000 -> present

As earlier mentioned, "foreign Policy is the use of political influence in order to induce other states to exercise their law-making power in a manner desired by the states concerned: it is an interaction between forces originating outside the country's borders and those working within them" (Rizwan, 2009, para.1).

Since 2000, Turkey's foreign policy has changed gradually. The ongoing negotiations that proceed almost 50 years with the European Union and the current ruling AKP government with Ahmet Davutoğlu as its Minister of Foreign Affairs gave the TFP a new perspective. Turkey seeks for other alternatives in its region, like the Middle East and the Caucasus.

Since the Second World War, the Turkish foreign policy was more focused on the West (the European Union and the United States), which changed with the end of the Cold War. A kind of rethinking has begun in the field of Turkish foreign policy. Especially in 2002, when AKP came to power. As before mentioned, AKP is more Islamic-oriented, thus, they focus gradually more on the Middle-East. The Ministry of foreign affairs explains its relations with the external borders as follows:

On the other hand, attaching particular importance to its Transatlantic ties Turkey is strengthening its relations both with the US and the European countries; while further developing its relations with the countries in the Balkans, Middle East and North Africa, Southern Caucasus, South Asia and Central Asia by making use of its close ties (Ministry of foreign affairs, n.d., para. 10).

This explains that Turkey wants to focus on the rest of the world, also called regionalization. However, it does not mean that Turkey will weaken its relations with the US and the EU. Turkey

needs to improve their relations both with East and West. “We need to adopt a realistic and constructive foreign policy approach which will not allow negative aspects to overshadow the positive ones” (Ministry of foreign affairs, n.d., para. 7). Turkey has also the advantage of being a bridge between the West and the Middle-East. Davutoğlu is aware of this geographic, religious and cultural position. Therefore, he argues in his book ‘Strategic Depth’ for variation in foreign policy: relations with several countries make Turkey less dependent on the great powers (Turkije Instituut, 2009, para. 2). With the collapse of the Soviet Union, TFP is also focused more on the independent states in Central Asia, the former Soviet countries and the Caucasus (Larrabee, 2011, p.3). According to Agarwal, the AKP government implemented the new TFP based on the next core principles: balance between security and freedom, zero problems with neighbours, proactive peace diplomacy or ‘soft power’, compatible global relations and active participation in global and regional issues (Agarwal, 2012, para. 4).

2.3.1 Neo-Ottomanism

As mentioned in the previous sections, Turkey was part of the Ottoman Empire. That means, the country has a common history with the present Balkan countries, Middle-East, most of North Africa and the Caucasus. Furthermore, the term neo-Ottomanism is nowadays linked with Turkish foreign policy under the leadership of Ahmet Davutoğlu. “Neo-Ottomanism is a Turkish political ideology that in its broadest sense, promotes greater engagement with areas formerly under the Ottoman Empire” (“Neo-Ottomanism”, n.d., para. 1). The term neo-Ottomanism is inconsistent with the Kemalist ideology, because with this ideology the country has leant westwards (“The Davutoğlu effect”, 2010, para. 1). On the other hand, neo-Ottomanism is leaning more on the neighbours of Turkey, like the Balkans and the Middle-East. This behaviour is also called, ‘regionalization’. So, focus on the regional nations and strengthen those relations.

However, Turkish foreign minister, Ahmet Davutoğlu has rejected the term neo-Ottomanism. He said: “Turkish Republic is a modern nation state and it is in the equal status with the countries in the region. We can build diplomatic relations with any big or small countries, which previously were in Ottoman geography in an equal status. This is what modern diplomacy requires” (“I am not a neo-Ottoman, Davutoğlu says,” 2009, para. 3). In contrast to the opinion of Davutoğlu, many critics say that the foreign policy of Turkey is moving away from the West towards the Middle-East (Palabiyik, 2010, para. 1). Looking from one side, this does not mean that Turkey applies a so called neo-Ottoman policy. But, Davutoğlu argues that the relations with the former Ottoman countries are important for the Turkish foreign policy. In that sense is the minister of foreign affairs Davutoğlu of opinion that Turkey should enhance relations with the regional countries in equal status.

2.3.2 Zero problems with neighbours policy

As earlier mentioned, TFP has been associated with the name of Ahmet Davutoğlu. This attitude is mentioned in the ‘zero problems with neighbours policy’ of Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu which he explains in his book ‘Strategic Depth’. The new introduced foreign policy ‘zero problems with neighbours’ also assumed as the use of soft power, has a great role in TFP. Davutoğlu argues that in many years Turkey has wasted efforts and time in conflicts with its neighbours. To sustain the pace of the economic, political and social developments in Turkey, stability in the neighbourhood is also important. Besides, “establishment of lasting peace and stability in the geography that we share with the Arab world is one of the main priorities in Turkey’s foreign policy” (Ministry of foreign affairs, n.d., para. 7).

According to Bülent Aras, there are three reasons why Turkey chooses to use soft power as new foreign policy behaviour. Firstly, the many reforms in the field of democratization, economic and political stability and the social and cultural achievement made Turkey a civil-economic power in the mind of the countries in the region. For instance, Turkish TV series are very popular in Arab countries and the country is more visited by citizens of the regional countries. Secondly, Turkey gained prestige in the Middle East. For example in 2003, when Turkey prevented US troops to use Turkish territory in order to entry Iraq. And so made the Davos issue a rising star of Turkey. Finally, the TFP keep all countries equal and avoid forming regional alliances or groupings. (Aras, 2009, para. 7-10).

In an interview with Sinan Ülgen, a visiting scholar at Carnegie Europe and the chairman of the Istanbul based EDAM think tank, he assumed that the zero problems with neighbours policy of Davutoğlu enhanced the influence of Turkey in its region. However, the rise of the Arab spring led the TFP under pressure. He mentions that ‘zero problems with neighbours’ essentially meant having zero problems with regimes” (Ülgen, 2011, para. 1). The main core value of the new TFP was using soft power in order to solve conflicts. In the Arab spring, Turkey tried to negotiate with the existing regimes, but was impossible to give support in times of turmoil. Therefore the zero problems policy failed in unstable times. Actually, the new foreign policy is successful just when the region is stable. In order to remain strong, to continue its influence in the region and act as role model in the region, Turkey has to invent new strategies (Agarwal, 2012, para 7-8).

2.3.3 Soft vs. hard power

Turkey uses political influence in terms of hard and soft power. As Daryl Copeland, research associate of Centre for International Policy Studies describes:

“Hard power is about compelling your adversary to comply with your will through the threat or use of force. Soft power is about attracting your partner to share your goals through

dialogue and exchange. Hard power seeks to kill, capture, or defeat an enemy. Soft power seeks to influence through understanding and the identification of common ground” (Copeland, 2010, para. 5-6).

With its new foreign policy concept, Turkey started to use its soft power in the region. Since the AKP elected in 2002, its foreign policy has been associated with the name of Ahmet Davutoğlu (Foreign Minister of Turkey). With this change, the foreign policy of Turkey has been changed also. “A previous Turkish foreign minister, İler Türkmen, said once that Turkish foreign policy was always reactive: waiting till something happened and then simply defending its own position” (Seker, 2009, para. 2). In the same way, Davutoğlu argues that “Turkish foreign policy had been unbalanced, with an overemphasis on ties with Western Europe and the United States to the neglect of Turkey's interests with other countries, particularly in the Middle East” (Taşpınar, 2008, para. 1).

2.3.4 Turkey as a role model

The Arab spring that rose in 2010 and the many tensions that arose in the Arab world had many influences for the Turkish foreign policy. The Arab spring in Egypt, Libya and Tunisia emerged due to the rebels of the Arab society against the government that caused bribery, corruption, unemployment and injustice in the country. The society rebelled to struggle for transformation and a democratic state. In this case, Turkey was seen as the role model for those Arab countries (Aktas, 2011, p. 168). Actually, the Arab spring was an opportunity for Turkey to gain influence in the region. In the same way, Turkey could create stability in the region due to its role model. Turkey is a democratic state with an Islamic government recently. According to Ülgen, “the unique cohabitation between secularism and political Islam is where the Arab world sees Turkey’s potential value as a model” (Ülgen, 2011, p. 5). As Mr. Yazgılı points out:

The whole Middle East is now upside down. Formerly was Saddam Hussein in Iraq, Ayatollah in Iran and Turkey was an ally of the West. With the invasion of Iraq the tensions in the Middle East started. And in the region, there is one model country with a Muslim and secular state, with huge economic growth. Thus, the region prefers a Turkish sample, with an open democratic market economy than an Iranian society that is a threat” (A. Yazgılı, personal interview, September 13, 2012).

According to Rami Khoury there are three battles raging in the Arab world:

- military vs. civilian authorities
- Islamists vs. secularists
- ethnic/tribal/sectarian identity vs. national identity

Idiz points out in his translated article in the Turkish newspaper *Milliyet*, that Turkey is familiar with the battles that emerged in the Arab World and made progress to solve these issues. He argues: “I am not claiming that Turkey has fully solved any of them, but we have made great strides in identifying the problems” (Idiz, 2012, para. 4). In terms of the first point, Turkey had solved several military coups in the past. The second point is still continuing with the AKP and the CHP parties in the government. As Turkey acts as a role model nowadays, it made serious progress on the listed problems and the Middle East countries can take a good example of these progresses.

Obviously, the application of the role model in Arab countries is not easy as in theory. The role model has to be applied by both sides Turkey and the Arab countries. The perspective of Turkey is quite simple. Firstly, according to Samuel P. Huntington, Turkey has to set up good examples for others and this snowballing effect will continue to other countries. Huntington argued, “democratic transitions and experiences set an example for the transitions that follow, which set an example for later transitions, and so on” (Ülgen, 2011, p. 14). In this way can Turkey act as a model in the Arab world because of what Turkey is and not because of what it does. Secondly, the cultural affinity between Turkey and the region is of crucial importance. According to Ülgen, a country finds Turkey’s experiences more meaningful and useful than of a non-Muslim country, this mainly because of the cultural affinity and the Islamic roots. For instance, the critic of the AKP towards the Jewish state and the support of the Palestinian in the Israel-Palestinian conflict. Finally, the demand for the Turkish role model is of crucial importance. Numerous public opinion polls suggest that there is need for the Turkish model in the region. A survey conducted by KA Research in 16 countries of seven Middle Eastern countries by the Turkish Economic and Social Studies Foundation (TESEV) found that 61 percent thought of Turkey as a model for Middle Eastern countries (Akgün & Senyücel Gündoğar, 2012, p. 6). So, it is quite clear that the region has a positive attitude towards the role model of Turkey.

Mr. Ali Yazgılı, program manager of the *Turkije Instituut*, preferred also to look through the perspective of the NATO. He assumed that, “the NATO countries do not know how the situation in the region is and Turkey can act as a role model and influence those countries to prevent conflicts” (A. Yazgılı, personal interview, September 13, 2012). This argumentation is right when you analyze the geographic situation of Turkey in this region. Turkey acts like a bridge between the West and East, it borders to several countries that causes tensions and conflicts in the region. In the same way is Turkey a crucial partner of the NATO.

The most developed country in the Middle East region is Turkey, with obvious difference from other Muslim countries. As earlier mentioned it operates as a bridge between East and West. Besides, the Islamic political identity of the government succeeded, despite it is quite criticized by

the society. So, Turkey is quite successful in playing the role model in the region (Aktas, 2011, p. 168).

2.3.5 TFP in the United States

Nowadays, the US is a critical partner in the issues of Afghanistan, Iraq and Iran. The wars in the Middle East countries, for example in Afghanistan (2002) and Iraq (2003) have affected the relations between Turkey and the US. After 9/11 the term 'War on Terror' was created. This term is referred to an international military campaign with the support of NATO-countries. Turkey was a close ally of the US by supporting it in the War on Terror. The Afghanistan war was a result of the invasion on 9/11 to destroy the al-Qaeda terrorist organization. Turkey was included in the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) which was established by the UN Security Council to support the US with its military. On the side of Iraq, the cooperation on the Kurdish issue is important for Turkey. "Moreover, U.S. cooperation with Turkey in the battle against the PKK has facilitated Turkish rapprochement with the KRG, which in turn has generated economic interdependence along the border and increased Turkish influence throughout Iraq" (Evin, et al., 2010, p. 39). The strong relationship between the US and Turkey decreased in the war of Iraq, because of the Kurdish sensitivity. The United States refused the Turkish troops in the war, because the US was afraid of 'a war within a war' (NOS, 2003, para. 3). In the case of Iran, The US and Turkey cooperate in order to prevent the use of nuclear weapons.

A new era in US foreign policy is the smart power, an approach towards external relations combined hard power tools, such as armed force with soft power tools, like diplomacy. Accordingly, the principles of Foreign Minister Davutoğlu's strategic depth are in line with the US approach (Rennick, et al., 2010, p.1,5). Obama sees Turkey as a bridge between the Muslim world and the Western world. At the US-EU summit in Prague, "Obama urged the 27-state union to admit Turkey as a member, saying that it would foster closer relations between the West and the Muslim world" (Van Auken, 2009, para. 22). Turkey has now a more active and multidimensional foreign policy. "The AKP argued that it could function as an interlocutor on Turkey's border with which Brussels and Washington had only limited ties and that a more active Turkey would also benefit the West" (Cornell, 2012, p. 14).

Chapter 3. Evidence of shift

It is obvious that Turkey changed its foreign policy concepts since the 2000s. For this reason, there are several evidences and influences in decisions. First of all, the complex negotiations between Turkey and the EU deteriorated the relations. Also, the collapse of the USSR, the new options and ideas of the current ruling AKP government influence the shift of TFP. In this chapter, the EU perspective, former Soviet Republics perspective and the regional relations are described, including examples and actions of TFP.

3.1 European Union perspective

The way to the European Union for Turkey began almost 50 years ago. In 1959, Turkey submitted a first request to the EEC for accession. In 1963, the Ankara Agreement was signed to take Turkey into a customs union and finally Turkey was an associated member of the EEC. However, Turkey was not a full member of the EU. Due to various reasons, the relation between Turkey and the EU were frozen, for example the invasion of Cyprus in 1974 and the military coup in 1980 (EurActiv, 2012). A formal application for membership in 1987 was therefore rejected in 1989, referring to the poor situation regarding human rights. “The tide turned with the 1999 Helsinki European Council, when Turkey’s long sought candidacy was recognized” (Narbone & Tocci, 2009, p. 23). This candidacy could be converted to full membership under conditions; Turkey should meet the Copenhagen criteria. In the period between 1999 and 2004, Turkey made many reforms in order to meet the Copenhagen criteria. In 2004, the European Council decided that Turkey met the Copenhagen criteria, in order to open accession negotiations. Until now, those negotiations are still continuing to accept Turkey as a member of the EU.

3.1.1 Political conditions

In order to become a member of the EU, a nation is required to meet certain conditions. For Turkey, those conditions are mainly political. Those conditions will be explained very briefly.

Human rights

The topic of human rights for the negotiations with the EU is maybe the most important part of the conditions. Human rights issues include the freedom of expression, freedom of religion, assembly and association. As well as the respect and protection for minorities is important, like the Kurds issue in Turkey.

In Turkey it is forbidden violating the honour of the nation or insulting the so-called 'Turkishness' (Turkije Instituut, para. 2). Known writers like Orhan Pamuk and Elif Shafak are indicted because of violating the honour of the nation. In 2006, the Armenian-Turkish journalist Hrant Dink was assassinated, due to the absence of freedom of press in Turkey.

Another aspect of the Copenhagen criteria is the respect for and protection of minorities. The Kurd population in Turkey is a minority with ca. 14 million out of 79 million citizens (CIA, 2012). Formally, the Kurds have the same rights as the Turkish citizens, but in practice there are differences. The main problem with the Kurds is the PKK that aims an independent Kurdistan and this leads to instability in the region. Not only Turkey is engaged with the Kurdish question. The neighbours, Iraq and Syria are also related and they are in cooperation to solve this question. In the past years, “Turkey undertook a number of important steps to allow Kurds to study (in private schools) in Kurdish dialects, and Turkey’s state-owned television and radio station began broadcasting in the Kurdish language” (Cook, 2008, para. 2). According to the European Commission, this progress is not enough to meet the conditions: “The Kurdish issue remains a key challenge for Turkey’s democracy; the democratic opening came to a virtual halt. Local government in the South-East suffered from the detention of numerous local politicians” (European Commission, 2012). The European Commission mentions also that the attacks of the PKK terrorists increased sharply. Hence, it is quite difficult for Turkey to become a member of the EU before solving the Kurd problem. As Turkey fights many years against the PKK, finding a solution for this problem is very complex.

Cyprus

Since 1974, the island Cyprus is divided in a South and North part. The North part is just recognized by Turkey and shares close ties with Turkey. On the other hand, the South part shares close ties with Greece. In 2004, the Southern part of Cyprus controlled by Greece became a full member of the EU. However, Turkey rejects to recognize the Republic of Cyprus. According to the Ankara Agreement Protocol, adopted by the European Community and its Member States, “Recognition of all Member States is a necessary component of the accession process. Accordingly, the EU underlines the importance it attaches to the normalisation of relations between Turkey and all EU Member States, as soon as possible” (EC, 2005). Therefore, the Cyprus issue is still an obstacle for Turkey’s EU road, because as mentioned in the 2012 progress report on Turkey, “there is no progress towards normalisation of bilateral relations with the Republic of Cyprus” (EC, 2005).

3.1.2 Developments

In the future, if Turkey fulfils its obligations and meets the Copenhagen criteria correctly, there is no restriction to become a member of the EU. However, Turkey is since 1999 engaged with negotiations and is several times rejected. Contrary, the relation between Turkey and the EU improved in the period between 2002 and 2006, because of the transformed Turkish political economy. Turkey was in its ‘golden age’ in terms of reforms to join the EU. According to Kutlay, researcher at the USAK Center for EU Studies, Turkey made many reforms both in the economic

field and the political field. In the sense of economy, the relations between businessmen and the state started to be institutionalized. The political aspects of reforms are in the sense that the human rights violations and torture have been reduced, the freedom of expression is improved and the death penalty is abolished. All this reforms had also an influence on Turkish foreign policy. The country stabilized its role in the world politics and sought ways to play a role in the unstable Middle East and Caucasus regions (Kutlay, 2009, para. 3). The new role of Turkey in the region or in other words the 'shift' was partly made possible by the rejection of the EU. After 2005, the relation between Turkey and the EU shifted in a negative way. According to Kutlay, the decreasing relation has to be analyzed from Turkey's and EU's perspectives simultaneously. His first point is that the AKP government does not have legitimacy concerns anymore as it had in the election period. In his second point, he argues that the domestic political agenda after the elections in 2007 was more important for the state and invested all its energy into the domestic politics. Finally, the EU's sincerity and objectivity was criticized by the Turkish society. In 2006, the EU froze the negotiations on eight chapters, until the Cyprus question had been solved. Contrary, the bans on Northern Cyprus were not lifted and this led to distrust among the society (Kutlay, 2009, para. 7-10). Turkey feels as not treated equally and not recognized as part of Europe. According to Ülgen, "the EU has adopted a seemingly discriminatory approach towards Turkey's membership bid and the standard formula for integration has not been applied in the same way as for other potential members" (Ülgen, 2010, para. 8).

The perspective from EU's point of view concerns two issues. Firstly, the prior EU's domestic political agenda. The crisis with the Constitutional and Lisbon Treaty arose discussion in the EU. The future of the EU was unclear, many European countries were unsure about the European identity. Therefore, the domestic political agenda was in that sense more important for the EU rather than the accession of Turkey. Secondly, the enlargements that occur between 2004 and 2007 dissatisfied the public level. Kutlay mentions that Turkey became the scapegoat and the long-term benefits were not accounted for a possible membership. "As a result, the EU preferred to cool down its relations with Turkey in order to calm down the European citizens" (Kutlay, 2009, para. 11). Thierry de Montbrial, director of the French Institute of International Relations, asserted in a seminar at the Bosphorus Institute that the EU is in great turmoil. According to the director, "the EU has enlarged too rapidly for political reasons without pushing integration comprehensively enough" (Gürsel, 2012, para. 2).

This negative approach of the EU causes a shift of the Turkish policy decisions. Because of this, Turkey seeks a multidimensional foreign policy. Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, the historical ties with the former Soviet countries are improved. The purpose is mainly to find

alternatives with respect to the EU (AIV, 1999, p. 23). According to Düzgüt & Tocci, (2009) “the EU is no longer a prominent issue on the political or public agenda” (para. 6).

Considering the poor conditions at the EU level, it is not very useful for Turkey to join the EU. These conditions are for example the euro crisis, the high debts of EU members Greece and Spain. If Turkey will join the EU, it goes without saying that it will face directly with problems. Turkey has a growing economy and this will lead problems for the EU. But on the other side the economy of Turkey can stimulate the crisis in the EU. Despite the tensions between Turkey and the EU, the trading relationship is still very strong. The customs union supports Turkey’s recent economic progress since 1995 (Head, 2012, para. 6) Despite the European recession, the EU continues to be the most important market for Turkish exports. Turkey needs the EU to continue its export growth and to achieve rapid economic growth as in the crisis of 2008-09. (Gürsel, 2012, para. 5).

Another aspect is the refusal of France and Germany. These two countries block the accession of Turkey. Because of this, Turkey’s interest disappears and moves towards other countries or regions for their own national interests. According to the Turkish Ministry of foreign affairs, “there has been a significant decline in the faith of our citizens in Turkey’s accession. This is due to the political hurdles we face in our accession process as well as the negative attitude and statements of certain European statesmen” (Ministry of foreign affairs, n.d., para. 4). As Gürsel points out, Turkey has no interest in fully adopting EU legislation and policies as long as full membership is not guaranteed (Gürsel, 2012, para. 6).

On the other hand, Turkey is part of the Western world from the establishment of the Republic in 1923. The EU is not only the Western ally for Turkey. The membership of NATO in 1952 played a key role in the relation with the West and moved Turkey closer to Europe. Therefore, to eliminate the European Union totally from the foreign policy agenda does not have any advantage for Turkey.

3.2 Former Soviet Republics perspective

As before mentioned, one of the main principles of TFP is the active participation in global and regional issues. This principle plays an important role in the former SU Republics. With the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1989, the Soviet threat for Turkey has disappeared. Five new Turkic-speaking republics like, Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan entered international politics as independent states. Accordingly, Turkey’s dependence on the United States has reduced. According to Larrabee, (2011) “the United States has to deal with a very different Turkey today than the Turkey during the Cold War” (p. 4). On the other hand, the new independent states in the Caucasus and Central Asia provided new opportunities for TFP. The role model of Turkey in the region was a failure in the mid 1990s, but is now again crucial in

the region. Several critics assumed that the Russian Federation was the only country with influence in the region. Especially because Turkey was focused on the EU and forgot Central Asia. The positive changes and reforms in the late twentieth century made Turkey a self-confident country. As Aras mentions, “both the rhetoric and practices in Turkish foreign policy have changed and, in result, a self-confident, active, dynamic and multi-dimensional foreign policy line emerged” (Aras, 2008, para. 6-7). According to this approach, the focus on foreign policy changed, Turkey began to act again as a model country for Central Asia countries.

Bülent Aras describes in the Turkish Weekly the new foreign policy of Turkey toward the Central Asia region as 3 principles:

- Balanced relations with regional countries like Russia and Iran.
- Create stability and security in the region.
- Transport energy resources of the region to world markets via its own territory.

First of all, the main principle of TFP is the zero problems policy with neighbours. The first principle includes this strategic aim of Davutoğlu. The reduced problems with regional and bordering countries will enhance the relations. The principle of acting as a role model in the region is crucial for Turkey, in the same way for Iran and Russia. Because of this, it is important that Turkey pays attention to good neighbourhood relations with Iran and Russia. So, this principle is of great importance to hold the stability and security in the region. In order to create stability and security in the region, it is important to deal with regional and domestic problems. In this field, the Turkish International Cooperation and Development Agency (TIKA) play an important role. The TIKA supports to achieve the foreign policy goals of Turkey with regard to provide funds to Central Asian countries since their independence. These funds are comparable to those in the European Union. In addition, Turkey provides also scholarships, technical assistance, training of representatives of civil society, military cooperation and military training to the regional states. Besides the various funds and aids of Turkey, businessmen and civil society organizations are essential to the stability and welfare of the region.

Another principle of TFP toward Central Asia is the transport of energy resources. In the Caspian Basin and the Central Asian region, Turkey seeks an active role. The aim of Turkey is to transport energy resources to world markets via its own territory. In other words, as Efegil, associate Professor at the Department of International Relations of Istanbul Arel University mentions, “by using its geopolitical advantage, located at the center of East – West, North – South and South – North energy corridors, Turkey desires to become an important energy transit country, energy terminal and the fourth energy source of the European Union, after North Sea, Russia and the Middle East” (Efegil, 2008, para. 9). Turkey should be used as an energy hub to transport the energy reserves. The project “East-West Energy Corridor, which is supported by the US and later

the EU, is the most important project in the transport of gas and oil. The aim is to connect Caspian region to the Mediterranean through Russia. In addition, to play an important role in the transport of gas and oil sector Turkey developed many projects. For instance, the Baku-Tbilis-Ceyhan (BTC) oil pipeline, Baku-Tbilis-Erzurum natural gas pipeline and Baku-Tbilis-Kars railway project. Furthermore, Turkey has gas pipeline projects, like Nabucco and Trans-Adriatic pipeline, for transporting Caspian and other gas reserves around the country to European markets (Aras, 2008, para. 6-14).

To conclude, the creation of new independent states in Central Asia and the Caucasus expanded Turkey's interest and geographic role towards the east. As a result, Larrabee argues that Turkey is less willing to follow the US. Turkey gained self-confidence with many reforms and developments. Therefore, it focused its foreign policy toward Central Asia and former Soviet Republics. The main principle of this policy was to balance its relations with regional countries like Russia, Iran, Pakistan, India and China and maintaining good relations with the U.S. and the European Union. According to Aras, "Turkey facilitates good relations with regional and international actors to gain strategic depth in Central Asia through bilateral relations with the countries in the region" and seeks a multi-dimensional policy to become crucial in the region (Aras, 2008, para. 13). In addition, Mr. Ali Yazgili, program manager of the Turkije Instituut asserted that Turkey should seek a multi-dimensional policy. Thus it should focus on the Middle East, Central Asia, and Africa and not only on the West. He explains that otherwise it will only use 50% of its capacity (A. Yazgili, personal interview, September 13, 2012).

3.3 Regional relations

One of the visible evidences of the shift in TFP is the relation with Syria. The Turkish government has developed close relations with Syria during the AK Party government. The main idea was to implement the 'zero problems with neighbours policy'. A good relation with Syria was a right start of Turkey's neighbourhood policy toward the Middle East. Turkey positioned itself as an honest broker in the region through a peace deal with Israel. The main reason was ending Syria's isolation from the international area. However, the close relations ended with the protests against the Assad regime. Turkey tried to convince Assad to implement a democratic governance structure, but it ended with a disappointment for the Turkish government. Since the Assad regime would not respond to Turkish advice and continues using force against its citizens, Turkey started supporting the Syrian opposition in August 2011" (Cebeci & Üstün, 2012, p. 14-15).

Nowadays, the tensions between Turkey and Syria are at the highest level. The Syrian attacks on the border have ensured the hostile attitude between the two nations. The US secretary of state Hillary Clinton mentioned: "We are outraged that the Syrians have been shooting across the border. We are very regretful about the loss of life that has occurred on the Turkish side. We are

working with our Turkish friends” (The guardian, 2012). Several diplomats from around the world have called for restraint. Furthermore, the Syrian attacks on the Turkish border called the NATO into action to discuss how to respond to these provocations. As a member of the NATO, Turkey gets support of this organization. In addition, “under Article 5 of NATO’s charter, an attack on one member of the alliance could be construed as an attack on the whole group, leading to possible joint retaliation against the offending party” (Ghosh, 2012).

As before mentioned, the new foreign policy value of Turkey is the use of soft power to maintain good relations in the region. As an example, Turkey provides humanitarian aid to civilians inside Syria. The refugee numbers are above 14.000 and Turkey started in 2012 to establish a buffer zone for those refugees (Cebeci & Üstün, 2012, p. 16). The relation with Syria was the most successful example of using soft power in order to solve conflicts. However, the Syrian attacks forced Turkey to request the NATO for the Patriot air defence system to protect the Turkish border against attacks from Syria. So, this means that Turkey should use hard power in order to protect itself and possibly solve the conflict. In other words, the ‘zero problems with neighbours policy’ of Turkey failed in this field.

The hostile relation with Syria influences also the regional position of Turkey. As Cebeci & Üstün mention: “The irony is that while Syria was key to Turkey’s Middle East opening during the past decade, the Assad regime in Syria now poses the most difficult challenge for Turkey” (Cebeci & Üstün, 2012, p. 15).

The first example is the relations between Turkey and Iran. The tensions between the two important countries in the region increase due to the hostile attitude between Turkey and Syria. Prime Minister Erdoğan compared Assad to Hitler, Mussolini and Gaddafi and demanded that he step down from power in 2011 (Cafiero, 2012, para. 9). On the other side, Iran and Syria are key allies. Iran’s deputy foreign minister, Hossein Amir Abdollahian, said: “Iran would not spare any effort to back the Syrian leadership” (Vatanka, 2012, para. 6). If Turkey turns its back to the Assad regime, it turns also its back to Iran indirectly.

As a second example is the recent tension between Turkey and Iraq that began with the criticism of the Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki by the Turkish government. In addition, the cooperation with Iraq’s opposition, like the former vice president Tariq al-Hashimi enhanced the tension. According to the Prime Minister of Iraq, Turkey’s new foreign policy is to intervene in the internal affairs of Iraq. After withdrawal of the American troops and the fall of Saddam, Iraq played an important role in the area of foreign policy close to its borders. And this role is in conflict with Turkey’s regional role in the Middle East. As Asadi argues, “Iraq’s close ties with Iran and its balanced stance on internal political developments of Syria, which have been construed as a sign of

Iraq's support of the incumbent Syrian President Bashar al-Assad, are in contrast with Turkish policy in Syria, which is based on regime change in that country" (Asadi, 2012, para. 2). This case is almost the same as the Iranian relations. The tensions emerge because of the hostile attitude of Turkey against Syria.

Another example of the implementation of Turkish foreign policy is the Israel – Turkey relations. In 1949, Turkey was one of the first Muslim countries to recognize the State of Israel. During the Cold War, the two nations built a secret partnership. They were both allies of the US and had strategic and political interests in the region. As Engin & Dargin (2011) mentioned "Israel has always been a U.S. ally, whereas almost all Arab Muslim-majority states have been against the U.S. and during the Cold War were closer to the Soviet Union" (para. 1). Therefore, the partnership was secret, otherwise the other Middle East nations could have a hostile attitude towards Turkey.

The Turkish-Israeli economic and military relation deepened in the eighties. The struggle against the PKK was one of the areas in which Turkey was diplomatically supported by Israel. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the strong relationship increased between two nations. In 1991, Turkey formally restored diplomatic relations with Israel. During the 90s there were many partnerships established, like a Turkish-Israeli trade council in order to raise trade and tourism. In general, the relations with Israel were until the 21st century in good condition. However, according to Engin & Dargin (2011) "those relations have taken a new face with the AKP's (Justice and Development Party) era because the new Turkish government has pursued a foreign policy which aims to give Turkey a key role in the Arab-Muslim world" (para. 1).

Not only had the change of Turkish foreign policy caused tensions between Israel and Turkey. According to Inbar, (2010) "Tensions have escalated since Turkey harshly criticized Israel following its invasion of the Gaza Strip in December 2008" (p. 40). After this invasion, Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan criticized Israel's conduct in Gaza at the World Economic Forum conference in Davos, Switzerland in early 2009 (Aljazeera, 2009). Furthermore, tensions increased as well in 2010 with the Israel attacks on the Gaza flotilla.

To implement the 'zero problems with neighbours' policy, Prime Minister Erdoğan said: "I do not think that Hamas is a terrorist organization. I said the same thing to the United States" (Cohen, 2011, para. 9). While the political party Hamas that governs the Gaza Strip is designated as a terrorist organization by both the EU and the US. This reasoning was actually to use soft power in order to solve conflicts. Although, the tensions between the two states did not reduced and Turkey neglected its role as a neutral mediator between Israel and its Arab neighbours. Therefore, Turkey

chose to support its Arab neighbours and downgraded its diplomatic ties (Cohen, 2011, para. 10). And again was the soft power effort of TFP in trouble as it is in unstable times.

To conclude, the evidence of shift in TFP is the implementation of zero problems with neighbours policy in the region. The AK Party government decided to adopt the instruments of soft power, which part is of the new policy. Turkey wants strong ties with its neighbours through the ‘zero problems with neighbours’ policy of Ahmet Davutoğlu. However, this policy failed in the most cases as in the Arab spring, the relations with Syria and Israel. The Arab spring was a failure for the new TFP because of the unstable region with many regimes and rebels. The Turkish government could not support the undemocratic states in times of turmoil. In terms of the Syria issue, Turkey used its foreign policy in order to solve conflicts. However, again, the soft power has not given any solution and Turkey was therefore forced to use hard power.

3.3.1 Economic field

Not only are the new policy areas the evidence of the shift in TFP. Economic aspects show that there is a shift towards the East. As Mango (1993) mentioned in the Middle Eastern Journal, Turkey is a model for MENA countries as “a secular, democratic, Muslim country aiming to achieve Western standards in cooperation with the West, by applying liberal free-market policies” (p. 730).

Nowadays, the MENA region is of great importance for the world economy. This region contains the majority of the world’s oil reserves. Therefore, the Middle East is quite attractive for Turkey because of the oil market. According to McGhee, (1990) “the area is also the single greatest repository of oil in the world possessing 70 per cent of proven world reserves and yielding 34 per cent of world production” (p. 1). The foreign trade with the Muslim world increased in the 1980s with the Iran-Iraq war. “Those countries became deeply dependent upon Turkey for transit access to the West and for Turkish consumer goods” (Fuller, 1993, p. 39). This economic interest in the Middle East also raised awareness in Middle Eastern politics. Furthermore, the economic interest is nowadays also at the highest level. In terms of regional trade Turkey has great relations with the Middle East. Between 2002 and 2010, Turkey’s exports are more than doubled. Contrary, the exports to Europe has dropped in the same period. Thus, not only the role model plays a key role in the region, but also the economic field is important for Turkey.

Conclusion

In this report, Turkey's foreign policy is analyzed combined with the relations between Turkey and the Middle East, the European Union, the United States and the former Soviet Republics. The central question of this dissertation was: *"What are the external reactions against Turkey that focuses more on the Middle-East?"*

First of all, the Republic of Turkey was established by Atatürk in 1923. In this period, the state developed into a modern and democratic state. During the Atatürk era, TFP was mainly focused on the West. In the following decades after Atatürk, Turkey became member of Western organizations, like the United Nations in 1945, the Council of Europe in 1949 and the NATO in 1952. The Second World War and the Cold War had many influence on the TFP. Especially, the Soviet threat was the main reason for Turkey to join the NATO. With the collapse of the Soviet Union, the threat disappeared and the TFP was more on the way of a multidimensional policy.

With the change of the government in 2002, the AKP came to power. Obviously, this change played a crucial role in TFP. Minister of foreign affairs Ahmet Davutoğlu implemented the new TFP based on the next core principles: balance between security and freedom, zero problems with neighbours, proactive peace diplomacy or 'soft power', compatible global relations and active participation in global and regional issues.

The Middle East is an important region for Turkish foreign policy and thus it focuses more on this region since the Erdoğan administration. Of course, the relationship with the Middle East countries was build before the AKP government. However, with the rise of the AKP, these ties are tried to strengthen.

The new perspective of Turkish foreign policy is now focusing more on the region, like the Middle East or Central Asia. Both in the case of the Middle East and Central Asia, it means that Turkey applies a 'zero problems with neighbours policy' towards the regional countries. Mainly, this policy is implemented through soft power. Obviously, this soft power attitude was not successful with all countries in the region. For instance, the possibility to strengthen its ties with Syria transformed in hard power. The 'zero problems with neighbours policy' created Turkey into a role model in the region. Turkey made many progresses in his history that occurs now in the MENA-region. So, it acts as a role model in the way that Turkey is a democratic state with an Islamic government. Thus, not only the progresses are vital to be a good example but also the more Islamic oriented government in a democracy state is of crucial importance.

On the other hand, the strong ties with the former Soviet Republics arose after the dissolution of the former USSR in 1989. The alliances with those countries were strongly supported by the

Turkish society, because of the shared ethnic, religious, cultural and linguistic ties. As before mentioned, the role model of Turkey is again crucial in the Central Asian region. However, this foreign policy goal was introduced before the Erdoğan government and continues nowadays in the region.

Obviously, the shift in Turkish foreign policy is something that is noticeable. Turkey was in the past more enthusiastic to become a member of the EU. One of the reasons of the shift is the prolonged relation with the EU. Many criteria are required for membership and many negotiations are undergoing, however without result. Therefore, the EU is no longer ‘popular’ for the TFP. In the same way, the EU is afraid of the growing economy of Turkey and therefore chooses for countries like Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, Albania and Serbia as members. EU’s strong members like Germany and France are against the membership of Turkey, because Turkey is more Islamic-oriented and do not fit in the EU. This is also one of the reasons of negative thinking. However, the cooperation with the EU will continue, but full membership is still a dream for Turkey.

The United States and Turkey have good ties for many years. On the side of the US, Obama sees Turkey as a bridge between the Muslim and the Western world. Thus, it is important and an advantage for the US that Turkey focuses its foreign policy mutually on the region.

Shifting West to East is what many critics use for Turkey’s foreign policy. They argue that Turkey is changing with the rise of the AKP. The AKP is an Islamic-oriented party and surely it wants to focus on the Middle East countries. However, the Prime Minister Erbakan in 1996 was also a leader of an Islamic-oriented party. The Erbakan period was the most similar government as the Erdoğan government. The shift of TFP, or in other words, the regionalization started before the Erdoğan government. The AKP is presented as the continuation of Erbakan’s banned party. In fact, Erbakan was seen as the ‘spiritual father’ of the AKP. So, the foundation of the shift to the East is more based on the Erbakan administration. Obviously, the main founder of TFP is Davutoğlu with its own ideas.

Finally, the changing TFP to the East does not mean that Turkey is turning its back on the West or that its policy decisions are Islamized. Turkey wants to strengthen its ties with all regions, the West and the East. In general, Turkey has an important geostrategic role; it does not entirely belong to the West, but has the same position with the East. Because of this position, Turkey wants to focus on both the EU and the Middle East, otherwise it will only use 50% of its capacity. The increasing improvement of international relations between Turkey and its neighbours should therefore not seen as a rapprochement of Turkey to the east. Because Turkey has also sought the

same approach with respect to its western and northern neighbours. It goes without saying that choosing one of the sides will be a disadvantage for Turkey to become a global player in the world.

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Appendices

Appendix 1

Interview with Mr. Ali Yazgili, program manager of the Turkije Instituut

September 13, 2012, The Hague

Interview summary

Ali Yazgili works since 2007 at the Turkije Instituut as program manager. The Turkey Institution is an information hub that concerns the modern Turkey. The institution is founded by Lily Sprangers in 2007. The main goal is the same as the German Instituut in Amsterdam. Turkey is a developing country, in the transformation phase and an important country for Europe. There is little information about the modern Turkey nowadays and therefore this institution is created.

Since 2002, the Turkish state is governed by the AKP under the leadership of Erdoğan. Do you think that with the rise of the AKP, the TFP has changed?

Not even with the rise of the AKP, the AKP is elected in 2002 and what you can see between 2002-2005 is the continuity in the foreign policy. There was a fear, that the former Prime Minister Erbakan would followed, he was the spiritual father of the AKP. This fear was that ties with the West would break and the government would focus on the region of the Muslim neighbours. In the period 2002-2005 this did not happen, it was more embracing the neoliberal model of the West. After 2005, the EU enthusiasm declined and after 2007 there was a clearer shift of the TFP. The term regionalization is used to clarify and means that there is more focus on their neighbours than before. Formerly was TFP actually oriented to the West, for instance the EU, NATO etc. The relations with Syria, Iran, and Georgia were very limited. This because of the tensions that could cause wars, for example, historical factors. The PKK issue with Syria or the complete boycott of Iraq. Turkey is located on a huge important geostrategic position between energy-rich regions in the East and internal markets in the West, Caucasus and Africa. Here come civilizations and trade routes together. And Turkey has realized this advantage by Davutoğlu in his book Strategic depth. He explains that Turkey should not only focus on the West, otherwise it will only use 50% of its capacity, it should be also integrated in the region. So good relations with the West, but also good relations with the East, North and South. He explains this in the 'zero problems policy'. Turkey is important in its region, and with using of soft power, that means having good relations with neighbours it can be very important in its region.

After 2007, Turkey had good relations with Armenia, Russia, Iran and even Syria. E.g. removing of visas, entering into free trade agreements, bilateral meetings of parliaments. Also, after 2007, many critics came of the West, for example, NATO countries. They thought, is Turkey still allowed to be a member of NATO as it seeks good relations with Iran for example. People thought that was a threat. Some said of AKP that it shows his real face and is just a neo Islamists who seek contact with his Muslim brothers and want to make the Turkish Republic as Iranian government. Other analysts say, the European trade became less important, so the region should be more important. In this case, the external factors are important: the power vacuum, change of the balance of power. For example, the intervention of US in Iraq. And there are the internal factors; formerly foreign policy was determined by military, so hard power was used, because Turkey was surrounded by enemies. But now the TFP is also made with the influence of entrepreneurs, like the TUSIAD in Turkey. The TFP is more focused on trade policy, entrepreneurs want economic development by improving relations with neighbours. So in short, yes TFP has certainly changed since 2007. Turkey should not only focus on the west. And this has become possible since 2007 by external and internal factors. Turkey is no longer the country 30 years ago, it has the ability to invest abroad. Entrepreneurs want peace in the region, to achieve economic development.

There is another factor, the European Union and Turkey. Turkey has long been engaged with negotiations to become member of the Union. What can you say about the negotiation process?

Turkey has formally applied in 1987. Actually, Turkey does not know what to expect from the EU. Since the establishment of Republic of Turkey in 1923, the state looks with admiration and distrust to the EU. The admiration in case of the many reforms and modern Union, the distrust because of the Sevres Treaty. In the mindset of Turkey was something like, the Europeans want to occupy, divide our country. The EU thinks in the way that Turkey is too large, too Islamic oriented country to become member of the EU. On the other, Turkey has advantages for the EU, it has a geostrategic important position, economy is growing etc. When Turkey applied for membership in 1987, this application refused, because of human rights issues etc. Due to the collapse of the Soviet Union, the strategic position of Turkey was less important. The former Soviet countries, like Poland, the Czech Republic were more important for the EU. The former Prime Minister Özal sought for other alternatives like the Turkic speaking countries in the Caucasus. And this was the first attempt to regionalize the foreign policy. The American pressure was in that period very important. The US wanted Turkey in the EU, because of the fear that Turkey would focus on the Middle East. With the rise of the AKP in 2002, Turkey made many reforms and the negotiations were positive. However, after 2005, the distrust increased again in the EU. This distrust was

mainly due to the Cyprus issue, the EU members that do not want Turkey in the Union and economic growth of Turkey. Turkey thought, if the EU does not want us, why should we want the EU? So, after 2005, the enthusiasm of Turkey decreased. This because of the populism in Europe, for example Wilders in the Netherlands or Sarkozy in France. In particular after 2007, the region is more important for Turkey and strained the relations with the EU. However, the EU members cannot break the relations, so is Turkey.

Do you think the refusal of the EU to allow Turkey to join the European Union has an effect on the foreign policy of Turkey? So that Turkey will increasingly focus on the Middle East rather than the EU.

In my opinion it has a role, because of the conditions. One of the conditions of the EU was the border disputes with its neighbours. Turkey should solve these problems. The TFP was looking for alternatives as in the Özal government, but Davutoğlu said, we are important for Europe, when we are important in our region. Turkey thinks now in the context of to be important for all regions. If Turkey cannot join the EU, it should not break its ties, but keep the relations and. Turkey should not think in the sense of, 'we will break our relation with the EU and we are focused on our region against the EU'.

Considering the Western interest and the national interest of Turkey. In most cases in the past, Turkey chooses for the Western interest, for example the invasion in Iraq with the Saddam issue. Turkey did not want regional conflict with Iraq, but in cooperation with the US and to hold the relations high, Turkey chose for the Western interest. In short, Turkey plays as a key role.

Do you think that the improved cooperation with the Middle East countries may have a negative impact on the NATO membership of Turkey?

What you can see, is just the distrust. If Turkey has good relations with its regional neighbours, this means also in the interest of NATO. The whole Middle East is now upside down. Formerly was Saddam Hussein in Iraq, Ayatollah in Iran and Turkey was an ally of the West. With the invasion of Iraq the tensions in the Middle East started. And in the region, there is one model country with a Muslim and secular state, with huge economic growth. Thus, the region prefers a Turkish sample, with an open democratic market economy than an Iranian society that is a threat. At least this is what several NATO countries think. To conclude, yes, it may have a negative impact if Turkey does not choose one side in time of crisis. There was a distrust, but in the same time understanding of NATO countries. Especially, during the Arab spring, the relations with the MENA countries were important for NATO. Turkey could influence North-Iraq or Syria. The NATO countries do not know how the situation in the region is and Turkey can act as a role model and influence those countries to prevent conflicts.