

TURKEY AND THE BALKANS IN THE POST-COLD WAR ERA: DIPLOMATIC/
POLITICAL, ECONOMIC AND MILITARY RELATIONS

A Ph.D. Dissertation

by
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Ankara
April 2009

To my late grandparents
To my family
And to the innocent victims of the war in Bosnia

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DIPLOMATIC/ POLITICAL, ECONOMIC AND MILITARY RELATIONS

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of
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ABSTRACT

TURKEY AND THE BALKANS IN THE POST –COLD WAR ERA: DIPLOMATIC/ POLITICAL, ECONOMIC AND MILITARY RELATIONS

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This dissertation argues that as a region in which Turkey has been no stranger since the end of the 14th century, the Balkans poses political, military, and economic significance for Turkey. Turkey has strong historical ties with the Balkans; the region is a strategic link between Turkey and Europe; Ankara is concerned that the Turkish minority in the region remain integrated in their host countries; and there is also a remarkable amount of Balkan immigrants in Turkey who are influential on Ankara's Balkan policies. Therefore, Turkey's engagement in the regional developments intensified after 1990. However, the intensity of relations lost momentum after 1995 due to more pressing domestic and foreign policy issues, causing a lack of strong cooperation network between political, military and economic fields. In this framework, the main research questions in this dissertation will be based on finding under what circumstances Turkey's political, diplomatic, economic and military relations towards the region have been formulated after 1990 and whether (and how) these policies displayed continuity or disruptions became possible throughout. It argues that well-worked policies towards the region can be achieved if political, diplomatic, economic and military relations are treated evenly.

Keywords: Balkans, Turkey, post-Cold War era, politics, diplomacy, economy, military, UN, NATO.

ÖZET

SOĞUK SAVAŞ SONRASINDA TÜRKİYE VE BALKANLAR: DİPLOMATİK/SİYASİ, EKONOMİK VE ASKERİ İLİŞKİLER

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Bu tez, 14. yüzyıldan bu yana Türkiye'nin yabancıları olmadığı bir bölge olarak Balkanlar'ın, Türkiye açısından siyasi, askeri ve ekonomik önem arz ettiğini savunmaktadır. Türkiye'nin Balkanlar'la güçlü tarihi bağları bulunmaktadır; bölge, Türkiye ve Avrupa arasında stratejik bir bağ teşkil etmektedir; Ankara için bölgedeki Türk azınlığının buldukları ülkelerde entegre bir biçimde yaşamaları önem taşımaktadır; ayrıca Türkiye'de, Ankara'nın Balkan politikaları üzerinde etkili, önemli sayıda Balkan kökenli nüfus bulunmaktadır. Bu sebeplerden ötürü, 1990 sonrasında Türkiye bölge olaylarına daha fazla dahil olmaya başladı. Ancak, ilişkilerdeki yoğunluk, daha acil cevap bekleyen iç ve dış politika konuları nedeniyle 1995 itibarıyla ivme kaybetmiş, bu da siyasi, askeri ve ekonomik alanlar arasında güçlü bir işbirliği ağı eksikliğini beraberinde getirmiştir. Bu çerçevede, bu tezdeki temel araştırma soruları, Türkiye'nin 1990 sonrasında bölgeye yönelik siyasi, diplomatik, ekonomik ve askeri politikalarının hangi koşullarda formüle edildiğini ve bu politikaların bir süreklilik mi sergilediği yoksa duraksamaların meydana gelip gelmediğini (ve bunların nasıl oluştuğunu) bulmak temelinde olacaktır. Bölgeye yönelik iyi hazırlanmış politikaların; siyasi, diplomatik, ekonomik ve askeri ilişkilerin eşit derecede ele alınıp değerlendirilmesiyle elde edilebileceği belirtilmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Balkanlar, Türkiye, Soğuk Savaş Sonrası dönem, siyaset, diplomasi, ekonomi, ordu, BM, NATO.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The coverage of Balkan issues and Turkey's post-Cold War relations with the Balkans to date gives the impression of the approach that the issue should be devoted more scrutiny, and yet this is not reflected into practice. Relevant research on the issue is observed to be redundant concerning the pre-1990 period, however there are not as many comprehensive researches on the post-1990 period. Furthermore, particularly after the wars in former Yugoslavia, one feels compelled to argue that from Turkey, the Balkans have even come to be perceived as a region composed of two states only, and their meaning for and relations with Turkey. In the relevant Turkish literature, the majority of the scholarly pieces seem to focus on the war in Bosnia and Turkey's relations with Bosnia – Herzegovina and Kosovo. Given this, the dissertation aims to examine diplomatic/political, economic, and military relations of Turkey with the Balkan states namely, Bosnia – Herzegovina, Serbia (and Montenegro), Croatia, Macedonia, Albania, Kosovo, Romania, Bulgaria, and Greece with special emphasis on the post-Cold War era, and by doing so it attempts to contribute to filling in the relevant void in the Turkish literature.

The subject matter is obviously comprehensive and interrelated, and at this point, it must be stated that the actors and the subjects presented are with no exception rapidly changing, complex, and still unfolding. The main argument in the

dissertation is framed around the assumption that the Balkans have been underrated in Turkey's relations and the diplomatic/political field has been treated with a higher concern, downplaying the impact of economic and military relations. Indeed, these venues are, interrelated and have the potential to consolidate one another if explored and exploited duly. The primary concern of this dissertation is therefore to examine how Balkans were placed in Turkish foreign policy making after the Cold War in the three fields, with a multidimensional approach.

Just as it is fundamental to develop individual policies towards each of the regional countries, it is equally fundamental to devise a revised and well-worked common policy towards the entire region, covering all venues, presenting a holistic approach, and without prioritizing a particular one. It goes without saying that just as events and issues faced by the countries examined in this study in the aftermath of the Cold War were of considerable importance, those which will face the countries concerned in the upcoming years are no less significant. For instance, the Bosnian war did not remain limited within the boundaries of Yugoslavia. Although it was labeled as a civil war by the European states in the initial phases of the war itself, it later boiled down to regional and international developments. It gave way to the subsequent engagement of the Western states and Turkey was no less engaged. As things stand now, the recent independence of Kosovo and contending approaches to the issue remain unsolved, and are likely to come to the surface once again in the region.

Apart from the objective to contribute to filling the void of a multidimensional approach in current Turkish literature, another significant objective of this study is to develop insight for future relations and to make policy recommendations. The changes in the region are likely to pose challenges for

decision makers, and that implies Turkish decision makers, too. The degree of intensity of the changes remains to be seen as these changes unfold in the ensuing years. Yet, it can safely be presumed that increased and rapid confrontation in the region, such as possible problems Bosnia and Kosovo, could bring about novel and substantial policy discords. That, unquestioningly, necessitates an informed and well-worked policy towards the region.

If we are to present a concise summary of Turkey's policies in view of the region in the post-Cold war era, the status of Turkish and Muslim minorities in the Balkans stands out as a considerable priority for Turkey, which stemmed from the assimilation policies implemented by the Bulgarian government from 1985 to 1989. As every crisis in the Balkans caused the displacement of the Turks and erosion of their acquired rights, Turkish policy makers tried to pursue a line which would ensure preservation of these acquired rights. After the break-up of war in Bosnia, Turkey tried to establish a bilateral and multilateral network of relations with all Balkan states. While Turkish foreign policy makers assumed a leadership role as much as Turkey's power, capacity and skills allowed, it also tried to prevent a regional actor from becoming a regional hegemon. When the irreversible wave of change in the international system, regional systems, and dissolution of Yugoslavia came about almost simultaneously, Ankara both tried to understand this new conjuncture and determine Turkey's attitude. The expected role from Turkey in this new conjuncture was to contribute to security, which would increase its geopolitical importance in due course. Furthermore, Ankara tried to bring the regional states into Euro – Atlantic structures as much as it could after the war ended. Nevertheless, although bilateral and multilateral relations were promoted by Turkey, they did not amount to the presentation of Turkey as a preponderant state in the region since the

contours of the relations were determined by the U.S.A.. Apart from its diplomatic and political efforts, Turkey tried to revive economic ties with the country by signing free trade agreements for instance. It also embarked into a new cooperation era in military terms with regional states. The essence of Ankara's diplomatic/political, economic and military relations with Balkan states was aimed at good neighborliness and establishing permanent peace, however, this did not go beyond minimum stability in the region.¹

A few words are in order regarding the terminology and the chapter sequence of the dissertation. The term "Balkans" shall refer to the countries mentioned above. Bosnia and Herzegovina shall be used interchangeably. The dissertation neither employs an approach which clusters formerly Communist and non-Communist countries nor takes one to examine their diplomatic/political, economic, and military relations individually. Instead, it deals with all of them in individual chapters regarding diplomatic/political, economic, and military venues, upon the preliminary background provided in the first two chapters, taking into account the existing state of affairs. Although Serbia and Montenegro separated in 2006, the dissertation examines relations with the two states under one subheading in the subsequent chapters due to the recent nature of the separation. Finally, all relations are handled in a chronological order, however there are no internal time frames in this chronological sequence due to the complex nature of relations and abundant number of states.

Upon such background, the first chapter is devoted to the overview of the historical backdrop as to how Turkey fits in the Balkans and the examination of how the region came to be labeled as a synonym for instability over the centuries. The

¹ For more information, see Mustafa Türkeş, "Türkiye'nin Balkan Politikası'nda Devamlılık ve Değişim", *Avrasya Dosyası, Balkanlar Özel*, 14(1), 2008, pp. 253 - 280

change in Turkish foreign policy making in the early 1990s towards an active stance and its relation to foreign policy making in the Balkans is also addressed. The second chapter is a preparatory section to better comprehend the existing state of affairs between Turkey and the regional states. It concentrates on the history of Turkey's relations with the Balkans from the end of the Great War to the end of the Cold War, examining the contours of Turkey's Balkan policy during the interwar period, the Balkan Entente (1934), World War II, Communism and Balkans, the Balkan Pact and the Alliance (1953), the Stoica Plan, and the succeeding decades up to the 1990s. The third chapter investigates bilateral diplomatic/political relations of the post-Cold War period in length. The fourth chapter explores Turkey's bilateral economic relations with the regional states in post-Cold War era. Finally, the fifth chapter investigates Turkey's military relations with the regional states in the post-Cold War era.

As for the literature on the Balkans and particularly the war in Bosnia, Noel Malcolm's *Bosnia – A Short History* provides a full history of Bosnia, yet more importantly, it negates the Western European claims that the war in Bosnia was inevitable due to deep rooted ethnic hatreds, and argues that the destruction came from outside Bosnia, that is, from Serbia proper, based on the misinformation and disinformation of Western political figures throughout the war. As such, Malcolm's book has high relevance to what this study maintains in the relevant section. The exact opposite approach to the war in Bosnia is seen in Robert Kaplan's *Balkan Ghosts* where the journalist – author has brought together, what may be called, literary travel writing with reporting. In his travel itinerary, Kaplan's formulation of the issue that internal hatred was a driving force in Yugoslavia falls out of the scope of this dissertation, as well as his writings on Romania, Bulgaria, Greece, and

Albania predicting the capacity of the region for large scale bloodshed due to old ethnic hatred, again missing out the point that the war in Bosnia was devised from outside Bosnia, and thus seeing no role on the part of the Western political figures. The book constitutes a good example of the relevant opposite approach which was reportedly blamed for former U.S. President Bill Clinton's hesitant stance concerning intervention, and his use of Kaplan's portrayal of the Balkans to provide justification for U.S. intervention. Concerning the war in Bosnia in general and the Srebrenica massacre through the end of the war in July 1995, David Rohde's *A Safe Area* is the most comprehensive work consisting of definitive account of events, narrative, and analysis. As it is the product of an on-site research at the time of the event, it provides a detailed and thoroughly factual account of Europe's worst massacre since World War II. The strength of the book lies in the reconstruction of the ten-day period from 6 July – 16 July 1995 which changed the course of the war in Bosnia around the personal experiences of three Bosnian Muslims, two peacekeeping soldiers, and two Serb soldiers. In other words, it combines all actors. Rohde's book relates to this dissertation in understanding the peak of the war as well as the *modus operandi* of ethnic cleansing which happened under the noses of the UN peacekeeping units. Apart from putting in detail what was going on, it can be said that the book also has an ability to tell in advance what happened soon in Kosovo. Last but not least, the book is important to see that the West missed several opportunities to end the war. The most powerful aspect of the book is to demonstrate that in reality the Dutch peacekeepers proved to be witnesses to the massacre, who were even awarded for their success afterwards. A general historical account of the region is also found in Mark Mazower's *The Balkans* whose strength lies in its concision. In line with the argumentation in this study, the book takes the view that

the Balkans does not necessarily entail ethnic and religious conflict as opposed to the commonplace Western arguments concerning the region. For one thing, *The Balkans* successfully argues that it was the West that has come to define violence in the Balkans as inherent, despite being an outsider. *Europe's Backyard War: The War in the Balkans* by Mark Almond portrays West's fallacious attitude towards the war when the politicians balked at recognizing the newly independent Yugoslav republics and therefore rather than supporting the integrity and independence of the newly-born states, they wanted to see Serbia establish the order. Almond makes the point that this was why the West opted for describing the developments as a civil war. Branka Magas' *The Destruction of Yugoslavia – Tracking the Break-Up 1980 – 92*, documents who destroyed Yugoslavia and how, and puts the blame on Slobodan Milosevic as well as his state-sponsored nationalism treating non-Serbs as a group of people to be cleansed. The response of the West had been that of a failure to distinguish between the aggressor and the victim, and as such, strengthened Milosevic's hand. Magas' book successfully argues that while the West had rallied around the "never again" principle after the holocaust, this proved to be left in words only.

Oral Sander's, *Balkan Gelişmeleri ve Türkiye* starts from the premise that although Turkey is a gateway between the Balkans and the Middle East, there is no significant and illuminating regional research in the period up until the date of its publication (1968). As such, it constitutes the ever all-inclusive study on Balkan issues in Turkish and Turkey's relations with the Balkans spanning from the end of World War II to 1965. Itself being a Ph.D. dissertation, it explores the region thoroughly dating back to the 19th century and Turkey's relations with the region as of the end of World War I in a chronological account. The book brings into light

various moments and developments which put their imprint on their respective times, such as World War I, the interwar period, World War II, and Communist era, etc. One of the strongest aspects of the book is its immediate observation of the necessity for Turkey that it should rearrange its relations with the regional states beyond the understanding of minimum goodneighborliness, back in 1968. Moreover, its ability to foretell the future rocky relations with Greece is evident in its reminder that Turkey should not forget that Greece was a Balkan state and therefore relations with the country was of utmost importance concerning both bilateral and regional relations. Regarding the alliance between Greece and Serbia during the Balkan wars in the last decade, Takis Michas' *Unholy Alliance* summarizes the book with his remark that “[w]hat seemed incomprehensible during the Bosnia and Kosovo wars was not so much that Greece sided with Serbia, but that it sided with Serbia’s darkest side (p. 4).” Michas explores Greece’s attitude towards Macedonia and Kosovo and links that to Greece’s response to the Balkan wars to argue that the westernizing experience of Greece which began in the 19th century was now over. The book strongly characterizes the nature of the alliance between Greece and Serbia as being not holy as opposed to commonplace arguments by of maintaining that the Orthodox Church in Greece is not a religious but a political institution. Therefore, it was an “unholy” alliance one which stemmed from the ideology of nationalism. *Unholy Alliance* constitutes an exemplary book of its kind as one which dispels relevant official Greek arguments concerning the Bosnian and Kosovo wars. In addition, an edited volume on bilateral economic relations between Turkey and Greece, *Greece and Turkey in the 21st Century: Conflict or Cooperation*, provides both overall Greek – Turkish bilateral relations in the Balkan context and economic relations, the EU dimension in the two states’ relations, and their respective defense economies. Apart

from being recent, the book also fills a niche concerning these issues which had not been available in the relevant international literature, written by Turkish and Greek scholars. This is yet another book that makes clear that complex bilateral relations should be examined in a multidisciplinary way, in line with the main approach of this dissertation.

Other scholarly pieces on the issue include Christopher Cviic's *Remaking the Balkans*, Chuck Sudetic's *Blood and Vengeance*, Sabrina Petra Ramet's *Balkan Babel*, Misha Glenny's *Fall of Yugoslavia*, and Norman Cigar's *Genocide in Bosnia*. Regarding Turkey's relations with other regional states, mostly national scholarly pieces have been used, which include *Balkan Diplomasisi* (Ömer E. Lütem and Birgül Demirtaş – Coşkun eds.), *Makedonya Sorunu Düünden Bugüne* by Murat Hatipoğlu, *Türkiye – Yunanistan – Eski Sorunlar, Yeni Arayışlar* (Birgül Demirtaş – Coşkun, ed.), *Bulgaristan'la Yeni Dönem* by Birgül Demirtaş – Coşkun, *White Papers 1987, 1990, 1992, 1995, 1998, and 2000* by the Ministry of Defense, *Balkans: A Mirror of the New International Order* (Günay Göksu Özdoğan – Kemali Saybaşılı eds.), and Turkish Grand National Assembly *Journal of Minutes* from 1989 to 2006, among many others. The list is not exhaustive and presents a variety in related sections. Within this framework, the dissertation is arranged in a way to build upon both scholarly pieces as well as empirical data from newspapers and news agencies due to the contemporary nature of the subject matter. The absence of a similar study in Turkish literature makes the exploration Turkish - Balkan relations in such a framework worthwhile and I sought to handle the issue with such an approach which permits the inclusion of diplomatic/political, economic, and military fields. I hope this study may help explore a region which has been explored to date

with insufficient attention with respect to Turkey's relations. Certainly, involuntary mistakes belong to me.

CHAPTER II

TURKEY AND THE BALKANS: AN OVERVIEW

2.1. THE HISTORICAL BACKDROP: HOW DOES TURKEY FIT IN THE BALKANS?

Relevant literature is replete with introductory remarks which usually depict the Balkans as noted for its significance for Turkey. This dissertation shall be no exception to this depiction. Historical evidence suggests that Turkey has been no stranger to the region since the end of the 14th century, when the Ottoman domination of the region began. The Ottoman Empire dominated the Balkan peninsula until the beginning of the 18th century, which would in the course of the next two centuries be pushed back territorially until the end of World War I.¹

With the proclamation of the Republic in 1923, Turkey sought to establish peaceful relations with a view to consolidating its new frontiers. Indeed, the Balkan states ranked among the first with which Ankara established friendly relations. During the Cold War, Turkey's foreign policy focused on the well-being and the protection of the Turkish minority in the Balkans and on acting as the protagonist of

¹ J.F. Brown, "Turkey: Back to the Balkans?" in *Turkey's New Geopolitics: From the Balkans to Western China*, Graham Fuller and Ian O. Lesser with Paul Henze and J.F. Brown, eds. (Boulder: Westview Press, 1993), p. 141.

the *Pax Americana* after 1952, when it became a NATO member.² The self-accommodation of most of the regional states within the Warsaw Pact was observed as having worked to the detriment of Turkey when these states joined the Communist bloc in the Cold War period, thereby constituting a barrier before cooperation opportunities in the region.³ Due to the polarization, Turkey never really had a chance to develop its relations in its “normal” course with the integration of Balkan states (Romania, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia) into the Soviet sphere of influence.⁴ The Balkans ended up a region where American and Turkish interests coincided; a sphere of ideological confrontation and power struggle between the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R., whereas Turkey, beyond playing a role in the containment of the Soviets, also had concerns with respect to regional security and economic considerations.⁵ Indeed, Turkey has always been in favor of good bilateral relations with the Balkan

² Dilek Barlas, “Turkey and the Balkans: Cooperation in the Interwar and Post-Cold War Eras” *Turkish Review of Balkan Studies* 4 (1998/1999), p. 72. Barlas states that like the other Balkan states, after 1952, Turkey’s role was relegated to regional politics and that the regional states partook in international affairs in broader schemes through integration with international organizations as NATO and the Warsaw Pact thereafter. In the wider historical context, the Balkans has always occupied a significant place in Turkish foreign policy. After signing the Treaty of Lausanne, Turkey tried to restore its relations with the Balkan states, which was one of the important tasks in its foreign policy. The idea of Balkan Entente, which was masterminded by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, was materialized in 1934 and was signed in Athens by Turkey, Greece, Romania and Yugoslavia. Bulgaria was not a signatory as it had territorial demands from Greece. The Entente did not prove long-lived partly because it coincided with the rise of fascism and Nazism in Europe and it withered away with the outbreak of World War II. The second important progress with regard to cooperation in the Balkans was recorded during the Democrat Party period. In the period concerned, Washington wanted a cooperation agreement to be concluded between Turkey and Greece, as two NATO members with Yugoslavia. Thus, it would be possible to pull Yugoslavia – which did not have friendly relations with the U.S.S.R. – to the Western camp. Due mostly to such a framework, Turkey, Greece and Yugoslavia signed a Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation in Ankara on 28 February 1953. Known as the Balkan Pact, this treaty did not prove long-lived either, because the close cooperation atmosphere which the treaty envisaged did not exist in the region at the material time. There were various disputes between Turkey, Greece and Yugoslavia. When Soviet foreign policy took on a milder form and thus decreased the threat *vis-à-vis* Yugoslavia in 1954, Belgrade, as a supporter of non-aligned movement, began to depart from the Balkan Pact framework. On the side of Turkey and Greece, the Cyprus issue began to take on a rocky nature and caused even further deterioration of this trilateral pattern. See also Ergun Balcı, “Cem’in Balkan Gezisi”, 30 October 1997, *Cumhuriyet*.

³ Esin Yurdusev, “1945-1989 Döneminde Türkiye ve Balkanlar,” in İsmail Soysal ed., *Çağdaş Türk Diplomasisi: 200 Yıllık Süreç*, (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1999), p. 376.

⁴ Graham Fuller, “Turkey in the New International Environment” in F. Stephen Larrabee ed., *The Volatile Powder Keg: Balkan Security after the Cold War*, (Washington D. C.: The American University Press, 1994), p. 142.

⁵ İlhan Uzgel, “Doksanlarda Türkiye İçin Bir İşbirliği ve Rekabet Alanı Olarak Balkanlar” in Gencer Özcan and Şule Kut eds., *En Uzun Onyıl*, (İstanbul: Boyut, 1998), p. 406.

states and supported limited efforts to establish a regional political cooperation that started in the late 1980s.⁶ By the mid-1990s, the new structure in international politics prompted Turkey to preoccupy itself more with the Middle East than the Balkans, while Greece focused on the Cyprus issue and Tito's Yugoslavia paid attention to the non-aligned movement. Put differently, the Balkans did not display a cooperative picture in this period. The Communist Balkan states – perhaps with the exclusion of Bulgaria – remained marginal for Turkey⁷ and the primary objective shaping foreign policy came out as preventing Greece from acquiring a superior position in the region whilst preserving the status quo with the remainder of the Communist regional states. However, during 1989 – 1991, when Communism was in retreat, Soviet control began to disappear. Thereafter, “[the] Balkans history not only returned, but also seemed to be making up for lost time.”⁸ As the post-Communist U.S.S.R., the post-Communist era in the Balkans opened up new questions about the future relations of Turkey with the Balkan states as they regained their independence after the “communist night”.⁹ The post-Communist era did not seem to bring a positive fresh start to the region. It appeared that “Balkanization”, once again, was well under way.

⁶ Heinz Kramer, *A Changing Turkey: The Challenge to Europe and the United States*, 2000, on <http://brookings.nap.edu/books/08157500234/html/162.html#pagetop>. p. 146.

⁷ Baskın Oran, “Türkiye'nin Balkan ve Kafkas Politikası” *Ankara Üniversitesi Siyasal Bilgiler Fakültesi Dergisi*, 50 (1-2) (January – June 1995), p. 271. For a similar argument, see *Unfinished Peace: Report of International Commission on The Balkans*, Foreword by Leo Tindemans (Washington D.C.: The Brookings Institute Press, 1996), p. 134. The Report writes that the Caucasus, Central Asia and the Middle East also pose equally pressing interest and for Turkey, these regions have strategic priority over the Balkans, yet in emotional terms, the Balkans loom larger.

⁸ Brown, “Turkey: Back to the Balkans?” in *idem*, *Eastern Europe and Communist Rule*, (Durham: Duke University Press, 1989), pp. 263-293, 317-383, 415-444; and *idem*, *Surge to Freedom: The End of Communism Rule in Eastern Europe*, (Durham: Duke University Press, 1991), pp. 181-245.

⁹ Fuller, “Turkey in the New International Environment,” p. 142.

2.2. “(RE)BALKANIZATION”: A SYNONYM FOR INSTABILITY?

Could Paul Scott Mowrer as a journalist have foreseen that the negative geopolitical impact of the Balkans expressed through the term “Balkanization”, launched by him back in 1921, would prove so persistent in the course of time? The answer to the question lies in the age old and recent history of the Balkans and our concern for the subject relates to the latter. In literal terms, “Balkanization” referred to:

the creation in a region of hopelessly mixed races, of a medley of small states with more or less backward populations, economically and financially weak, covetous, intriguing, afraid, a continual prey to the machinations of the great powers and to the violent promptings of their own passion.¹⁰

One may argue that not every use of the term endorses all the components in this definition as most scholarly works seem to refer to fragmentation primarily, in their use of the term. Be that as it may, the breakdown of Communism brought back the concept as a synonym for instability, even before the war in Yugoslavia placed the region at the core of the international policy agenda.¹¹

Notwithstanding, since the disintegration of Yugoslavia and the retreat of Soviet power from Europe, the process of Balkanization had come visible once again back in 1990s, after seventy years.¹² The signs after 1990 of clashes in Croatia and talk of independence in Slovenia brought warnings from different circles such as the diplomats, scholars, and intelligence agencies regarding the danger of Balkanization

¹⁰ Lene Hansen, “Past as Preface: Civilizational Politics and the ‘Third’ Balkan War” *Journal of Peace Research*, 37(3) (May, 2000), p. 350. Hansen cites Maria Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), p. 34.

¹¹ *ibid.*, pp. 350-51. Hansen cites James Der Derian, *Antidiplomacy, Spies, Terror, Speed and War* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1992), pp. 141-169; and Ole Wæver, “Securitization and Desecuritization” in Ronnie D. Lipschutz, ed., *On Security*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), pp. 72-75.

¹² Murat Yetkin, *Ateş Hattında Aktif Politika – Balkanlar, Kafkaslar ve Orta Doğu Üçgeninde Türkiye* (İstanbul: Alan, 1992), p. 192.

and Yugoslavia's disintegration.¹³ It has been argued that the agencies of concern such as the CIA and also the desk officers of Western departments of state and foreign affairs were well informed of the events and they tried to draw public attention to the dangers during 1990.¹⁴ However, they were mostly dismissed out of hand:

... not because they were unconvincing but because the prospect did not seem to present any threat to the interest of major powers. No longer needed to contain the Soviet Union, not considered capable of sparking a wider war since great power competition was a thing of the past or capable of disrupting Western economies, Yugoslavia and its fate were not significant.¹⁵

Perhaps "the Balkans" still inspired disparaging descriptions, attributions of backwardness, corruption, or even in the popular way of thinking, Dracula and the Orient Express at best,¹⁶ and the general euphoria and self-confidence in the West based on the idea that threats to security were declining with the retreat of Communism and that economic interests and opportunities would shape the new world order.¹⁷

As Nelson had estimated back in 1991, it proved certain that a smooth transition from Communism towards democracy was made far more difficult by the resurgent Balkan issues and that the larger European integration and security was troubled by (re)Balkanization.¹⁸ When diplomatic maneuvers proved futile and a

¹³ Susan L. Woodward, *Balkan Tragedy – Chaos and Dissolution after the Cold War* (Washington D. C.: The Brookings Institute, 1995), p. 148.

¹⁴ *ibid.*, p. 454, see footnote 4 of Chapter 6 titled "Western Intervention". Woodward writes that there is one leaked report of the CIA, dated November 1990, regarding the issue.

¹⁵ *ibid.*, p. 148.

¹⁶ Daniel N. Nelson, *Balkan Imbroglio – Politics and Security in Southeastern Europe* (San Francisco: Westview Press, 1991), p. 1.

¹⁷ Woodward, *Balkan Tragedy – Chaos and Dissolution After the Cold War*, p. 148; and Murat Yetkin, *Ateş Hattında Aktif Politika – Balkanlar, Kafkaslar ve Orta Doğu Üçgeninde Türkiye*, p. 194.

¹⁸ Daniel N. Nelson, *Balkan Imbroglio – Politics and Security in Southeastern Europe*, p. 2.

preponderance of power was necessary to bring peace to the region,¹⁹ it was seen that the famous film title *Im Balkan nichts Neues* ('All Quiet in Balkans') which the writers on the Balkans had been articulating in their own way during the Cold War years would not match with the new Balkan developments. Indeed, by 1990, there was a lot of news from the Balkans²⁰ which would coincide with active foreign policy making in Turkey.

2.3. NEW DIRECTION IN TURKISH FOREIGN POLICY IN THE EARLY 1990s: ACTIVISM

The term "active foreign policy" was a concept introduced by former President Turgut Özal with reference to explaining the policy pursued during the Gulf War. It was articulated more concretely in former Prime Minister Mesut Yılmaz's Government's program in July 1991 read in the Turkish Grand National Assembly, which stated that Turkish foreign policy would take on an active path thereafter.²¹ A brief descriptive account of foreign policy restructuring in the first half of the 1990s is in order here, because, in the face of developments in the Balkans and elsewhere, Turkey had already begun to restructure its foreign policy from being "the tail end of Europe into the center of its own newly emerging world" in Fuller's description of the state of affairs.²² Observations of the matter endorsed the self-evident view that

¹⁹ Raymond Tanter and John Psarouthakis, *Balancing in the Balkans*, (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1999), pp. 132-133.

²⁰ Christopher Cviic, *Remaking the Balkans*, (London: Pinter Publishers, 1991), p. 1.

²¹ Murat Yetkin, *Ateş Hattında Aktif Politika – Balkanlar, Kafkaslar ve Orta Doğu Üçgeninde Türkiye*, p. 240.

²² Graham Fuller, *Turkey Faces East: New Orientations toward the Middle East and the Old Soviet Union*, (Santa Monica, CA: Rand, 1997), p. 66 cited in Muhittin Ataman, "Leadership Change: Özal Leadership and Restructuring in Turkish Foreign Policy" in *Alternatives: Turkish Journal of International Relations* 1(1) (Spring 2002), p. 147.

this was an abandonment of Turkey's traditional policy of non-involvement in regional conflicts in the new post-Cold War openings.²³ This entailed that the main thrust of Turkey's response to the new post-Cold War situation was to pursue a more active role in the regions surrounding its borders – the Balkans, the Caucasus, Central Asia and the Middle East.²⁴

As the mastermind of this strategy, Turgut Özal, prime minister from 1983 to 1991 and then president until his death on 17 April 1993, played a central role both in the formulation and the execution of this strategy. At the core of this strategy was the belief that Turkey could continue to be a valued ally of the West only by expanding its regional role and influence.²⁵

It has been argued that both during his prime ministry and his presidency, within the scope of active foreign policy making, Özal acted upon a grandiose mission to make Turkey one of the ten or fifteen most developed countries in the world and accordingly took the initiative and chose to act individually regarding foreign policy issues.²⁶ He also expressed his views on sensitive foreign policy issues and critical problems with other countries without even consulting the Ministry of Foreign Affairs at times and he justified this attitude by emphasizing that he was responsible for the security of the country as President and Head of the National Security Council.²⁷

²³ I.P. Khosla, "Turkey: The Search for a Role" in *Strategic Analysis*, XXV(3) (June 2001) on <http://www.ciaonet.org/olj/sa/sa-june01khi01.html>

²⁴ Sabri Sayarı, "Turkey and the Middle East in the 1990s" in *Journal of Palestine Studies*, 26(3) (Spring 1997), p. 45.

²⁵ *ibid.*

²⁶ Metin Heper and Menderes Çınar, "Parliamentary Government with a Strong President: The Post-1989 Turkish Experience" in *Political Science Quarterly*, 111(3) (Autumn 1996), p. 493.

²⁷ *ibid.*, p. 495. For further information on the reaction of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, see *Murat Yetkin, Ateş Hattında Aktif Politika – Balkanlar, Kafkaslar ve Orta Doğu Üçgeninde Türkiye*, the chapter titled "Aktif Dış Politika ve Özal'ın Açmazı", pp. 240-258.

In the wider context, Turkey began to follow a diversified, active, daring and outward-oriented foreign policy which seemed to be a clear contrast to the Western oriented, élite-formulated and pro-status quo foreign policy making. Within the new framework, it was not surprising to see that Özal administration signed more international agreements than any other administration until then Turkish history.²⁸ Özal's conduct of foreign policy was an overt departure from Turkey's non-involvement in the regional affairs and that included the Balkans as well. While many in Turkey and the West assumed a much reduced role for Turkey as a regional actor and an ally of the West, these calculations proved devoid of any ground as the new active foreign policy contrasted remarkably with the passive approach that characterized Turkish foreign policy before the Gulf War.²⁹ In Paul Kennedy's (*et al.*) use of the term, Turkey qualified as a "pivotal" state *par excellence*³⁰ due to its location at the nexus of the Balkans, the Middle East and the Caspian region.³¹

After most of the postwar period during which Turkey largely neglected the Balkans and regarded the region in secondary importance,³² Turkish policy was now in flux with renewed interest in the Balkans.³³ Turkey established closer relations with countries which had a high percentage of Muslim population. Some circles argued that Özal's official visits to Bulgaria, Macedonia, Albania and Croatia in 1993 were a "[h]istorical step toward overtly expressing friendship with Muslims

²⁸ *Anavatan Partisi Genel Başkanı ve Başbakan Turgut Özal'ın Konuşmaları*, 16-31 October 1989, Basın Yayın ve Halkla İlişkiler Başkanlığı, 1989, cited in Muhittin Ataman, "Leadership Change: Özal Leadership and Restructuring in Turkish Foreign Policy," p. 132.

²⁹ F. Stephen Larrabee, Ian O. Lesser, *Turkish Foreign Policy in An Age of Uncertainty*, p.1-4 on <http://www.rand.org/publications/MR/MR1614MR1612.ch1.pdf>

³⁰ Robert S. Chace, Emily Hill and Paul Kennedy, "Pivotal States and U.S. Strategy", *Foreign Affairs*, 75(1) (January-February 1996), pp. 33-51, cited in F. Stephen Larrabee and Ian O. Lesser, *Turkish Foreign Policy in An Age of Uncertainty*, p. 2.

³¹ F. Stephen Larrabee ed., *The Volatile Powder Keg – Balkan Security after the Cold War*, (Washington D.C.: RAND, 1994), p. xxiii.

³² F. Stephen Larrabee, Ian O. Lesser, *Turkish Foreign Policy in an Age of Uncertainty*, pp. 6-7.

³³ *ibid.*

while containing aspirations of Yugoslavia and Greece.”³⁴ It has also been maintained that the alleged Ottomanist – Islamist approach towards the region was seen as a policy of balancing against the “Orthodox Christian – Slavic” bloc in the Balkans.³⁵ The project that materialized within the framework of active foreign policy towards the region was the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC) launched by Özal in 1992. The positive response of the states invited to join the BSEC was to be coupled with the acknowledgment by the former Soviet Republics that Turkey was their gateway to the West. It seemed that “the Balkans, the Caucasus and the Middle East” framework that Özal had in mind was well under way.³⁶

The dramatic shift from the traditional status quo foreign policy making to Özalist proactive and diversified alliance patterns and regional foreign policy led the supporters of the former attitude to consider Özal’s active foreign policy as adventurism.³⁷ From afar however, Turkey, under the leadership of Özal, was seen far ahead of the material time. According to an American diplomat, “Turkey [was] living ten years ahead of its time.”³⁸

Although the concept of active foreign policy was not welcome by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, so much as to cause one superior diplomat to say that the term should be rid, and not well-received by the military alike, the ensuing years until mid-1990s proved that it was to be adopted. As mentioned above, the term “active foreign policy” had found expression in Mesut Yılmaz’s government program and remained in Demirel – İnönü government program as a more contoured

³⁴ Muhittin Ataman, “Leadership Change: Özal Leadership and Restructuring in Turkish Foreign Policy” p. 140.

³⁵ *ibid.*

³⁶ Murat Yetkin, *Ateş Hattında Aktif Politika – Balkanlar, Kafkaslar ve Orta Doğu Üçgeninde Türkiye*, p. 253.

³⁷ William Hale, *Turkish Politics and Military* (New York: Routledge, 1994), cited in Muhittin Ataman, “Leadership Change: Özal Leadership and Restructuring in Turkish Foreign Policy” p. 148.

³⁸ Murat Yetkin, *Ateş Hattında Aktif Politika – Balkanlar, Kafkaslar ve Orta Doğu Üçgeninde Türkiye*, p. 254.

policy – though not with the same intensity - defined as “integration into the new world order.”³⁹ Afterwards, Turkey had to balance this activism with self-restraint in face of foreign reactions and fears that Turkey might be tempted to “play the Muslim card” at some point.⁴⁰

Although Turkish foreign policy pursued its traditional path in the early 1990s, this did not last long with regard to the Balkans. The last section of the chapter shall proceed with exploring Ankara’s policies toward the region. However, before that, an account of the road to Balkan developments in the early 1990s is in order for the sake of laying out the causes of resurgent turmoil in the region.

2.4. PRELUDE TO BALKAN TURMOIL

A short travel in finding out the commonalities that laid the ground for future conflict in the Balkans reveals at least six factors.⁴¹ First, nationalism gained new acceleration which had a profound spill-over effect in terms of both domestic and foreign policy making in the region. Indeed, this momentum assumed such a pace that both regional states and Western states tried to develop and use the term “Southeast Europe” in their description of the region with a view to averting the age-old reputation of the Balkans as a “powder keg”. Second, the ex-Communist party members and activists pursued nationalist policies within the newly established socialist parties while the liberal-oriented parties came to power but were replaced soon due to lack of liberal experience and opposition background in, particularly,

³⁹ Murat Yetkin, *Ateş Hattında Aktif Politika – Balkanlar, Kafkaslar ve Orta Doğu Üçgeninde Türkiye*, p. 257.

⁴⁰ F. Stephen Larrabee, Ian O. Lesser, *Turkish Foreign Policy in an Age of Uncertainty*, p. 7.

⁴¹ İlhan Uzgel, “Balkanlarla İlişkiler” in Baskın Oran ed., *Türk Dış Politikası*, Vol. II (1980-2001) (İstanbul: İletişim, 2001), pp. 481-483.

Bulgaria, Romania and Albania. Third, the struggle for influence in the Balkans in the 1990s took on a new shape as the Soviet factor had now diminished. While Russia tried to maintain influence on the new Yugoslavia and Greece, the role of Germany, Turkey, the U.S.A., and Italy increased in the region. Fourth, a number of new states emerged after the disintegration of Yugoslavia leading to the establishment of new bilateral relations. Fifth, although the new structure was expected to bring political and ideological variety, it brought a one-dimensional structure in domestic and foreign policy making. For all regional states, with the exception of Yugoslavia, liberalization, privatization, and integration with Western organizations became a top priority. Sixth, and related with the fifth, the regional states went through the burden of the transitional period. The hope and the will to liberalize remained, yet they were built on fragile state structures and non-existing liberal experience.⁴²

This “slow-motion”⁴³ but irreversible disintegration in Yugoslavia would pose new challenges to both regional states and outsiders as ensuing years proved. Although this disintegration *prima facie* might have sounded as good news for some circles, the tuning in the region brought hot war, replacing the Cold War. It was seen that the aftermath of Communism was not a clear break with the past because Communism had taken deeper roots than assumed. The new Balkans seemed hard to lend itself to a quick compromise. Unlike the European countries that had undergone transitions from authoritarian to democratic systems such as Spain, Greece and Portugal, the Balkan states had to go through a dual transition which suggested that

⁴² see *ibid.* for details. Uzgel further writes that these common defects and problems were coupled with individual economic problems in Bulgaria, Romania, Albania and Yugoslavia. For a compact account on the Balkan economic picture towards the 1990s, see Christopher Cviic, *Remaking the Balkans*, pp. 43-62.

⁴³ Christopher Cviic, *Remaking the Balkans*, p. 82.

they would have to change their political and economic systems simultaneously.⁴⁴ The main actors on the new Balkan stage were the regional states, Russia, Western Europe, Austria, Hungary, Italy and Greece and they were to have their share from the developments and their repercussions after Croatia and Slovenia declared independence which confirmed the conclusion that Yugoslavia had broken down irreversibly. Amidst this Balkan turmoil was Turkey, having to face the daunting task of handling the issue which was to take its place among other pressing foreign policy issues such as the PKK terrorism, the war between Azerbaijan and Armenia, and the middle-East in the 1990s with new activism in foreign policy.

2.5. A SHORT TRAVEL IN THE RELATIONS BETWEEN TURKEY AND THE BALKANS IN THE POST-COLD WAR ERA

As stated in the previous sections, a remarkable activism was observed in the Balkan connection of Turkish foreign policy in the early 1990s which gave rise to neo-Ottomanist arguments by the regional states.⁴⁵ The evaluation of these arguments shall be elaborated in the following sections, however it can briefly be stated at the outset that Turkey sought to improve the previously existing links and to establish itself more prominently in the region.⁴⁶ A considerable portion of Turkey's population, approximately 10 percent, has ties with the Balkans. Similarly, there are people of Turkish origin living in the Balkans. As Kramer notes, this led to a revival of the concept of *Dış Türkler* (Turks abroad) as a significant factor shaping Turkish

⁴⁴ Stephen Larrabee, "Long Memories and Short Fuses: Change and Instability in the Balkans" *International Security* 15(3) (1990-1991 Winter), p. 60.

⁴⁵ Şule Kut, "Turkey in the Post-Communist Balkans: Between Activism and Self-Restraint," *Turkish Review of Balkan Studies*, 4 (1998/1999), p. 39.

⁴⁶ Heinz Kramer, *A Changing Turkey: The Challenge to Europe and the United States*, p. 146.

regional foreign policy in the early 1990s.⁴⁷ Turkey's Balkan policy was regarded as a natural expression of existing geographical, historical, and cultural links from the viewpoint of decision makers in Ankara.⁴⁸

In the wake of the events in the Balkans, Turkish concern and fears grew by 1991, however the sequence of developments in the following year was not quite expected in Ankara, and beyond that, the Balkans were not a top priority issue in the first half of the same year since the pressing policy agenda included issues such as the war between Azerbaijan and Armenia, the Gulf War, and PKK terrorism. Turkey also had to include in its agenda the need to lay the basis for improving the relations with the former Soviet Union.⁴⁹ Yet, upon growing number of reports and news on ethnic cleansing and detention camps, Turkey inevitably became more involved Balkan issues in its active foreign policy framework. The upheaval in the Balkans caused a feverish debate in the Turkish media and public opinion that could not be overlooked by policymakers.⁵⁰ Indeed, "it was becoming increasingly involved in a situation it would like to have avoided but now it could not."⁵¹ The involvement was shaped by the strong Turkish public opinion that something must be done in Bosnia, the aloof stance of Western states who initially were inclined to suggest that the situation in Yugoslavia was a civil war and should be handled by those states themselves; and finally the pressure from the Muslim states.⁵² In face of such a conjuncture,

Ankara's policy of defining and pursuing Turkish national interests in the Balkans has had to maintain a balance between often exaggerated

⁴⁷ *ibid.*, p. 147.

⁴⁸ *ibid.*

⁴⁹ J.F. Brown, "Turkey: Back to the Balkans?" in *Turkey's New Geopolitics: From the Balkans to Western China*, p. 15

⁵⁰ Heinz Kramer, *A Changing Turkey: The Challenge to Europe and the United States*, p. 147.

⁵¹ J.F. Brown, "Turkey: Back to the Balkans?" in *Turkey's New Geopolitics: From the Balkans to Western China*, p. 152.

⁵² *ibid.*, pp. 153-154.

and interventionist public expectations, limited national means of action for creating stability in Turkish terms, constraints on the design and implementation of multinational regional architectures emanating from the conflict-ridden regional political pattern, and the necessity to keep Turkish policy in line with the policies of its western allies.⁵³

Kramer's assessment above captures Turkey's concerns at the material time. In this connection, it is also worthy to note that not only such domestic concerns but external factors have been among factors that determined Turkey's Balkan policy: 1) the Balkans were regarded as a strategic link between Turkish and Western Europe 2) almost three million Turkish citizens live in Western Europe, 3) the Balkans are seen as a gateway for Turkish trade route, and 4) the Balkans would continue to attract Ankara's attention as long as Turkey's foreign policy is shaped by a lasting interest in integrating with the European institutions.⁵⁴ Although these factors will be handled in the following sections, suffice it to say that they indicate that Turkey would be one of the players that would shape the Balkans' future.⁵⁵

Several analyses concluded that in Turkey's overall post-Cold War foreign policy within the paradigm of "daring versus caution," as one scholar has done in a 1998 study,⁵⁶ caution has dominated over daring with regard to Balkans - except for the active foreign policy of the first half of the 1990s. Yet some arguments asserted that Turkey acted aggressively in the Balkans.⁵⁷ It was suggested that Turkey tried to play the card of Islam in the Balkans; Greece also maintained that Turkey's activities in the Balkans were a set of efforts to create a Muslim axis. Taking the view even to

⁵³ Heinz Kramer, *A Changing Turkey: The Challenge to Europe and the United States*, p. 147.

⁵⁴ For further information, see *ibid.*, and Shireen Hunter, "Bridge or Frontier? Turkey's Post-Cold War Geopolitical Posture" *International Spectator*, xxxiv (1) (January-March 1999) on http://www.ciaonet.org.olj/iai/iai_99hus01.html.

⁵⁵ "Crises were Frozen, Time Could Not" on <http://www.diplomaticobserver.com/news-read.asp?id=205>

⁵⁶ see M. Mufti, "Daring and Caution in Turkish Foreign Policy" *Middle East Journal*, 52(1) 1998.

⁵⁷ see Stephanos Constantinides, "Turkey: The Emergence of a New Foreign Policy – The Neo-Ottoman Imperial Model" *The Journal of Political and Military Sociology*, Winter 1996, on http://www.findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_993719/is_199601/ai_n8750313/print

further geographical locations, this view also asserted that Turkey tried to do the same with regard to the Middle East, the Caucasus and Central Asia.⁵⁸ What followed from this argument was that “the unsuccessful attempt to play a major role in the Caucasus and Central Asia turned Turkey’s attention to more traditional directions, having to do with its Ottoman past: the Middle East and the Balkans.”⁵⁹ From such a point of view, the use of Muslim ties and the Ottoman past constituted the cement of creating the supposed Muslim – Ottoman axis in Europe, the so-called green corridor.

However, it should be noted that Ankara shaped its Balkan diplomacy in conformity with the principles and policies of the international community and refused to unilaterally participate in any possible military intervention. As Gangloff writes, for instance, when NATO issued an ultimatum to Serbia in February 1994, Turkey backed the initiative but offered its participation in air strikes only for logistic purposes.⁶⁰ Close cooperation with the international community implied that Turkey had acted in concert with Washington. There was a similarity between Turkish and American policies regarding the region. It has been correctly argued that Turkey helped the U.S.A. in the region since the latter did not have any pre-cognizance of the region.⁶¹ Ankara worked hand in hand with Washington particularly on sensitive issues such as the ethnic tensions in Bosnia, Macedonia and Kosovo,⁶² and it signed military agreements with Macedonia and Bosnia-Herzegovina in August 1995 and January 1996, respectively, only after the U.S.A. got involved in the settlement of the

⁵⁸ *ibid.*

⁵⁹ *ibid.*

⁶⁰ Sylvie Gangloff, “The Impact of the Ottoman Legacy on Turkish Policy in the Balkans 1991 – 1999” (November 2005), p. 4 on <http://www.ceri-sciences-po.org>.

⁶¹ Mesut Özcan, “An Overview of Turkey’s Policy in the Balkan and the Middle East in the 1990” p. 4, on <http://www.obiv.org.tr/2004/Balkanlar/002-MESUT%20OZCAN.pdf>.

⁶² Sylvie Gangloff, “The Impact of the Ottoman Legacy on Turkish Policy in the Balkans 1991 – 1999,” p. 4

conflict in Bosnia-Herzegovina in 1994-1995, and recognized the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) and signed military agreement with it.⁶³

It has been argued that Turkey's role, to a certain extent, in the Balkans could be compared to the geostrategic equivalent of Germany's attraction for most of the old Soviet Empire in Eastern Europe.⁶⁴ Although not in similar vein as the neo-Ottomanist charges, it has been argued that Turkey mattered so much in the region as Germany did in Europe. This argument was depicted most clearly in *The Times* editorial under the title "The Sick Man Recovers" with the following words:

No sooner has Germany begun to stretch its muscles across Central Europe than another historical ghost is emerging to the south. Turkey not only boasts a vigorous growing rate; it is now actively intervening in the economies of its sickly neighbors.⁶⁵

Noting Turkey as the already largest single source of foreign investment in Romania and Bulgaria, it has been maintained that from Brussels, it was still a developing country, however, from Bucharest (or Tashkent), it was a dynamic regional power. From the latter two, Turkey's well-stocked shops, thriving agriculture and developing infrastructure, a new Germany could pull them out of their stagnation and Turkey's contribution to regional influence could be invaluable.⁶⁶ In this connection, taking into account Mark Eyskens'⁶⁷ remark that the European Community (EC) was back then an economic giant, a political dwarf, and a military worm, it would not be erroneous to claim that this was confirmed by the

⁶³ *ibid.*

⁶⁴ Mehmet Ögütçü, "Turkey's Place in the New Architecture of Europe" 23 March 1998 on <http://www.aings.com/TurkeyEurope.htm>.

⁶⁵ Taken as cited in *ibid.*

⁶⁶ *ibid.*

⁶⁷ Former Belgian foreign minister.

EC's failure to handle the crisis in former Yugoslavia situated in a region which was a test ground for the EC.⁶⁸

It can be argued that both the neo-Ottomanist assumptions and others, as laid out above, charging Turkey with the said allegations seem to have missed out the point that Turkish decision makers were conscious that they had to act prudently in their relations with the Balkan states and avoid any impression that might be patronizing the newly emerged states as the "big brother" in the most colloquial sense of the term.⁶⁹ In the course of time, this self-restraint received so much criticism from senior academics and various circles.⁷⁰ Indeed, Turkey went to great lengths to avoid giving the image that it followed a neo-Ottomanist strategy and that it would become "a future protagonist in the Balkans" as one Greek scholar

⁶⁸ *ibid.*

⁶⁹ *ibid.* Regarding the Ottoman legacy in the Balkans, Maria Todorova explicitly argues that it is preposterous to look for an Ottoman legacy in the Balkans, for the Balkans *are* Ottoman legacy. Todorova maintains that there have come to be two main and different approaches to the Ottoman Empire in the Balkans and the problem of the Ottoman legacy. The first definition of Ottoman legacy suggests two interpretations of the concept. According to the first approach, it was an alien imposition on autochthonous Christian medieval societies in religious, social and institutional terms. Central to this interpretation is the argument that there is an incompatibility between Islam and Christianity, between newcomers and the settled populations. The second interpretation regards the Ottoman legacy as a mixture of Turkish, Islamic, Byzantine and Balkan traditions. It suggests that long years of coexistence must have produced a common legacy and sees the history of the Ottoman state as the history of all its constituent populations. Todorova asserts that both approaches, which she baptizes as "organic and separate" may be valid in more or less degrees, depending on the domain, i. e. economics, demography, culture, etc. According to Todorova, both views have their own rationale, approach and works of quality. For more information, see Maria Todorova, "The Ottoman Legacy in the Balkans", Carl Brown ed., *Imperial Legacy: The Ottoman Legacy on the Balkans and the Middle East* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), pp. 45-77; see also Dennison Russinow "The Ottoman Legacy in Yugoslavia's Disintegration and Civil War" in *ibid.*, pp. 78-99. Related with the Ottoman legacy in the Balkans and the arguments of the alleged neo-Ottomanist tendency towards the Balkans, the Ottoman legacy in Turkish foreign policy is in order. The Ottoman legacy to the Republic of Turkey in various venues is acknowledged, however it often comes as rejection of Ottoman ways such as refusing the burden of empire, rejection of pan-Islam and opting for an ethno-linguistic nation-state. The Balkan policy of Turkey after 1990 was no exception to this. However, as Roderic Davison argues, it should be noted that the Republic of Mustafa Kemal and his successors adapted the most effective aspects of Ottoman diplomatic practice *vis-à-vis* the West during the war times. See Roderic Davison, "Ottoman Diplomacy and Its Legacy", in *ibid.*, pp. 174-199.

⁷⁰ see , Şule Kut, "Turkey in the Post-Communist Balkans: Between Activism and Self-Restraint" pp. 39-45

commented.⁷¹ In this regard, it has been argued that Turkey's cautious foreign policy in the Balkans enjoyed support in some circles particularly in the very early phases of the Yugoslav conflict. To give one example, although the Turkish press showed its reaction to the ethnic cleansing in Knin and Vucovar in 1991, it was also recorded that although there were high casualties and destruction in Croatia, the Serbs were taking revenge upon the Croats who had "butchered" the Serbs during World War II in collaboration with the Axis powers.⁷² However, later on, this attitude did not prove to outweigh in relation to the one which accused Serbian policies and practices.

The activism in the first half of the 1990s lost previous momentum in the second half of the same decade to the extent that it found articulation in the agenda of the Turkish Grand National Assembly (TGNA) as a separate topic. In spite of the fact that Turkey existed in the Balkans in diplomatic/political, economic, and military terms, it lacked the organization between these venues to attain targeted levels in relations with the regional states, as one analyst had observed in 1999.⁷³ Almost a year later, the heads of TGNA Balkan States Interparliamentary Friendship Group requested in a written letter to former President Süleyman Demirel, former Prime Minister Bülent Ecevit and former Foreign Minister İsmail Cem that Turkey's Balkan policy be reformulated. This platform included Hayati Korkmaz from Bursa (Democratic Leftist Party/Bulgaria), Kemal Vatan from İzmir (Democratic Leftist Party/Macedonia), Turhan Tayan from Bursa (True Path Party/Greece), Fahrettin Gülenler (Democratic Leftist Party/Albania), Hüseyin Kansu from İstanbul (Virtue Party/Bosnia-Herzegovina) and Turhan İmamoğlu from Kocaeli (Democratic Leftist

⁷¹ Thanos Veremis, "Greek – Turkish Relations and the Balkans" *The South-Eastern European Yearbook* 1991, pp. 240-241, as cited in Şaban Çalış, "Turkey's Balkan Policy in the Early 1990s," *Turkish Studies* 2(1) (Spring 2001), p. 137.

⁷² Hasan Ünal, "Bosnia II: A Turkish Critique" *The World Today*, (July 1995), pp. 128-129 as cited in Şaban Çalış, "Turkey's Balkan Policy in the Early 1990s" *Turkish Studies*, p. 138.

⁷³ Hasan Cemal, "Dört Yılda 10 Bin Çocuk Öldü Saraybosna'da" 31 July 1999, *Milliyet*.

Party) and laid out the parameters to be taken as basis.⁷⁴ Following the letter, and after negotiation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, it was decided that a briefing be held to be attended by the deputies who were members of the commission. It was further envisaged that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs would revise its Balkan policy taking into consideration the arguments raised by the said deputies.⁷⁵ One noteworthy remark in the said letter at the turn of 2000 was:

it should be known that Greece's influence on the regional states is likely to increase due to the membership demands of these states. In the Balkans, as a gateway to Europe, Turkey has to maintain its friendly relations with states in face of Greece. It has to play a more active role and closely follow the developments in the Balkans...⁷⁶

Furthermore, stating that economic relations with the region were weak and fragile, the letter listed certain initiatives which Turkey could take at the time. Some among these were listed as 1) Macedonia should be accepted to the BSEC; 2) Balkan population studies should be carried out; 3) organized inventories of the İstanbul – Durres Highway be established; 4) Eximbank credits should be increased; 5) private sector should be encouraged to invest more in the region; 6) political contacts and consultations should be made more frequently.⁷⁷

It can be argued that this request for revising the regional policy echoed a frequently used phrase “Turkey has no Balkan policy” in the words of one deputy.⁷⁸ Such a judgment may be too straightforward and rough, or even banal, to be accepted in scholarly terms. However, it may well be accepted that, as mentioned, Turkey can

⁷⁴ “TBMM'den Balkan Uyarısı” 27 February 2000, *Zaman*.

⁷⁵ *ibid.*

⁷⁶ *ibid.*

⁷⁷ *ibid.*

⁷⁸ Hüseyin Kansu, “Sırp Kasabının Seçim Hilesi” 21 September 2000, *Akit*.

have a contoured Balkan policy if organization between diplomatic/political, economic and military venues is provided.

Most recently, from the European Union (EU), Turkey and the Balkans perspective, impacts of Turkey's possible EU membership on the Balkans have been on the agenda of relevant debates. It has been maintained that if Turkey becomes a full member of the EU, regional integration will be reinforced or it will be hastened; the solution of bilateral problems will be easier; Turco-Greek cooperation will serve as a locomotive in solving the conflicts in the region; democratization and respect for human and minority rights will gain new momentum and; irredentist and ultranationalist tendencies will be enervated.⁷⁹ One feels compelled to argue that these assumptions largely depend on an assumed given and are by no means exhaustive or all-inclusive. To give one example, Turkey's relations with Serbia and Bosnia-Herzegovina, for instance, may not follow the same expected course in a scenario that posits Turkey as a member of the EU, or a prospective membership may further increase the rivalry between Turkey and Greece in the Balkan context as the Balkan states might want to have closer relations with Greece and Turkey as two members that can pave the way for the regional states for future membership.

Given the historical background of relations between Turkey and the Balkans, the assumptions regarding Balkanization, the outlook of the Balkans in the early 1990s, and activism and caution in Turkish foreign policy, it is for the following sections to proceed with exploring the evolution of Turkey's diplomatic/political relations with the regional states upon such background in a comprehensive time frame from the early days of the Republic to date.

⁷⁹ Sedat Laçiner, "Turkey's EU's Membership's Possible Impacts on the Balkans: The End of 'Balkanization'?" *The Journal of Turkish Weekly* on <http://www.turkishweekly.net/articles.php?id=41>.

CHAPTER III

TURKEY AND THE BALKANS: FROM THE END OF THE GREAT WAR TO THE END OF THE COLD WAR

3.1. CONTOURS OF TURKEY'S BALKAN POLICY DURING THE INTERWAR PERIOD

Even though Turkey's policies towards the Balkans had the imprint of common history, geopolitical location, and cultural values, it was first and foremost shaped by Atatürk during the interwar period. Therefore, it has been rightly argued that the Balkan policies of the interwar years were those formulated by Atatürk.¹ The components of Atatürk's Balkan policy may be examined with different approaches depending on the method and nature of analysis. Ten components were substantial in shaping Atatürk's Balkan policy, which are of course tentative but of equal significance:

1. Realism: Realism was observed as the main pillar in the Balkan policies and it was based on the objectives defined in *Misak-ı Milli* (National Oath). Turkey achieved success in the Lausanne Peace Treaty negotiations with the realist stance it assumed and drew the boundaries of the new Turkish Republic

¹ Atilla Kollu, *Türkiye - Balkan İlişkileri, 1919 – 1939*, Ph.D. Dissertation Submitted to Hacettepe University, 1996, p. 106.

with this realist framework. For instance, it renounced part of the claims in Thrace as well as the actions filed for compensation. Likewise, it did not put forward an assertive attitude concerning the Dodecanese islands and the Aegean islands, all constituting thorny issues.²

2. *Tactical Expertise*: Tactical success was seen as important as strategy towards the Balkans. For instance, Turkey did not allow the regional states to form a hostile front against Turkey and followed closely the Little Entente supported by Italy.

3. *Openness for Dialogue*: The policies towards the Balkans were also based on keeping dialogue channels open. Personal contact between high level officials was seen beneficial as a tool in conducting successful diplomacy. In this context, many high level Balkan politicians were invited to Turkey.³

4. *Knowledge of History, Understanding the Present, and Interpretation of the Future*: A well-known fact, Atatürk's deep knowledge of history and use of experience proved useful in many future prospects. For instance, he estimated future developments in Germany after 1933, the approximate outbreak date of World War II, the failure of Italy, the defeat of Germany by the U.S.A., and the final victory of the U.S.S.R. during his conversation with General Macarthur in November 1932.⁴

5. *Reliability*: Turkey acted in accordance with the National Oath in law and practice, which in turn gained the approval of the regional states.

6. *Being Self-Reliant and Entering Alliances*: Atatürk's foreign policy making also rested on the premise that states which were not self-reliant were not

² *ibid.*, p. 107. The author cites Mehmet Gönübol, Ömer Kürkçüoğlu, *Atatürk Dönemi Türk Dış Politikasına Genel Bir Bakış*, IAMD, CI (2) March 1985, p. 461.

³ *ibid.*, the author cites Bilal Şimşir, "Atatürk'ün Yabancı Devlet Adamlarıyla Görüşmeleri, Yedi Belge (1930 – 1937)", *Belleten*, C.XVIII (177), January 1981, p. 1999.

⁴ *ibid.*, citing ASD, III, TTK, 1989, pp. 134-135.

likely to govern themselves independently. It was also based on entering into alliances if and when Turkey's interests so demanded. For instance, when Italy attacked Ethiopia in 1935, this was also perceived as a threat for Turkey which led Turkey to ally with Britain. However, before that, one of Turkey's main opponents in Lausanne was Britain.

7. *Active Foreign Policy*: Turkey followed an active foreign policy for its national cause during the National War of Liberation and the Montreux Convention. It assumed a pioneering role in the 1934 Balkan Entente as well.

8. *Nationalism – Humanitarianism*: Atatürk's foreign policy was in line with nationalism yet it was not on extreme lines. Although the defeated powers of the Great War - Italy and Germany - were swayed into extreme forms of nationalism in the 1920s and 1930s, this was not what happened in Turkey. In this context, Atatürk told the participants of the Balkan Conference in Ankara in 1931 that the only way to make human beings content would be a movement which would bring them together.⁵

9. *Western-Oriented Foreign Policy*: The basic pillar of Turkish Foreign Policy after independence was its western-oriented nature. In the interwar period when states signed countless nonaggression and friendliness pacts, Turkey tried to be part of the European family of nations in political and economic terms, which continued during World War II.

10. *"Peace at Home, Peace in the World"*: Turkey observed this principle after 1923 which helped produce a friendly atmosphere towards Turkey on the part of other states and that applied to the Balkans as well.⁶ Upon such backdrop,

⁵ *ibid.*, p. 110. The author cites Sevim Ünal, "Atatürk'ün Balkanlardaki Barışçı Siyasisi" (Presentation), IX. Turkish History Conference, 21 – 25 September 1981, Ankara.

⁶ The sequence and the content of these pillars are examined in detail in *ibid.*, pp. 106 -114. The following bilateral relations at the time are also examined in *ibid.*, pp. 115- 120.

Turkey's foreign policy towards Yugoslavia, Romania, Albania, Bulgaria, and Greece can be summarized briefly as follows.

a. Yugoslavia: Following the formation of Yugoslavia in 1918, the Yugoslavian officials began to pursue a friendly foreign policy towards the regional states. During the Turkish War of National Liberation, Britain asked for Yugoslavia's support against Turkey. However, this was turned down by Yugoslavia and a copy of the relevant letter explaining the refusal was also sent to Atatürk. This was returned by Atatürk by allotting a land for the Yugoslav Embassy to open in Ankara. In the course of the War of National Liberation, Atatürk also stated that Turkey would in no way enter a secret or an open alliance against Yugoslavia. Later on, the relations between Turkey and Yugoslavia were based on such a cooperative framework.⁷

b. Romania: Relations with Romania followed a friendly path mostly due to the lack of any territorial and minority-related problems. The two states became signatories of the Balkan Entente and direct bilateral political relations began in 1933.

c. Albania: The predominantly Muslim society in Albania and occupation of significant posts by Albanians in the Ottoman Empire in the past had already brought the two states close in the pre-1923 period. The relations improved when Interior Minister Ahmet Zogu annulled monarchy in 1922, which in fact lasted only 6 years. The relations were strained when Zogu's sister Saniye Sultan married Prince Abid, the son of Abdülhamid II.

⁷ *ibid.*, p. 116. Desanka Todorovic, *Yugoslavya ve Balkan Devletleri* (Belgrade: 1979), p. 80; Borivoy Erdelyan, *Politika*, 31 December 1989 and 12 January 1990, p. 9; and Mustafa Kemal Karahasan; "Mustafa Kemal Atatürk'ün Barış Felsefesi Işığı Altında Türkiye – Yugoslavya Dostluk İlişkileri", XI. Turkish History Conference, (Ankara: 1990), p. 2525 – 2570.

d. Bulgaria: In April 1920, Atatürk sent a letter to Bulgarian Prime Minister Stamboliski on behalf of the newly established Turkish Grand National Assembly, which was the first step to build diplomatic relations. Following this, a Bulgarian delegation came to Ankara and Atatürk sent a representative to Bulgaria. Relations improved not only in the political and diplomatic realm, but also in culture, science and education, sports, and economy.⁸

e. Greece: Despite the experience of war, Turkey and Greece were successful at making up for the nature of bilateral relations. The seemingly unsolvable problems such as the *établi* issue, Turks in Western Thrace, the status of the Orthodox Greeks, and the Patriarchate in İstanbul were solved, averting a possible war.⁹

3.2. EPISODE I: BALKAN ENTENTE (1934)

As the first attempt of its kind, the Balkan Entente was signed in February 1934 by Turkey, Greece, Romania, and Yugoslavia. The agreement intended to guarantee the signatories' territorial integrity and political independence against threat by another regional state. In this connection, the Balkan states aimed to transform the Balkans into a stable and secure region. Despite the hostilities among them, the Balkan states engaged in efforts to form a Balkan union. As the most war-torn country after World War I which was swayed into economic depression in the immediate aftermath of the war which was coupled with remarkable loss of territory, Bulgaria was the first state to attempt to build a rapprochement with the

⁸ *ibid.*, pp. 118 – 119.

⁹ *ibid.*, p. 120.

regional states. Bulgarian Prime Minister Stamboliski visited Belgrade and Bucharest and proposed the establishment of an impartial commission to find a just solution for the Macedonian problem. According to Stamboliski, the solution of this issue could bring the two states closer in Southeast Europe and could even lead to their organization as one state. However, this was not welcomed by Belgrade and Bucharest, which emerged as the winners of the war and did not want to discuss the issue at the table. This encouraged internal enemies of Stamboliski. Eventually, he was assassinated by Internal Macedonian Revolution Organization and soldiers who wanted close relations with Italy which was against a bloc in the Balkans. After Stamboliski, all military governments which took power in Bulgaria followed revisionist and extreme types of nationalism, something not uncommon in Europe at the time. It was such behaviors by Bulgaria that other Balkan states were prompted to come up with the inclination to build a union. However, one of the most significant impediments before this idea was the rocky relations between Turkey and Greece.¹⁰ However, rapprochement between Turco-Greek relations began in 1930. The Locarno Pact, Briand - Kellogg Pact, and Litvinov Protocol also contributed to regional cooperation. Indeed, the first steps for a Balkan union did not come from the Balkan governments *per se*, but through informal efforts. In the peace conference held in Athens in October 1929, Chairman and former Greek Foreign Minister Alexander Papanastasiou repeatedly put forward the idea of a Balkan Entente and all Balkan delegations approved the idea and the first Balkan Conference took place in Athens. These conferences were held annually afterwards in İstanbul, Bucharest, and Thessaloniki, which paved the way for the establishment of Balkan Trade and Industry Chamber,

¹⁰ Oral Sander, *Balkan Gelişmeleri ve Türkiye (1945 – 1965)* (Ankara: Sevinç, 1969), pp. 7-8.

Maritime Office, Agriculture Office, Tourist Federation, Law Commission, and Medical Federation.¹¹ Turkey assumed an active role for realizing political cooperation and received the approval of Bulgaria, which in fact proved futile later. Taking into account that the Little Entente¹² which had assumed a continuous status as well as the National Socialism in Germany in 1933, the regional states were also prompted to act. Turkey and Greece decided to conclude a cooperation pact in the Balkans and forwarded their inclination to Bulgaria. When Bulgaria expressed its reluctance, Turkey and Greece signed the Entente Cordiale in 1933, which intended to secure the common borders for a period of 10 years. While this pact raised negative concerns on the part of Bulgarians, it prompted Romania to sign a friendship, nonaggression, and arbitration and cooperation agreement with Turkey, mostly for two reasons: concerns over Bulgaria's revisionist attitudes and Romania's maritime trade links with Turkey which provided passage through the Straits. Yugoslavia followed suit by way of signing a similar agreement with Turkey in 1933 due to Bulgarian revisionism, and Italy's growing control in Albania which had the potential to expand. Needless to say, the Turkish role in these bilateral agreements would be pivotal. Given these three bilateral agreements, it was time to merge them together under one agreement which materialized with the Balkan Entente.¹³

¹¹ Fahir Armaoğlu, *20. Yüzyıl Siyasi Tarihi* (İstanbul: Alkım, 2005), vol: 1-2; 1914 – 1995, pp. 337 – 338.

¹² The Little Entente was a mutual defense agreement among Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, and Romania in the interwar period. It was directed against German and Hungarian influence in the Danube River basin.

¹³ There are contending views on taking Bulgarian revisionism as the main driving force to establish a Balkan union. Although it is commonly observed in relevant writings, Sander does not share the idea that it was the only factor. Likewise, he argued that German and Italian expansion designs in the Balkans were not fundamental, either. According to Sander, the only state that saw the Balkan Entente as a collective security measure against Italy was Turkey. A combination of Bulgarian, Italian and German threats lied at the heart of the Entente itself, and not Bulgarian revisionism alone. For more information, see pp. 9-11. See also Osman Metin Öztürk, "Türk Dış Politikasında Balkanlar", Ömer E. Lütem and Birgül Demirtaş-Coşkun (eds.), *Balkan Diplomasisi* (Ankara: ASAM, 2001), pp. 5-9.

The initially low levels of cohesion which were supposed to grow in fact loosened in face of the ensuing developments as the political situation in Europe underwent turmoil. In particular, there were fluctuations in Yugoslavia's domestic and foreign policy. However, Yugoslavia preserved political solidarity and continued negotiations with Turkey until 1939. In general, the regional states could at least discuss issues among themselves and sometimes act together. For instance, they discussed the stance to be taken in case of a possible pact between France, Russia, and Italy, the integrity of interests of the Balkan Entente in face of the 1935 French – Italian pact, and the guarantee to be given to Austria.¹⁴ Following the conclusion of the agreement, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs sent the following letter to the embassies, explaining the scope and the aim of the pact:

1. The core of the Entente is the fact that the agreements aim to keep the territories within and between Balkan states safe from assault and attack. None of the four states have undertaken any obligation *vis-à-vis* another concerning borders outside the Balkans.

2. Just as other governments, Turkish government also invited Bulgaria to join the Entente. However, the government, which is observed to value certain emotional concerns, did not accept the invitation.

3. Although the significance of the Entente in Turkish foreign policy is obvious, this does not imply any change in the foreign policy pillars observed to date, it does not conflict with mutual commitments with other states.¹⁵

¹⁴ For detailed information on the talks on the road to the signing of the Balkan Entente, reactions of key European states such as Britain, France, and Italy as well as the Soviet Union, and military agreements concluded in the framework of the Balkan Entente, see T.C. Dışişleri Bakanlığı, Araştırma ve Siyaset Planlama Genel Müdürlüğü, *Türk Dış Politikasında 50 Yıl: Cumhuriyetin İlk On Yılı ve Balkan Paktı (1923 – 1934)* Vol. III, (Ankara: 1974), pp. 308 – 368. See Appendix A for the agreement.

¹⁵ *ibid.*, p. 342.

Just as it was Turkey which assumed a pivotal role in the conclusion of a Balkan agreement, it was also Turkey that loyally adhered to the Entente until it came to an end. However, loose cooperation between the regional states which was intended to be eliminated was never eliminated due to certain weaknesses. For instance, a secret agreement was signed together with the Entente. In accordance with this agreement, if a party was attacked by a non-Balkan state, and a Balkan state helped the aggressor, the other parties would declare war on this Balkan state. However, the compromise did not materialize since Turkey informed the Soviet Union that it would not help Romania in case of a war between the Soviet Union and Romania. Likewise, Greece stated that this secret agreement would not lead to war between Greece and Italy.¹⁶ That said, it can be argued that the collapse of the Balkan Entente was fivefold. First, the Entente was an easily dissolving group of relatively weak states which had a restricted objective. The member states appeared to have neglected that they also had territories to be defended against powerful states. Turkey realized this and that was why it opted for a strong organization which would be capable of defending these boundaries against great powers, thinking that such an organization could function as a balancing factor *vis-à-vis* European blocs.¹⁷ Second, the mistake made before the Great War was repeated by way of dividing the Balkan states into two hostile camps. In more specific terms, leaving Bulgaria and Albania out turned the Entente itself into an issue. Bulgaria and Yugoslavia eventually inked a friendship and nonaggression pact in 1937. This rapprochement harmed the spirit of the Entente and accelerated its dissolution. Third, when Italy attacked Ethiopia in

¹⁶ Fahir Armaoğlu, *20. Yüzyıl Siyasi Tarihi*, pp. 339- 340.

¹⁷ Oral Sander, *Balkan Gelişmeleri ve Türkiye (1945 – 1965)*, p. 12, citing Mehmet Gönübol and Cem Sar, *Atatürk ve Türkiye'nin Dış Politikası, 1919-1939* (İstanbul: Milli Eğitim Publication House, 1963), p. 101.

1935, and the League of Nations proved ineffective; it was observed that France, which was seen as influential on the Balkans, looked weak. This also had its own impact on the Entente states. The participation of the Entente states in the economic measures decreased their trade with Italy, which proved in the interest of Germany, which could bolster its trade relations with the Balkans. This is one of the reasons why some of the Entente states allied with Germany later on. Moreover, the dictatorships which emerged in the Balkan states in the interwar years facilitated German penetration in the Balkans. Fourth, the Entente could not go further than being a mere military alliance. The Entente could not materialize a comprehensive understanding as it did not lead to the establishment of substantial organizations. Fifth, the parties had diverging views on foreign policy. Greece was the most important state in this respect. Greece wanted secure boundaries only with Bulgaria and did not want to defend Yugoslavia in case of a possible war between Italy and Albania as it did not want to risk a war with Italy. What Turkey stressed most was the militarization of the Straits which was demilitarized after the Treaty of Lausanne. Romania wanted the issue to be discussed in the Balkan Entente conferences and wanted Turkey to consult Romania in advance regarding the issue. Yugoslavia and Romania were in compromise with respect to enhancing the Entente. Yet, while Romania approved the improvement of French – Soviet relations, Yugoslavia did not like the idea because it still hosted the ambassador of the Tsarist Russia to Belgrade.¹⁸ On the other hand, the Entente had not received a welcome by Czechoslovakia, either. This was to be coupled by a deepening depression in Europe and the appearance of Berlin – Rome Axis by 1936. When German influence became visible in 1936, Romania feared Germany more than it

¹⁸ Oral Sander, *Balkan Gelişmeleri ve Türkiye (1945 – 1965)*, pp. 11.13.

feared Bulgaria and Hungary and thus weakened its ties with the Entente. Yugoslavia preferred to cooperate with Italy and Bulgaria in face of the said Axis.¹⁹ The problems were discussed during the Council of Ministers meeting in Belgrade in 1936. Greece's reservation regarding Italy and Turkey's militarization of the Straits were accepted. However, the parties did not reach a compromise regarding the expansion of the Entente. Upon such background, the Entente completed its lifetime and dissolved during World War II.²⁰

3.3. EFFORTS FOR PEACE DURING WORLD WAR II AND THE BALKANS

German activities towards the Balkans, particularly in Bulgaria and Romania, in late 1940 and early 1941 raised serious concerns on the part of Turkey, Britain, and the Soviet Union. While there were improving relations between the Soviet Union and Turkey, there were deteriorating relations between Germany and the Soviet Union. Britain feared that Germans could get hold of Iranian and Iraqi oil routes and the road to Suez when the Germans entered Bulgaria, so much as to cause Churchill to send a relevant letter to İnönü, and therefore Britain wanted Turkey to declare war. However, this was rejected by Turkey. Unlike Britain, Germany did not want Turkey to enter the war. Meanwhile, Britain put forward the idea of another combination in case the Germans settled in the Balkans: a bloc to be established by Turkey, Greece, Yugoslavia and Bulgaria. This was welcomed by Turkey but did not yield any result. Yugoslavia turned down the

¹⁹ Fahir Armaoğlu, *20. Yüzyıl Siyasi Tarihi*, p. 340.

²⁰ Oral Sander, *Balkan Gelişmeleri ve Türkiye (1945 – 1965)*, p. 14.

idea since it saw it as provoking Germany. Turkey wanted the Soviets to join and also wanted U.S. support in that respect, as Turkey did not believe Britain would supply Turkey with adequate arms and equipment. Indeed, the U.S.A. expressed interest in the idea, which was most clearly observed when Roosevelt sent a representative to Ankara. However, the U.S.A. found Turkey's aircraft requirement excessive for some reason and seemed to have missed the point that Turkey wanted to secure itself with adequate equipment if it were to wage a possible war.²¹

From a general perspective, it has been argued that the story of the Balkans during World War II can be outlined as one in which first fascism and then Communism emerged victorious from the battle between them.²² The first country to fall into the hands of Axis powers was Romania. As a country which had enlarged its territory after the end of World War I, Romania faced equal territorial loss after World War I, upon which it was prompted to restore these territories by approaching Germany.²³ Eventually, the German army entered Romania in 1940 under the pretext of training Romanian army and that constituted the initial step for Romania to turn into a totalitarian state.

Germany followed suit in Bulgaria as it wanted to secure the Balkans before it proceeded with the Soviet Union. Hitler's aim was to enter Bulgaria and then Greece, which was well understood by Bulgarian King Boris. It goes without saying that Bulgaria's principal aim was to gain outlet to the Aegean and to take back Macedonia which it had lost back in the end of World War I. King Boris was known for his hatred for Communism. He was also of German origin. Therefore, it

²¹ Fahir Armaoğlu, *20. Yüzyıl Siyasi Tarihi*, pp. 408-409.

²² Oral Sander, *Balkan Gelişmeleri ve Türkiye (1945 – 1965)*, p. 15.

²³ *ibid.* During the 1877 – 1878 war, Romania had done the same and sought to establish friendly relations with Great Powers to be able to restore Bessarabia which was given to Tsarist Russia.

was perhaps no surprise that he joined the Axis front in 1941. The Axis powers invaded Yugoslavia and Greece in the same year. With the invasion of Crete as the last drop, all of the Balkans fell into the hands of Germany.²⁴ It is acknowledged that the fall of the whole peninsula into Germany's domination raised serious concerns in Turkey. It is argued that Turkey, as the strongest country among other Entente signatories, was willing to assume the mediator role between the regional states and had drawn attention to the dangers posed by Germany, before the war broke out in 1939.²⁵ A year later, when the war was continuing at full-scale, the Balkans states convened in Belgrade, where Turkey made a similar appeal by way of drawing attention to the urgent need to take action for the second time. The Balkan states once again turned down the appeal maintaining that Turkey tried to pull the regional states to British – French line. Turkey's appeals for taking efforts to formulate a common decision and action totally failed when Yugoslavia was invaded by the German troops in early 1941.²⁶

3.4. COMMUNISM ENTERS THE SCENE

The establishment of Communism in the Balkans and the attempts to add Greece into this portrait influenced the foreign policy of Turkey. In more specific terms, Turkey found itself encircled by the Soviet Union geographically and isolated in diplomacy in the immediate aftermath of the war. Moreover, the Soviet Union sent a note to Turkey in March 1945 stating that it would not renew the nonaggression pact of 1925, demanded bases in the Straits and claimed territory in Eastern

²⁴ *ibid.*, pp. 15-16.

²⁵ *ibid.*, p. 16.

²⁶ *ibid.*, pp. 16-17.

Anatolia. All these drew Turkey into isolation because the spirit of solidarity between the Great powers was still in the air and this very fact compelled the thought that the West would not support Turkey in case Turkey opposed the Soviet Union. In this connection, Turkey considered the rise of Communism in the Balkans after World War II a serious issue due to the possibility that the Soviet Union could further proceed to dominate the Aegean and perhaps the Mediterranean. The intentions were seen relatively more clearly when the fact that the Soviet Union demanded administrative claims in Libya, and Tito's coveting Thessaloniki were also taken into account. Following this, the Soviet Union preserved its claims and claimed more in the 1946 note demanding the amendment of the Montreux Convention articles in favor of the littoral states.²⁷ When Turkey rejected the Soviet note on the Balkans, it was seen that the efforts to establish a south Slav Federation and mutual alliance agreements between Communist Balkan states prompted Turkey to become even more concerned.²⁸ A possible Yugoslav – Bulgarian alliance in the Balkans was exactly what Turkey tried to avert since the Balkan Entente days. Turkey viewed this rapprochement directed against Greece, indirectly against Turkey and the Mediterranean. Upon Turkey's rejection of the Soviet note, the Soviet Union acknowledged that it would not achieve superiority in the Straits with Turkey's cooperation. So, through its domination in the Balkans, it would now threaten the Straits as well as Greece. That was why Turkey declared martial law in Thrace, the reasons of which are found in former Prime Minister Recep Peker's remarks in May 1947 when he said that "[t]he area covering martial law in Turkey is the Straits and the Marmara basin surrounding

²⁷ Yavuz Sezer, *Demokrat Parti'nin İlk Yıllarında Balkan Politikası*, A Master's Thesis Submitted to Dokuz Eylül University, 2006, p. 50.

²⁸ *ibid.*, the author cites Aptülâhat Akşin, *Türkiye'nin 1945'ten Sonraki Dış Politika Gelişmeleri: Ortadoğu Meseleleri* (İstanbul: 1959), p. 13.

the Straits. If there is to be an assault on Turkey, one of the first and most fragile directions can be this region. For this reason, the most sensitive point that needs to be secured is the region in question”.²⁹ In the same years, former Foreign Minister Necmettin Sadak’s reply to a question asked in the parliament reflected Turkey’s relevant concerns clearly as he said that there was a direct relationship between the Greek Civil War and the polarization in the Balkans; that the agreements were part of a larger project which obviously threatened security; and that unlike Yugoslavia and Bulgaria, Turkey did not perceive the mutual agreements as efforts to form a peaceful front.³⁰

It was argued that if a Communist regime took power in Greece, the possibility for Turkey to become “an island in the sea of Communism” would be reinforced.³¹ The aim of internal and external pressure was to establish a socialist government in Greece and place Greece among other satellites of Moscow. It would follow that the whole peninsula would fall under Soviet hands, allowing the Soviets to reach the Aegean. In face of growing security threat, Turkey stated that UN’s efforts were not adequate and called for stricter measures.³² It has been correctly argued that the most important consequence for Turkey with respect to the efforts to establish blocs in the Balkans and Greek Civil War was that Turkey began to see regional conflicts as those between the U.S.A. and the Soviet Union and as a matter of aligning its relevant policies parallel to those of the U.S.A. as Necmettin Sadak’s remarks indicated:

²⁹ Oral Sander, *Balkan Gelişmeleri ve Türkiye (1945 – 1965)*, pp. 42-43.

³⁰ *ibid.*, pp. 43-44.

³¹ Yavuz Sezer, *Demokrat Parti’nin İlk Yıllarında Balkan Politikası*, p. 52, *citing* Altemur Kılıç, *Turkey and the World* (Washington D.C.: Public Affairs Press, 1959), p. 136.

³² *ibid.*, p. 53.

The views of our government are the same with those of the U.S.A. and Britain. ... The future measures to be taken by the U.S.A. and Britain with a view to averting the efforts of Cominform to turn Greece into a satellite state will definitely concern us closely.³³

3.5. THE AFTERMATH OF WORLD WAR II

3.5.1. EPISODE II: BALKAN PACT AND ALLIANCE

Turkey's membership in NATO after World War II ushered a new period in Turkish foreign policy, in which Turkey was observed to reinforce security and defense systems in the Middle East and the Eastern Mediterranean and to play a more active role. Turkey's membership in NATO had a negative impact on the Soviet Union which was most openly seen with the note sent by the Soviet Union in November 1951. The note stated that the responsibility to arise from joining this bloc directed against the Soviet Union would rest on the Turkish government. In reply, Turkey stated that although Turkey had acted in peaceful lines, the same could not be expected from the Soviet Union. The second note received in late November 1951 did not have a less hostile tone. This hostile attitude prompted Turkey to seek to form new alliances in its vicinity. Although NATO stretched into the Balkans, it did not include Yugoslavia. Yugoslavia was not included in the Soviet bloc since 1948, either. Therefore it would be easier to include Yugoslavia into a new alliance system. Moreover, as the efforts of Turkey and Greece showed, a rapprochement had started between the two states and Greek foreign minister visited Turkey in early 1952, which would be followed by more mutual visits. It

³³ 18 February 1948, in Oral Sander, *Balkan Gelişmeleri ve Türkiye (1945 – 1965)*, p. 48.

seemed that with these mutual visits, the Balkan Entente of 1934 had been revived and Yugoslavia was part of the contacts, too. The first positive result was seen when Turkey, Greece, and Yugoslavia signed the Friendship and Cooperation Agreement in Ankara in late February 1953. This was not an alliance agreement *per se*, yet it was an important step to that end. The agreement envisaged economic, cultural and security cooperation. In accordance with Article 6 of the Agreement, the parties would not engage in any alliance or any act which was against the interests of other parties.³⁴ The pact did not last long, either. That is why examination of the pact is in order. The factors in the establishment of the Balkan pact can be summarized in four subheadings.

i. The threat posed by pro-Moscow Balkan states: After the exclusion of Yugoslavia from the Soviet bloc in 1948, the friction between the two blocs which was being shaped in the Balkans escalated. The Bulgarian pressure on Turkey; the measures by Bulgaria, Romania, Hungary and Albania against Yugoslavia; and the deteriorating relations between Greece, Bulgaria and Albania were key factors in this friction. Bulgaria's deportation policy towards the Turkish minority in 1950 – 1951 made Turkey concerned, and given the bipolar nature of the structure at the time, this was perceived as a Soviet pressure on Turkey via Bulgaria. Furthermore, Turkey saw itself more isolated on this occasion as the Western states remained indifferent. From then on, Turkey accelerated efforts to enter NATO and took the initiative in regional terms. Turkey's membership in NATO was not welcomed by Bulgaria at all. Yugoslavia also saw itself encircled by three Soviet satellites. Belgrade was open to easy invasion due to geographical location. The Yugoslav

³⁴ Fahir Armaoğlu, *20. Yüzyıl Siyasi Tarihi*, pp. 521-522. Celal Bayar was of the opinion that Balkan Entente of the 1930s must be revived and he launched a preparation to that end. He thought the revival of the agreement would be a basis for a prospective Mediterranean pact. The idea of a regional pact was also supported by the U.S.A., Yavuz Sezer, *Demokrat Parti'nin İlk Yıllarında Balkan Politikası*, pp. 54-55.

army was equipped by the Soviet Union mostly with inactive equipment. There were also rumors that the Bulgarian, Romanian and Hungarian armies would invade Yugoslavia. The border clashes escalated according to what Yugoslav news reported, killing Yugoslav soldiers. In short, Yugoslavia feared being attacked. On the other hand, Greece had emerged from a civil war which was thought to be supported by its northern neighbors. Greece had a border problem with Bulgaria concerning the Rhodope Mountains. It had strained relations with Bulgaria claiming that Bulgaria abetted gangs of Greece, mutual claims over Macedonia, minorities, Bulgaria's demands concerning outlet to the Aegean, and Greece's demand for reparations regarding World War II. Therefore, from the Greek point of view, Turkey and Yugoslavia could be seen as a front against Albania and Bulgaria. Thus, it would be seen that the policies of pro-Soviet Balkan states in the Balkans were an amalgam of significant factors causing Greece, Yugoslavia, and Turkey to become concerned.³⁵

ii. Trieste problem: The Trieste problem emerged as an issue between Italy and Yugoslavia after World War II. Tito saw the issue as a matter of prestige and this had great impact on Yugoslav foreign policy after 1950. The Trieste problem strained the relations between the two states. Yugoslavia feared that Italy would take Trieste and enter the Balkans. This was one of the reasons why Yugoslavia engaged in cooperation with Greece and Turkey and tried to show that the Balkans were for Balkan people.³⁶

iii. Economic aid: The economic aid to be received from the West and the U.S.A. was another important factor in pulling the three states closer. Some arguments even posit that there were only two reasons why Greece, Turkey and

³⁵ Oral Sander, *Balkan Gelişmeleri ve Türkiye (1945 – 1965)*, pp. 81-86.

³⁶ *ibid.*, pp. 87-88.

Yugoslavia engaged in cooperation. Such arguments maintain that the Soviet Union was seen as an enemy by all of the three states and their depending on the West in economic and military terms.³⁷

iv. Vacuum in NATO strategy and Western support: The security line starting from the North Atlantic stretching across Iran lacked only Yugoslavia in it. The need to pull Yugoslavia into European defense system was obvious as Yugoslavia had a strategic location.³⁸ To fill the vacuum, the West could take in Yugoslavia under the NATO umbrella and draw Yugoslavia into cooperation with Greece and Turkey. In turn, such cooperation would strengthen the NATO front.³⁹

3.5.2. ON THE ROAD TO THE PACT

3.5.2.1. GREEK EFFORTS FOR COOPERATION IN THE MEDITERRANEAN

The articulation of the Balkan Pact could be taken back to 1947, when Greek Prime Minister Konstantinos Tsaldaris visited Rome and stressed the defense line established between the West and the Soviet bloc. Stretching from the Caucasus to the Alps, the line was composed of the Straits, Macedonia, and Thrace. This line was parallel to the Balkan defense line. The articulation of the issue by Greece in Italy was welcomed by Turkey. However, the efforts for cooperation between

³⁷ *ibid.*, p. 88.

³⁸ If there was an attack on Yugoslavia from Bulgaria, and the Yugoslav troops retreated to the West, Greece's Vardar valley would be open to aggressor's moves. If Hungary attacked, and Yugoslav troops retreated to the mountains leaving Ljubljana, Trieste and Po plain would come under threat. If there was a threat against Turkey and Greece, a balance could be struck by cooperation between Greece and Yugoslavia against the aggressor, *ibid.*, p. 89.

³⁹ *ibid.*

Turkey, Greece and Italy failed because Italy secured itself under NATO umbrella and the separation of Italy's and Yugoslavia's ways due to Trieste problem. Therefore, the focus on Italy now shifted to Yugoslavia. This implied that rather than forming a Mediterranean alliance, forming a Balkan Pact against Bulgaria and the Soviet Union was the question.⁴⁰

3.5.2.2. TURKISH EFFORTS FOR COOPERATION IN THE MEDITERRANEAN

After the unrest caused by Bulgaria's deportation policies, Turkey took the initiative to act for cooperation in the Balkans. This began with former Prime Minister Adnan Menderes' visit to Athens in 1952. The two states concurred that trilateral talks must begin and Turkey should take the initiative to make an appeal to Yugoslavia in that respect. However, it is noteworthy that although Tito reciprocated positively to cooperation appeals, he hesitated to engage in a written agreement with Turkey and Greece for a short time arguing that an oral compromise would be even more influential in building friendly relations. To reiterate, this did not last long and Tito's attitude revealed by 1952 that it would cooperate with Turkey and Greece.⁴¹

⁴⁰ *ibid.*, pp. 90-92.

⁴¹ *ibid.*, pp. 93-95.

3.5.2.3. WESTERN SUPPORT AND BILATERAL CONTACTS

While the three states continued negotiating at increasing pace, the U.S.A. and Britain also showed their interest. Top level officials from both states had contacts in Greece, Turkey, and Yugoslavia.⁴² What was left to be done was to hold bilateral contacts in the military venue between Turkey, Greece and Yugoslavia. In this connection, Foreign Minister Fuad Köprülü's visit to Belgrade in January 1953 was the first official attempt to form the basis of the Balkan Pact. In the same month, Köprülü visited Athens during which it was openly stated that a pact would be signed between Turkey, Greece and Yugoslavia. The last visit was by Greek Foreign Minister Stephanos Stephanopoulos to Belgrade in February 1953. After the bilateral talks, trilateral negotiations started. The government's Balkan policy also received support from the opposition in Turkey.⁴³

3.5.3. THE BALKAN PACT

The Treaty of Friendship and Collaboration was signed by Turkey, Greece and Yugoslavia on 28 February 1953 in Ankara.⁴⁴ As mentioned above, the treaty envisaged military, economic, technical, and cultural cooperation as well as not entering alliances against any of the parties. It was also stated that the treaty would not affect the liabilities of Turkey and Greece concerning NATO. Different from the Balkan Entente, the Balkan Pact envisaged a common defense understanding and cooperation among general staffs of the three parties. However, the Balkan

⁴² *ibid.*, pp. 95-96.

⁴³ *ibid.*, pp. 96-98.

⁴⁴ See Appendix B.

Entente stipulated that each party would defend itself with its own army in case of an attack. Still, the Balkan Pact was not merely a military alliance although it came into being as a result of military considerations. It foresaw collaboration between three general staffs. The reason why it was not a pure military alliance was that a legal ground to reconcile the status of Turkey and Greece as NATO members with that of Yugoslavia was not possible. Therefore, it was decided to sign such an agreement as a first step towards establishing a military alliance. It should also be stated that the pact was open to accepting other Balkan states if they so wished and if the signatories approved, just as the Balkan Entente. These two states were also called on to join the pact in 1953. It is also noteworthy that a socialist state concluded a treaty with Western states independent from the directions of the Soviet Union, the signals of which were in fact observed when Yugoslavia departed from the Communist bloc back in 1948. The ensuing years also made it clear that the country would remain socialist, but not on Soviet terms.

The main objective of the Soviet Union appeared to prevent the pact to turn into an alliance. The Yugoslavian example showed that Stalin's Yugoslavia policies did not pull Yugoslavia closer to the Soviet Union; on the contrary, it caused Yugoslavia to build cooperative relations with the West. The Soviets feared that the Pact could turn into an alliance and as such it could be supported by the 6th U.S. Fleet in the Mediterranean and threaten the southern flank of the Soviet Union in Europe. This would mean that the industrial and oil sources of the Soviet bloc could be under risk. Seeing that previous policies had not worked, the Soviet Union launched a policy of friendliness towards Turkey, Greece, and Yugoslavia. It sent a note to Turkey stating that it did not have any territorial claims from Turkey in May 1953. It also lifted the economic measures on

Yugoslavia. Bulgaria followed suit and the former Bulgarian Prime Minister stated that Bulgaria wanted to build friendly relations with Turkey and Yugoslavia on the basis of mutual respect.⁴⁵

3.5.4. BALKAN ALLIANCE

The signing of the Balkan Alliance became possible by Tito's visit to Ankara and Athens in 1954. During the talks in Ankara, the parties reached a compromise that it was time to sign an alliance and that the fact that Yugoslavia was not a NATO member was not an obstacle before signing an alliance. Eventually, the alliance was signed on 9 August 1954 in Bled, Yugoslavia. It was a military agreement which recognized all parties' liabilities concerning the U.N.'s as well as Greece's and Turkey's liabilities concerning NATO. It was based on the spirit of NATO because it stated that in case of an attack on one of the parties, the other parties, alone or together, would respond in the same way. In other words, it was based on all for one, one for all principle. The alliance signed in Bled can be considered as a significant contribution for the Western defense system since it covered Yugoslavia, and as such, it encompassed the Eastern Adriatic coasts, Serbian mountains, and Vardar and Morava valleys. Apart from military cooperation, the parties also signed an agreement to establish a consultation assembly in March 1955. Moreover, in the same month, the parties stated that a trilateral conference on economy would be held for improvement in the economic as well as technical,

⁴⁵ *ibid.*, pp. 102-103.

cultural, and other areas. The parties also signed a postal communication agreement.⁴⁶

3.5.5. THE END OF EPISODE II: DISSOLUTION OF THE BALKAN ALLIANCE

When military necessities disappeared, Balkan alliance also gave signals of dissolution. However, first and foremost, certain changes came to fore in Yugoslavia's foreign policy after 1955 when the Soviet officials visited Yugoslavia. This visit was one that gave the message that post-1948 policies of the Soviet Union towards Yugoslavia were erroneous and that Communism on nationalist lines was not something unacceptable. With this visit, Yugoslavia saw that the attitude of the Soviets would be different than before. This meant that military cooperation with Turkey and Greece was not a must. This was to be coupled with Britain's joining the alliance which Tito considered as adding an imperialist characteristic to the alliance. However, Tito did not unquestioningly ally with the Soviet Union, either. Rather, he chose to follow active neutrality after 1955. As its name suggested, active neutrality implied that there would be no place of any kind of alliance within it.⁴⁷

On Turkey's part, the most important development that worked to the detriment of the alliance was the strained Turkish – Greek relations due to the Cyprus issue in 1955. The Greek government applied the UN regarding the Cyprus issue one week after the Balkan alliance was signed. The relations further

⁴⁶ *ibid.*, pp. 107-112.

⁴⁷ *ibid.*, pp. 113-115.

deteriorated with the 6 – 7 September events in Turkey. Unlike the public reaction against Greece, Turkish government tried to maintain Balkan alliance. The U.S.A. was also pushing for the preservation of the alliance arguing that the issue of aid would be reconciled by the U.S.A. Although Turkey was supportive of maintaining the alliance, it did not receive positive reciprocation by the other two other parties.⁴⁸ In the end, the pact ended up being an alliance on paper, in which even regular meetings could not be held by 1956. The pact was annulled implicitly by the statements of Yugoslavian and Greek foreign ministries in 1960. Viewed through Turkey's lens, the alliance did not bring much benefit for Turkey. The 20-year term foreseen for the alliance ended in 1975 and was not renewed. It has been correctly argued that the Balkan alliance was exemplary as being a product of the policy of reinforcing Western defense with regional pacts after becoming a NATO member. Yet, the positive consequences for Yugoslavia and Greece were far more than those for Turkey since the former bolstered relations with their neighbors by means of this pact. By 1955, in another regional attempt, Turkey turned its face to the Middle East for building close relations with Iraq, Iran, and Pakistan, which took shape as the Baghdad Pact. This did not yield a different outcome either, mostly due to the fact that the Soviet Union entered the stage afterwards, dividing the region into two hostile camps. Leaving some of the regional states out and taking some of them in was the commonality of both the Balkan alliance and the Baghdad Pact, which prepared the ground for their failure.⁴⁹

⁴⁸ *ibid.*, pp. 113-117. See also Fahir Armaoğlu, *20. Yüzyıl Siyasi Tarihi*, pp. 523-524; Osman Metin Öztürk, "Türk Dış Politikasında Balkanlar", p. 15; and İlhan Uzgel, "Balkanlarla İlişkiler", Baskın Oran ed., *Türk Dış Politikası: Kurtuluş Savaşından Bugüne Olgular, Belgeler, Yorumlar*, vol. II (İstanbul: İletişim, 2001), pp. 171-172.

⁴⁹ Oral Sander, *Balkan Gelişmeleri ve Türkiye (1945 – 1965)*, pp. 124-125.

3.5.6. POST-1955 ATTEMPTS FOR COOPERATION IN THE BALKANS

3.5.6.1 THE STOICA PLAN

As part of the other similar plans for cooperation in the Balkans, the Stoica Plan was proposed by Romanian Prime Minister Chivu Stoica in 1957. Proposed to Romania, Albania, Bulgaria, Greece, Yugoslavia, and Turkey, the plan aimed to develop economic and cultural relations, settle disputes, and launch joint economic enterprises between the regional states. Stoica's plan was significant in that it included all Balkan states unlike the Balkan Entente and the Balkan alliance. With the abovementioned aims, the plan was intended to prove a lasting basis in the Balkans. Stoica's plan was approved by Bulgaria, Albania, and Yugoslavia on the condition that all Balkan states participated but was rejected by Turkey and Greece. The Greek reason for rejection of the plan was stated by former Prime Minister Konstantinos Karamanlis on the grounds that certain Greek territories were still under invasion by some Balkan states, which were considered to be Northern Epirus in the Albanian territory as well as Macedonia at the time. Yet, the interpretations in Ankara and Athens said otherwise. It was considered that the two states were not in a state to engage in cooperation at the time. On Turkey's part, the plan was viewed as an effort to weaken Turkey's ties with NATO and thus to distance it from the U.S.A. at a time when Turkey had improved relations with the country. Not surprisingly, the Soviet Union rejected any Soviet role in the plan. It was enough to consider that Romania would not propose such a plan without consulting the Soviet Union in 1957. Therefore, although the plan was geared by the Soviet Union, it was shaped and proposed Romania. It did not yield

the expected repercussions in Turkey, excluding the views that saw it as a Soviet propaganda. The previous unsuccessful attempts for a cooperative framework and Turkey's prioritizing the Middle East after 1955 were two other factors in that respect. It is noteworthy to remember that at a time when Turkey feared the superiority of the Soviet Union in respect of arms and approved the U.S. missiles to be deployed in its territory, it would not be consistent to accept the proposal. The second Stoica Plan came two years later and covered the following issues: to work for a Balkans free of nuclear arms, which aimed to remove the missile bases in Turkey, Greece, and Italy; a stronger Soviet influence than in the former Stoica Plan; and the inclusion of Italy in addition. Turkey refused this plan with the note it sent to the Soviet Union. It was seen that the note did not refer with a single word to the Balkans, and it had almost the same wording of the note sent by the U.S.A., Britain, and France. Last, but not least, it should be mentioned that while Turkey sent its note directly to the Soviet Union, Greece sent its note to Romania. At the heart of this attitude lied the fact that Greece considered its regional interests more. Apart from these proposals, annual meetings were held in the 1960s with a view to building mutual understanding and cooperation. These meetings articulated a region free of nuclear weapons, however it did not receive positive response from Albania. Turkey did not attend the meetings. Albania was opposed to the meetings from the beginning and Greece wanted to use the meetings as another forum against Turkey.⁵⁰

In brief, between 1945 and 1955, Turkey saw its security threatened in the Balkan region and preferred to ensure security through regional organizations and inked the Balkan pact and alliance in 1953 and 1954. When the alliance completed

⁵⁰ *ibid.*, pp. 147-163.

its lifetime in 1955, Turkish foreign policy towards the Balkans also changed, to the detriment of its relations with the region. Turkey did not reciprocate positively to the appeals for a Balkans free of nuclear weapons as well as to the regional conferences. Turkey's foreign policy perspective was determinant in the formulation of policies as such, because between 1950 and 1960, the views of Democrat Party were based on the consideration that peace in the world presented an integrity so the security of a country could not be viewed independent from overall security of the bloc to which it belonged. Therefore, Turkey did not assume an active independent attitude towards the Balkans unlike Greece, and so it acted in line with the Western bloc. Another foreign policy pillar during these years was not to hold bilateral negotiations, not to enter bilateral agreements; and not to cooperate with the opposite camp states. In parallel, Democrat Party rejected proposals by the Communist states in the Balkans. The 1960 coup and National Union did not alter Turkish foreign policy essentially. Yet, when the Cyprus crisis unfolded in 1963, Turkey acknowledged that it had serious problems other than the security problem with respect to the Soviet Union and tried to strengthen its place in the Western bloc in that respect. Turkey saw that Greece's *enosis* policy was a direct threat for Turkey and began to seek ways to avert it outside the Western bloc by responding to the appeals made by the Soviet Union since 1953 and by building relations with the non-aligned countries. Turkey also saw that Yugoslavia and Bulgaria openly supported the Greek arguments of Cyprus by 1965. It would be remembered that Greece had begun to conduct an active foreign policy in the Balkans after 1954. By 1965, Turkey realized that it had to do the same to act as counterweight against Greece in the region.⁵¹

⁵¹ *ibid.*, 169-177.

II.V.VI.II. THE 1970S

In the 1960s, Turkey began to conduct multilateralism in foreign policy and this included the Balkans as well. It also tried to improve relations with the Middle East, Asia, Africa, and Eastern bloc states. In this connection, relations with the Balkan states were attached utmost importance, yet this did not include Greece. The second period in which relations with the Balkans further improved was during Ecevit administration since the beginning of Cold War. The first visit was conducted by former Foreign Minister Turan Güneş to Romania in 1974. Turkey and Bulgaria signed a goodneighborliness agreement and Turkey and Romania signed a joint declaration in 1975. Tito visited Ankara the following year. When Ecevit became prime minister for the second time in 1978, the Balkans were again paid due attention in the general framework of maintaining friendly relations rather than prioritizing armament. The first visit by Ecevit was to Yugoslavia and this was followed by a visit to Romania.⁵²

II.V.VI.III. THE 1980S

The Balkans posed a relatively stable picture in the 1980s except for the pressure on Turkish minority in Bulgaria, due to which relations with this country were strained in 1989. The pressure had its precedent in 1950 when a similar influx was experienced from Bulgaria to Turkey. Approximately 154.000 Turks had come to Turkey until the end of 1951. While Turkey feared Bulgaria could use Turkish

⁵² İlhan Uzgel, "Balkanlarla İlişkiler", pp. 174-175.

minority as a tool as in 1950 – 1951, Bulgaria feared Turkey could use the Turkish minority to weaken Bulgaria from inside.

The Turks in Bulgaria preserved their social structure and traditions as they lived in the country. While the Slavic population showed a tendency to shrink, the fact that Turkish population indicated a growth caused Bulgaria to grow concerned. The forced emigration policies did not yield the expected outcome, and to add onto the picture, the proclamation of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus in 1983 prompted the Bulgarian officials to think that Turkey also coveted Bulgarian territories. Consequently, Zhivkov administration launched an assimilation campaign which included changing of Turkish names as well. Former President Kenan Evren sent a message to Zhivkov stating the campaign to be brought to an end immediately, only to see shortly that the situation would in fact be aggravated by way of expanding into the northern part of the country. The Özal government which took power in 1983 preferred to act cautiously concerning the issue. Turkey sent a note to Bulgaria in 1985 asking for a solution through negotiation. The Bulgarian government saw this as interference into its internal affairs. Meanwhile, Turkey tried to refer the issue to international fora. In 1985, Council of Europe called on the Bulgarian government to end the campaign. The Organization of Islamic Countries (OIC) sent a delegation to Bulgaria for on-site observation of the developments. The U.S.A. reduced diplomatic contacts with the country. Helsinki Watch and Amnesty International also criticized Bulgaria's practices. While the West showed its reaction, Greece pinpointed Turkey as the responsible state claiming that Turkey had provoked the Turkish minority against Sofia, although not stating it expressly. Furthermore, Greece signed a friendliness and cooperation agreement with Bulgaria in 1986 as the campaign was continuing

full scale. Yugoslavia criticized Bulgaria and accepted the Turks who escaped from Bulgaria giving them refugee status. However, Romania returned the Turks to Bulgaria. In brief, Greece and Bulgaria assumed similar stances due to the presence of Turkish minority in both states while relations between Turkey and Yugoslavia became closer on this occasion, although not expressly stated. However, the 1990s would tell a different story about minorities with the demise of Communism and the subsequent emergence of nationalism in its extreme forms.⁵³

⁵³ *ibid.*, pp. 175-181.

CHAPTER IV

TURKEY'S DIPLOMATIC AND POLITICAL RELATIONS WITH THE BALKAN STATES IN THE POST-COLD WAR ERA

From the beginning of the dismantling of former Yugoslavia in June 1991, the issues that made Turkey an important actor in the Balkans were roughly as follows: (1) Turkey was a Balkan country in geographical, historical and cultural terms; (2) the region was a strategic link between Turkey and Western Europe; and (3) the strong affinity between the Turks in Turkey and Muslim/Turkish people throughout the Balkans¹, therefore a stable and peaceful Balkans was a vital area for Turkey.² Turkey's relevant interests and policies put forward certain policy implications concerning the region. Turkey assumed a pro-status quo position in the initial phases of the crisis in Yugoslavia and expressly stated its hopes for internal negotiation to end the conflict. However, as the war showed its spillover effect in Croatia and Bosnia, the Turkish threat perceptions of Serbia were modified.³ Backed by Greece, a possible cooperation between the Serbs and the Greeks seemed like a future barrier capable of cutting off Turkey's links from Western Europe:

¹ Duygu Bazoğlu Sezer, "Turkish Security in the Shifting Balkans: Reorientation to a Regional Focus", in Kosta Tsipis ed., *Common Security Regimes in the Balkans*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), p. 99.

² Baskın Oran, "Türkiye'nin Balkan ve Kafkas Politikası", *Ankara Üniversitesi Siyasal Bilgiler Fakültesi Dergisi*, 50 (1-2) (January – June 1995), p. 274.

³ Duygu Bazoğlu Sezer, "Turkish Security in the Shifting Balkans: Reorientation to a Regional Focus", p. 101.

The simultaneous campaign of attrition on Bosnia – Herzegovina at the same time as the vulnerable states of Albania and Macedonia were being harassed by Greece threatened to wipe out the new potential bridges Turkey could cross to reach Western Europe.⁴

Viewed through a broader lens however, other components that have come to shape Turkey's policies toward the region deserve mention in order to better understand the process in which these policies were formulated. First, the disintegration of the U.S.S.R. served to make the U.S.A. a more preponderant actor in world politics, which involved intervention in crises and conflicts including the Balkans after 1991. Both the unilateral superiority of the U.S.A. and the struggle for influence between the U.S.A., Germany and the Russian Federation served to add upon the preponderance of the U.S.A in the Balkans as the newly independent states turned their face to the West and the U.S.A.. Second, close relations between Turkey and the U.S.A. were reflected also on the Balkans since both countries had common

⁴ *ibid.* Regarding Greece's siding with Serbia during the Bosnian war, see Takis Michas, *Unholy Alliance – Greece and Milosevic's Serbia* (Texas: Texas A & M University Press, 2002). Michas argues that what was incomprehensible during Bosnia and Kosovo wars was not that Greece took the same side with Serbia, but that it sided with Serbia's darkest side (p.4). In explaining the behavior of Greece during the war in Bosnia, Michas recalls Huntington's argument that the main factors influencing the eruption of conflicts after the end of the Cold War have been cultural or civilizational. In this new international environment, states were supposed rally to those sharing similar nationalist mythology, ancestry, religion, or language. The new state of affairs produced realignment in the Balkans. While Greece and Turkey were in the same block (NATO) against the Warsaw Pact countries, this, according to Huntington, became devoid of meaning, since a new line pushed Orthodox Greece, Serbia, and Russia against Turkey and Albania. Greece increasingly sided with Serbia and Russia. Its cooperation with the former made itself visible in wars Bosnia and Kosovo while its cooperation with the latter was seen most notably in its permission of Russia to establish a significant presence in Cyprus. Thus, Greek foreign policy assumed a heavily Orthodox orientation. Michas writes that following the Huntingtonian thesis, most Western commentators viewed Greece's actions in the context of the divide between Eastern and Western Christendom. However, as Michas argues referring to Ramet, this approach treats the religious sphere as an autonomous part of society (p.9). That is why it is necessary to place the Church at the center of the political process of nation-building in the case of Greece, in trying to understand the role of Orthodox Church in Greece. In Greece, the variants of nationalism was ethnic, which was composed of the myth that the contemporary Greeks are the direct descendents of the Hellenes of antiquity; the language as the link uniting classical Greece with modern Greece; and the Orthodox religion and Church which became of tool of the state in promoting homogenization in the country. In brief, Michas maintains that the state of affairs did not result from the mere fact that Greece and Serbia shared the same religion. Therefore, the Greek – Serb alliance was not "holy" in Michas's words. It was an "unholy" one which is to be sought not in the religious sphere but in the realms of state and nation-building, because the Orthodox Church in Greece is not a religious but a political institution. (p. 143).

interests in the region. Put differently, the fact that certain newly independent states were inclined to build close relations with the U.S.A. through Turkey and that the U.S.A. wanted to be more influential in the region through the historical, cultural and religious ties between Turkey and the Balkans brought Turkey and the U.S.A. even closer. The other factors bolstering this picture were the problems both states had been facing at the material time, i.e. the problems between the U.S.A. and Germany, and the inclination of Europe to build its own defense and security body in which Turkey would allegedly have no place. Third and equally important was Greece's policies with respect to the Balkans. The problems troubling the relations between Turkey and Greece have become almost constant and Greece's policies centered on backing a Greek – Serbian alliance in the 1990s appeared as yet another dimension of the inherent set of bilateral problems. Fourth and related with the third was Greece's support to PKK terrorist organization. The exacerbating element in this regard was the close relations that Greece established with Armenia, Syria, Iran and the Russian Federation. The relations between certain Balkan states and Turkey thus aimed to balance those established with Greece and those Balkan states although these relations would bring Turkey a remarkable financial cost. Given that, it would not be erroneous to maintain that Turkey's Balkan policies were centered on Greece's relevant policies. Finally, Turkey's needs in defense and security increased in the 1990s as it embarked into a period in which it encountered almost simultaneous crises surrounding its borders. In the absence of certain defense advantages provided to Turkey by the former bipolar system, Turkey now had to meet its relevant needs with domestic sources. The expectations of newly independent states of the region from Turkey only increased the need for defense and security. Viewed as such, the relations between Turkey and the Balkan states were

functional in meeting Turkey's defense and security needs beyond its boundaries in the West. At the more specific level, it served for balancing Greece.⁵

The vicissitudes of the crises in the war-torn regions of Transcaucasus and the Gulf made Turkey's considerations in the Balkans take on a deeper strategic shape seen through an integral part of the rocky security environment back in the 1990s. Within this framework, Turkey's policies toward the region rested on political, strategic, and economic venues, the first of which shall be examined in this section. Due to the experience of war, the analysis shall begin with the disintegration of Yugoslavia.

⁵ For a more detailed account on the factors in this paragraph, see Osman Metin Öztürk, "Türk Dış Politikası'nda Balkanlar", in Ömer E. Lütem and Birgül Demirtaş-Coşkun (eds.), *Balkan Diplomasisi*, (Ankara: ASAM, 2001), pp. 22-27. See also Baskın Oran, "Türkiye'nin Balkan ve Kafkas Politikası", pp. 271-274; and Çevik Bir, "Turkey's Role in the New World Order – New Challenges" *Strategic Forum* 135 (February 1998) on <http://www.ndu.edu/inss/strforum/SF135/forum135html> as retrieved on 7 December 2005 10:35:01 GMT. As regards the U.S. approach towards the Balkan crises after 1991, Richard Holbrooke, in *To End a War*, observes that even with the Cold War gone, what happened in Europe still mattered to the U.S.A. by way of arguing that the U.S. involvement in Europe was not limited to crusades against fascism or communism. However, with the collapse of the Soviet Union, most Americans did not believe that an unstable Europe would still threaten the security interests of the U.S.A. as they thought there was no clear threat to western democracies, no Hitler or Stalin. Holbrooke argues that the Americans divided into two groups during the Balkan crisis: supporters of intervention and opponents who feared that the U.S.A. would be entangled in another Vietnam-like quagmire. When the awareness of ethnic cleansing increased, the proportion of the former group increased. Accordingly, the Clinton administration was criticized for lack of commitment to European security and for weak leadership in foreign policy. However, the Clinton administration, in its own eyes, had a powerful image in post-Cold War Europe. With what is called the "CNN factor", ordinary Americans were outraged at what they saw on T.V. after Srebrenica massacre. Still, it is commonplace to argue that the U.S.A. acted belatedly and reluctantly although it was praised for its firm leadership after the Dayton Peace Accord. The three pillars of U.S. foreign policy in Europe (U.S. – Russian relations, NATO enlargement in Central Europe, and Bosnia) which worked against each other now seemed to reinforce each other. For more information and also the flaws in the Dayton Peace Accord, see Richard Holbrooke, *To End A War* (New York: Random House, 1998), pp. 358 – 69; and David Owen, *Balkan Odyssey* (London: Indigo, 1996) pp. 4, 91, 295, 296, 401-402.

4.1. THE DISINTEGRATION OF YUGOSLAVIA AND THE WAR IN BOSNIA

The Socialist Federative Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY) came to an end in late June 1991, that is, when the Federal Army launched an attack on Slovenia.⁶ However, the very first ostensible sign of the disintegration was the breakup of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia when the Party's collapse became irreversible following the interruption of the 14th Extraordinary Congress held in January 1990 as the Slovenian delegates walked out. This suspension ratified the dissolution of the League of the Communists into independent republic parties.⁷

Slovenian and Croatian independence had been declared only two days before the Federal Army launched its frontal attack in June 1991. The example of Slovenia and Croatia was followed by Bosnia for full independence. In January 1992, Slovenia and Croatia finally received international recognition. Thereafter, the Serbs already started the campaign of creating enclaves in Bosnia before the Bosnians declared independence in October 1991 which suggested that the Serb war in Bosnia was not provoked but was planned.⁸ In April 1992, Bosnia was recognized as an

⁶ Branka Magas, *The Destruction of Yugoslavia – Tracking the Break-Up 1980-1992*, (London: Verso, 1993), p. 327. For a chronology of key events, see Appendix C.

⁷ Vladimir Goati, "The Challenge of Post Communism", in Jim Seroka and Vukasin Pavlovic (eds.), *The Tragedy of Yugoslavia – The Failure of Democratic Transformation*, (New York: M. E. Sharpe, 1992), p. 10. The real causes were deeper and they concerned different views about the character of the political system, the position of the Communist parties in the system, the nature of the Yugoslav community and the debates on confederalism and federalism, and also the policies regarding Kosovo. For further information, see also Mirjana Kasapovic, "The Structure and Dynamics of the Yugoslav Political Environment and Elections in Croatia" in *ibid.*; and Jim Seroka "Variation in the Evolution of the Yugoslav Communist Parties" in *ibid.*

⁸ The prelude to the war was designed by Milosevic and the like-minded officials in the Serb administration and it constitutes the blueprint for what was done in Bosnia later on. As Malcolm writes, three techniques were used. The general method was to produce radicalism in the Serb population with an incessant misinformation and fear-mongering bombardment by using the media and the local politicians. The second was one of guerilla warfare which was based on staging an incident such as shooting a group of policemen in a certain place and then inviting reprisal to be followed by distributing arms to villagers again by misinforming them that the police are planning to attack them. The third one was to create violent incidents and calling the army to take action as an

independent state and the Serb paramilitary forces conducted an operation upon which between 50,000 and 100,000 Bosnians filled the streets to protest.⁹ As a news report wrote, as voices from the crowd suggested all the Serb chauvinists go to Serbia and all the Croat chauvinists go to Croatia, and stated that they wanted to remain in Bosnia together and to keep Bosnia intact, the spectacle was interrupted with automatic weapon fires. However, these bursts of gunfire had already happened before more than a week in the Bosnian towns of Banja Luka and Mostar.¹⁰

Although the observations regarding the causes and the backdrop of the war vary in their degree of content, they mostly depict the common points that laid the basis for the crisis. There were at least three significant developments that altered the prospects of Bosnia's political leaders. First, the Federal Army changed its mission in the latter half of 1991 from defending the Yugoslav ideals to acting as an agent of Greater Serbian nationalism. Second, the 1991 war in Croatia strengthened national extremist sentiments among Bosnian Serbs. Finally, although the international community voiced their lofty principles, their actions worked to create a maneuver space for the Serbs to move on with their plans.¹¹ In similar vein, it has been argued that viewed in retrospect, it is seen that the genuine causes of Bosnia's destruction

"impartial arbiter". While the Serbs in Croatia were told that they were threatened by an Ustasa regime, in Bosnia, the Muslims were told they were threatened by Islamic fundamentalism. After 1989, the nationalism of Serbia and Croatia had already been seen as intimidating in Bosnia, and Milosevic's and Tudjman's ambitions were understood by the Bosnians. Tudjman believed most of the Bosnian Muslims were of Croatian origin and Bosnia and Croatia formed an indivisible entity. It was also seen that Milosevic's plans were openly associated with Former Yugoslav President Dobrica Cosic who was the main architect of Greater Serbia Project. By early 1991, Milosevic publicly said that if there were any attempts to replace the federal structure of Yugoslavia with a confederation, he would annex both Croatia and Bosnia. For more information on how the war in Bosnia was planned from the outside, see Noel Malcom, *Bosnia – A Short History* (London: Macmillan, 1994), pp. 213 - 233. See also Margaret Thatcher, *Statecraft* (New York: Harper Collins Publishers Inc., 2002), p. 299.

⁹ Noel Malcoln, *Bosnia – A Short History*, p. 235.

¹⁰ See *ibid.*, p. 235. Malcolm cites the report by Michael Montgomery, *Daily Telegraph*, 7 April 1992.

¹¹ Robert J. Dania and John V. A. Fine, Jr., *Bosnia and Herzegovina: A Tradition Betrayed* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), p. 220. The authors stress that armed conflict, ethnic cleansing, the bombardment of cities, and other atrocities against civilians in Bosnia were not results of ethnic division in the Bosnian society but those of the transformation of the Federal Army into an instrument of Serbian extreme nationalism.

came from outside Bosnia in two forms: first as the political strategy of the Serbian leadership and then in the form of the miscomprehension of the Western leaders.¹²

4.1.1. THE WAR AND SECRET ARMS TRANSFERS

Unlike the war in Slovenia which ended in ten days, the war in Bosnia would last until the mid-1990s. The most significant development in the initial phases of the war in April 1992 was the arrival in Bijeljina of Arkan's paramilitary forces made up of mostly Serbs.¹³ From then on, the war unfolded with a precise plan which was to encircle the non-Serb territories and to link the Serb-intense areas with one another based on "ethnic cleansing".¹⁴

The initial *modus operandi* of the Serb paramilitary acts was two-fold. While the paramilitary forces¹⁵ induced the local Muslims to flee their homes, they also tried to convince the Bosnian Serbs to defend themselves against the local Muslims aided by the broadcasts of Radio Television Belgrade airing the same editorial line warning the Serbs against the Muslims and the Croats.¹⁶ As Milos Vasic put it in *New Yorker* on 15 March 1993, it was as if Ku Klux Klan had taken over all TV channels in the U.S.A.: "You must imagine a United States with every little TV

¹² Noel Malcolm, *Bosnia – A Short History*, p. 251; and Margaret Thatcher, *Statecraft*, p. 300.

¹³ A paramilitary adjunct leader whose real name is Zeljco Raznatovic. See Stojan Cerovic " 'Greater Serbia' and Its Discontents", in Rabia Ali and Lawrence Lifschultz (eds.), *Writings on the Balkan War: Why Bosnia?* (Connecticut: The Pamphleteer's Press Inc., 1993), p. 265; and Noel Malcolm, *Bosnia – A Short History*, p. 236.

¹⁴ Although critics mostly argue that the primary failure of the West was to see ethnic cleansing as a by-product of and/or one of the consequences of the war in Bosnia, it is also argued that there were voices from the West that labeled the objective of the entire affair as "ethnic cleansing", such as Tadeusz Mazowiecki, the Special Rapporteur of the UN Commission on Human Rights and former Prime Minister of Poland. Such voices, however, remained as the minority.

¹⁵ These groups included Arkan's Tigers, White Eagles led by Mirko Jovic, and Vojislav Seselj's Chetniks.

¹⁶ This was done so persuasively by RTB between 1991-94 that ordinary Serb townspeople came to believe unquestioningly that the threat was real and that they would be "slaughtered" by the Muslims and the Croats.

station everywhere taking exactly the same editorial line – a line dictated by David Duke. You too would have war in five years.”¹⁷

Although the operations were carried out by the Federal Army and its paramilitary adjuncts, it has been argued that the invasion in more than 60 % of Bosnia was achieved mainly by the Federal Army forces directed from Belgrade. In other words, although the Bosnian Serbs were also involved in the entire affair, the event was directed from outside, that is, from Serbian soil.¹⁸ In his book titled *Origins of a Catastrophe* (1996), Warren Zimmerman, the former U.S. Ambassador to Belgrade, wrote that in his last cable sent to the U.S.A. before he left Yugoslavia in May 1992, he stressed that Yugoslavia was not destroyed by ethnic/religious hatred or by the collapse of communism or by the failure of the Western countries to act; but “Yugoslavia was murdered by local political villains who dismantled it from the top down.”¹⁹

Throughout the war, the Bosnian Muslims, for their part, presented a state of extreme unpreparedness with perhaps 3500 armed men in total. The Serbs had quite a lot of guns. Milosevic’s police and the Federal Army were sending them guns from Serbia in small trucks. The local Serb leaders sold the Muslims guns as they saw a lot of money in the business. They coveted money more than they coveted guns.²⁰ In Western Herzegovina, the local Croats had made some preparations and later were joined by men from the Croatian Paramilitary Force (HOS). The war also coincided a

¹⁷ Taken as cited in Noel Malcolm, *Bosnia – A Short History*, p. 252.

¹⁸ See Mark Almond, *Europe’s Backyard War* (London: Heinemann, 1994), p. 268. See also *Bosnia – Herzegovina: Achilles Heel of Western Civilization* (Chicago: News and Letters, 1996), pp. 19-91.

¹⁹ Carole Rogel, *The Breakup of Yugoslavia and The War in Bosnia* (Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1998), p. 126. See Noel Malcolm, *Bosnia – A Short History*, p. 251, for a similar argument.

²⁰ Chuck Sudetic, *Blood and Vengeance* (New York: Penguin, 1998) pp. 89 – 91. Serb gun sellers were reported to say that they knew the Sabanovic brothers of Visegrad, Avdija, and Murat, who ran a couple of grocery stores. It was argued that the Serbs knew that Sabanovic brothers were dealing and distributing guns to Bosnian Muslims in the districts as they sold arms to the Sabanovic brothers, too. Later on, and interestingly enough, the Serbs accused the Sabanovic brothers for starting all the trouble in Visegrad, for instance. See also Noel Malcolm, *Bosnia – A Short History*, p. 240.

time when political awareness of the unity of the country and its history was very weak. In the long period of growth of Serbian and Croatian ethno-political plans, it became clear that the weakening of Bosnian unity was the precondition for establishing a united Serbian and a united Croatian state.²¹ The Bosnian Army was so poorly prepared partly because Aliya Izzetbegovic clung until the last moment to the hope of a political settlement. Furthermore, with the hope of preventing the Croatian conflict from worsening, the UN had imposed an arms embargo in September 1991 on former Yugoslavia. As such, having no borders with other states and only one outlet to the sea, Bosnia was the real disadvantaged party to violate the embargo while Serbia and Croatia could circumvent it.²²

Regarding the role of the intelligence and gun running in the war in Bosnia between 1992 and 1995, it has been argued that although secret arms supplies and other covert actions pointed the U.S.A., indeed it was the third countries that were directly involved. Former CIA President Woolsey stated that the CIA did not move weapons to Bosnia but they were willing to do that and had enough experience in the field. One reason was that there were fears about possible leaks and the second reason was the hesitation about possible negative reactions from Britain and France about which Claes, Secretary-General of NATO, had warned Clinton.²³ It was also confirmed by one prominent White House adviser that the U.S.A. did not wish to violate the arms embargo as it would undermine the authority of UN Security Council resolutions. Put differently, if the U.S.A. were to violate the embargo, then the imposition of an embargo elsewhere would be made impossible such as the one

²¹ Rusmir Mahmutcegajic, *The Denial of Bosnia*, Francis R. Jones and Marina Bowder trans., (Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania University Press, 2000), p. 121.

²² Robert J. Donia and John V. A. Fine Jr., *Bosnia and Herzegovina: A Tradition Betrayed*, pp. 239-240.

²³ "Intelligence and War in Bosnia 1992 – 1995: The Role of the Intelligence and Security Services" on http://213.222.3.5/srebrenica/toc/pb_c04_s003_b03.html. as retrieved on 20 December 2005 13:41:19 GMT.

in Iraq at the time. However, this by no means is to say that the U.S.A. was not involved. Washington played a role in the background. It has been argued that the U.S.A. turned a blind eye or simply closed its eyes to the arms transfers.²⁴

Among the countries which supplied arms to Bosnia were Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Iran and Turkey.²⁵ Malaysia also attempted to circumvent the embargo via merchant shipping and the Malaysian UN Protection Force (UNPROFOR) soldiers stationed in Bosnia. The reason behind such direct supplies to Bosnia was that the Bosnian government was dissatisfied with the Croatian authorities' practice of skimming the arms supplies, and also the government did not want to become dependent on Zagreb. Turkey was another significant supplier of arms and had been involved in the secret arms in 1992 when Iran had opened a smuggling route to Bosnia. Bosnian officials acknowledged that in 1993, a Turkish pipeline existed through which arms from Saudi Arabia, Malaysia, Brunei and Pakistan was transferred.²⁶ Turkey was mentioned once again in relevant conversations in early 1993 as the direct supplier. Bosnian vice-President Eyüp Ganic had an interview in mid-February with President Turgut Özal. Yet, the former denied that the latter had promised an aircraft full of arms.²⁷ In the summer and autumn of 1994, the CIA reported that the spy satellites had taken photos of Iranian aircraft on Turkish airfields, soon after which it was reported that satellite photos were taken of the same aircraft in Zagreb and in other airports in Croatia showing the arms unloaded. Turkish aircraft also flew directly to Tuzla. It was assumed by UNPROFOR officers

²⁴ *ibid.*

²⁵ It was reported that the transfers which arrived from Saudi Arabia, Iran, and Turkey were diplomatic post.

²⁶ "*Intelligence and War in Bosnia 1992 – 1995: The Role of the Intelligence and Security Services*". Other consignments were from Belgium, Hungary, Uganda, and Argentina because President Menem issued a delivery of 8,000 FN-Fals, 155 mm guns, 2,000 pistols, 211,000 hand grenades, 3,000 rockets, 30,000 grenades, 3,000 landmines to Bolivia. However, the Bolivian officials stated that they had ordered nothing. The Argentine parliament discovered that the destination of the arms were Croatia and elsewhere.

²⁷ *ibid.*

that Turkish aircraft flew in from “Cyprus” with U.S. military authorities acting as intermediary.²⁸ French military officials also asserted that Turkey was responsible for the flights.

British Defense Intelligence Staff (DIS) was also aware of the U.S. secret arms supplies and like the case of CIA, it was emphasized that the DIS was not involved in the flights to Tuzla.²⁹ The DIS also obtained intelligence from the German military intelligence service. Yet, no U.S. – German alliance existed in the matter of arms transfers.³⁰

On the other hand, the statements of politically prominent figures in the U.S.A. expressly conveyed their arguments. Former President Bill Clinton, Senator Robert Dole (majority leader), Peter Tarnoff (Undersecretary of State), Benjamin Gilman (Congressman, New York) and Lee Hamilton (Congressman, Indiana) said in a TV interview that if the U.S.A. violated the embargo, it would lose support from the allies for other embargoes such as the one in Iraq; that “there was absolutely nothing improper done”; that in a situation like this there should have been a formal briefing by the administration telling them what had been done with regard to Iranian arms; or that many in the Congress wanted to lift the embargo but they wanted the U.S. arms to go into Bosnia.³¹ All the same, it seemed that supplies via a third party country were a simpler solution for the U.S.A.

²⁸ *ibid.* According to this report, Turkey’s involvement operated as follows. Specially modified C-130s from U.S. bases in Britain and Germany would pick up their cargo on remote runways in the “Turkish part of Cyprus” (quotation marks not original). The cargo consisting of arms and ammunition would be delivered there by Iranian and Turkish aircraft. The aircraft would fly to Croatia via the Adriatic and then on to Bosnia. If it could not achieve this, it could always stop over the Croatian island of Brac. From this island, the CIA also operated its UAVs flying over Bosnia. The Croatian Defense Minister Susak claimed that most of the aircraft that landed there came from Turkey and not Iran.

²⁹ *ibid.*

³⁰ *ibid.*

³¹ “*Gun Running*” 24 April 1996, Transcript, on http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/bosnia/iran_4-24.html as retrieved on 27 December 2005 07:35:37 GMT.

Speaking generally, if the Bosnian government had been able to exercise the right of any government to acquire arms, the Serb gains would have decreased in many parts of Bosnia; at least it would make the Serbs realize that they would not get the territory they wanted by arms when they attempted to. It has been asserted that the war might then have ended within four to six months.³² The detailed *modus operandi* of the Serbs as the war continued showed itself as concentration, decapitation, separation, evacuation, and liquidation. Concentration involved surrounding the area to be cleansed, warning the local Serbs to leave and intimidating the target population. Decapitation was to execute the political leaders and those educated groups capable of taking their places such lawyers, judges, public officials and professors. Separation included dividing women, children and old men from men of fighting age – from sixteen to sixty years of age. Evacuation meant transporting women, children and old men to the border and expelling them to a neighboring territory or country. Finally, liquidation involved executing men of fighting age and disposal of their bodies.³³ In such a war based on ethnic cleansing, which was beyond the definition of classical warfare, it seemed that the only way for the equality of arms to exist was to engage in secret arms transfers.

By early 1995, around 300,000 people had died since June 1991 and at least 2,7 million people had been reduced to refugees, not to mention around 50,000 Bosnian Muslim women raped by Serb soldiers in a systematic campaign of humiliation and psychological terror.³⁴ It has been maintained that while accepting the casualty in the Bosnian conflict reached six-digit figures, most data tend towards lower estimates. However, the slaughter through the endgame of the Bosnian war in

³² Noel Malcolm, *Bosnia – A Short History*, p. 244.

³³ “Case Study: Bosnia – Herzegovina” on http://www.gendercide.org/case_bosnia.html as retrieved on 11 January 2006 08:59:40 GMT.

³⁴ *ibid.*

mid-1995, and that includes the massacre at Srebrenica, should also be added to the overall estimates. Yet still, no reliable statistics exist as in most cases of war. The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) noted that the majority of missing persons in Bosnia are men and of around 18,000 persons recorded by the ICRC in Bosnia as missing in relation to the war that ended in 1995, 92 % are men and 8 % are women.³⁵

The Srebrenica massacre which marked the apogee of Greater Serbia design was followed by the offensive of the Croat – Muslim alliance armed with the U.S. alliance. Thereafter, the direction of the war shifted. In early August 1995, the Croatian Army took Knin which was the center of rebel Serbs. The Croats sent these

³⁵ *ibid.*; and “Bosnia Names 17,000 For War Crimes” 4 October 2005, CBS News, <http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2005/10/04/world/main910670.shtml>, as retrieved on 4 October 2005 15:40:14 GMT. The events at Srebrenica marked the peak of the war through its end in July 1995. While the international community and the UN forces were present, Serbs separated civilian men from women, killed men *en masse* or hunted them in the forests. Srebrenica was declared a safe area with UN Resolution 819 in April 1993 among Zepa, Gorazde, Tuzla, Sarajevo and Bihac. However, the meaning of the term soon turned into “safe death camps”. The area was put into the care of Dutch battalion in March 1995. After Srebrenica fell to Serbs in July 1995, Muslim population was massacred and buried in mass graves, buried alive or chose to commit suicide to avoid capture. Milosevic and the UN High Command were in contact with each other during the massacre in Srebrenica. Before Srebrenica fell, a deal between the UN and Mladic was made already, on June 1995, between General Bernard Janvier of France, supreme UN military commander of former Yugoslavia met with Mladic at the Hotel Vidakovac in Zvornik on the Bosnian – Serbian border on 4 June. The meeting was held when Bosnian Serbs held UN soldiers hostage. It was negotiated that if the Serbs released the hostages, and stopped shooting the UN soldiers, the UN would cease to grant permission for NATO air strike against the Serbs. The agreement drawn up between Janvier and Mladic was three-fold: 1) The army of Republika Srpska will no longer use force or threaten the life and safety of members of UNPROFOR, 2) The UNPROFOR commits to no longer make use of force which leads to the use of air strikes against the targets and territory of the Republika Srpska. 3) The signing of this agreement will lead immediately to the freeing of all prisoners of war. The hostages were released by mid-June. On 9 July 1995, the Serbs entered the safe area of Srebrenica destroying patrols and taking 32 soldiers hostage. The Serbs engaged in a bloody push in Srebrenica on 11 July and massacres took place in the woods, as well as killing civilian people with shells as they tried to flee the so-called safe area. The killing *en masse* continued on 12 and 13 July. The Red Cross listed around 7,000 dead and missing at Srebrenica. The International Criminal Tribunal indicted Radko Mladic for crimes against humanity in Srebrenica. As the war was directed from Serbia, it would not be erroneous to argue that the policies of Mladic were those of Milosevic. Mladic’s whereabouts still remain unknown although there is occasional news that he is arrested, the most recent of which was reported by Serbian News Agency in February 2006. The news said that Mladic was arrested in Belgrade which was soon denied by the Serbian government. See Davis Rohde, *A Safe Area – Srebrenica: Europe’s Worst Massacre since the Second World War* (London: Pocket Books, 1997), Noel Malcolm, *Bosnia – A Short History*; idem, *Bosna*, (Aşkın Karadağlı, trans.) (İstanbul: Om Yayinevi, 1999); “Case Study: The Srebrenica Massacre, July 1995”, on <http://www.gendercide.org/case-srebrenica.html>, as retrieved on 26 May 2007, 04:40:48 GMT; and Bianca Jagger, The Betrayal of Srebrenica, *The European*, 25 September – 1 October 1995, on <http://www.haverford.edu/relg/sells/srebrenica/BiancaJagger1.html>.

Serbs into Serb-held regions in Bosnia. With a view to protecting the safe areas, Clinton insisted that NATO and the UN take a more active stance. In mid-August, U.S. negotiators led by Richard Holbrooke began intensive shuttle diplomacy with the parties. In late August, NATO and the UN issued an ultimatum to the Bosnian Serbs to stop shelling Sarajevo, to stop offensive action against remaining safe areas, to withdraw heavy weapons from around Sarajevo and to allow road and air access to Sarajevo. In late August, NATO began its heavy air strikes against the Bosnian Serb military. Eventually, at the meeting arranged by the Contact Group in Geneva and New York, the Foreign Ministers of Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia and Serbia concluded the Dayton Peace Accord in November 1995. The Dayton Peace Accord³⁶ was secured by 60,000 NATO peacekeepers, yet this did not mean that Milosevic's "Greater Serbia" designed ceased to exist. The year 1999 proved to be the time for such intentions to come to the surface once again in Kosovo. The Western attitude was too little and too late for Bosnia, yet it would prove too much and too soon for Kosovo.

The trial proceedings of Slobodan Milosevic, who thought that the real victims of the war were the Serbs, began in 2002 in The Hague and were pending until his death in March 2006.³⁷ By 2004, about sixteen war crime suspects had still not been turned over to the tribunal among whom Radovan Karadzic and Radko Mladic are counted.³⁸ Although Milosevic did not plead guilty at any point

³⁶ See Appendix D. "Fact Sheet: The Road to the Dayton Peace Agreement – Securing a Peace Agreement for Bosnia" on http://www.findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m1584/is_nSUPP-5_v6/ai_18106992 as retrieved on 13 November 2006, 06:43:34 GMT.

³⁷ "Slobo: Serbs Were Real Victims" 31 August 2004, CBS News, on <http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2004/09/02/world/main640442.html> as retrieved on 2 September 2004 10:27:37 GMT.

³⁸ "War Crime Suspect Eludes Raid" 1 April 2004, CBS News, on <http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2004/03/31/world/main609692.html> as retrieved on 1 April 2004 13:09:35 GMT; and "Ex-Bosnian Serb Leader Pleads Guilty" 2 October 2002, CBS News, on <http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2002/10/02/world/main524110.html> as retrieved on 2 October 2002 15:50:31 GMT.

throughout the trial proceedings until his death, it is remarkable to note that Bogdan Bogdanovic, as a Serbian architect and the former mayor of Belgrade, concluded in as early as 1991 that Serbia had already lost the war:

Serbia has lost this war. When I say ‘this war’, I am thinking not only of the current one, but of all our modern wars, and our entire modern history from the *Hatt-ı Sherif* to the present day. One hundred and seventy years have passed since the proclamation of the *Hatt-ı Sherif*, and in the course of all that time a state like Serbia – in Europe – should have made a far greater civilizational, cultural and economic leap. Today we should be at least where Hungary is, or where the Czechs are. A feeling of failure lies at the very heart of Serbian nationalism, and with that come all the various justifications for this failure: all various Cominterns, Vaticans, Freemasonries and their unbelievable plots. There is indeed a sense of having missed out. This history gambled away – this century and a half gambled away – is what can be described as a lost war. But when I speak of the lost war, I am speaking also of the events taking place today. Whether we like it or not, when we look on TV at the various maps showing Serb and non-Serb villages, and how far the ‘defenders of the Serb villages’ have advanced, we see that these ‘defenders of Serb villages’ are attacking towns! The ‘defenders’ are surrounding Vukovar; the ‘defenders of Serb villages’ are attacking Osijek. We see the map of destruction broaden. The irresponsible, indeed disgusting Belgrade press presents these as some kind of victory. They write about advances, liberation, etc. and the ordinary, already deeply indoctrinated people acquire the feeling that we Serbs are winning the war. This is a terrible misconception. Firstly, from a political-military point of view, they cannot possibly win, since nobody sensible would allow anything to be changed by force at the end of the 20th century. Sooner or later those who are there will be forced to withdraw shamefully – unless they are thrown back by the Croat defense effort itself, which if the war spreads will be aided from outside. Secondly, this war has been lost at another and even more terrible level: it is destroying our Serb feeling that our wars were just wars and that we behave honorably. The war now being waged is not an honorable war.”³⁹

³⁹ Taken as cited in Branka Magas, *The Destruction of Yugoslavia – Tracking the Break-Up 1980-1992*, p. 344. For a compact account of the Bosnian war, see Paul Shoup, “The Bosnian Crisis in 1992”, in Sabrina Petra Ramet and Ljubisa S. Adamovich (eds.), *Beyond Yugoslavia – Politics, Economics, and Culture In a Shattered Community*, (Boulder: Westview Press, 1995), pp. 155-187. Writing the article before the Dayton Peace Accord was signed and when the war was still raging, Shoup argues that the resolution of the Bosnian war would not be accomplished without the presence of a stabilizing force from outside the area. He also suggests that the crucial factor in the future of Bosnia would be the degree of international supervision and control in Bosnia. See also Sabrina Petra Ramet, *Balkan Babel – the Disintegration of Yugoslavia from the Death of Tito to Ethnic War* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1996), pp. 243-279, for another compact chronological account. Also

4.2. TURKISH FOREIGN POLICY TOWARDS BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA⁴⁰

Indeed, Turkey and Yugoslavia had friendly relations before the war which was recorded particularly in the economic venue. Just one year before the war broke out; former State Minister Cemil Çiçek (MP) had gone to Belgrade to attend the 8th Meeting of the Turkish – Yugoslavian Economic Cooperation Joint Commission.⁴¹ Five months later, Yalım Erez, the former President of Turkish Union of Chambers and Stock Exchanges (TOBB), stated that joint investments could be launched with a view to selling goods to third parties.⁴² The second Turkish – Yugoslavian Business Conference produced the memorandum of understanding signed by Yalım Erez and Milan Pavic, the former President of Yugoslav Economic Chamber, in mid-October 1990.⁴³ When the separatist tendencies became visible by 1991, Turkey expressed its

writing before the war ended, Ramet observes that the war had greater impact than believed at the outset, which included the declination of the West to defend the Helsinki Accords, the Geneva Conventions, and the 1948 Genocide Convention; the shelving of the principle of *uti possidetis*, under which new states that emerge from larger states were to be recognized within their boundaries; the reluctance of the Western international organizations to act; and the subsequent decline in their credibility. Last, but not least, she points out to the notion of democracy by way of arguing that democracy is taken to be operative when elections are held and when the elected officials take office as a result of the majority vote. This was not the case for Bosnia since the Westerners accepted that an ethnic minority (Serbs) did not feel bound by the will of the majority (Bosnians) and could resort to force and ethnic cleansing. Ramet concludes that given that the West had a poor perception of democracy; it should not be surprising that when changes that subvert democracy in the heart of Europe were not even recognized.

⁴⁰ From the beginning of the war in April 1992, until the end of it in November 1995, four governments served in Turkey for rather short terms. From 20 November 1991 to 25 June 1993, the 7th Demirel government (49th government), which was a coalition of True Path Party (center-right) (*Doğru Yol Partisi/TPP*) and Social Democratic People's Party (center-left) (*Sosyal Demokrat Halkçı Parti/SDPP*), held power. The second government was also a coalition of these parties which held power between 25 June 1993 and 5 October 1995, known as the 1st Çiller government (50th government). After SDPP joined Republican People's Party (center-left) (*Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi/RPP*) on 18 February 1995, TPP – RPP coalition began. The third was the TPP government, known as the 2nd Çiller government, which held power between 5 October 1995 and 30 October 1995 (51st government). Holding power between 30 October 1995 and 6 March 1996, the successor of this government was the 3rd Çiller government, which was a coalition of TPP and RPP (52nd government). The opposition parties in the same period were Motherland Party (center-right) (*Anavatan Partisi/MP*), RPP, Democratic Left Party (center-left) (*Demokratik Sol Parti/DLP*), Nationalist Movement Party (center-right) (*Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi/NMP*) and Welfare Party (pro-Islamic) (*Refah Partisi/WP*).

⁴¹ 8 May 1990, Türkiye.

⁴² 13 October 1990, *Tercüman*.

⁴³ 14 October 1990, *Milliyet*.

belief that the constituent republics should resolve their disputes through negotiation on several occasions which included former Bosnian President Aliya Izzetbegovic's visit to Ankara on 15 July, Foreign Minister Safa Giray's (MP) visit to Sarajevo on 30 August, and a Turkish delegation's visit to Yugoslavia on 23 October.⁴⁴ However, when the irreversible disintegration took place, Turkey recognized Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia – Herzegovina, and Macedonia in early February 1992 as mentioned previously. In fact, in the first half of the 1990s, Turkey's diplomatic and political initiatives for Bosnia – Herzegovina had been so prioritized that the Balkans were viewed as “Bosnia and the remainder of the Balkans” from the official Turkish view.⁴⁵ After shortly supporting the continuation of the status quo, Turkey changed its position upon increasing Serbian aggression and the irreversible disintegration. The new policy was threefold: to bring an end to the war in Bosnia – Herzegovina to preserve its independence; to prevent the spillover effect of war in Kosovo, Albania, Macedonia, Sandjak and Vojvodina; and to draw the international attention to the crisis.⁴⁶

In face of increasing attacks, Hikmet Çetin announced that if requested, Turkey could send troops to the UNPROFOR in early January 1992.⁴⁷ As the tension increased in March, the Federal Army announced that it would intervene in the fighting if Croat and Muslim militia continued attacks on the Serbs' Federal Army in Bosnia – Herzegovina.⁴⁸ The European Community (EC) recognized Bosnia – Herzegovina in early April 1992, which was welcomed by Turkey, yet afterwards the

⁴⁴ Şule Kut, “Turkish Diplomatic Initiatives for Bosnia – Herzegovina”, in Günay Göksu Özdoğan and Kemal Saybaşılı eds., *Balkans – A Mirror of the New International Order*, (İstanbul: Eren, 1995), p. 299.

⁴⁵ Şule Kut, “Soğuk Savaş Sonrası Türkiye'nin Balkan Ülkeleriyle İlişkileri”, in İsmail Sosyal (ed), *Çağdaş Türk Diplomasisi: 200 Yıllık Süreç* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1999), p. 395.

⁴⁶ Duygu Bazoğlu Sezer, “Turkish Security in the Shifting Balkans: Reorientation to a Regional Focus”, p. 102. See also Ali Askeroğlu, “The Bosnia – Herzegovina Question in Turkish Foreign Policy: 1992 – 1995 – Has It Been Successful?” *Journal of Qafqaz University* 2(2) (1999), p. 101.

⁴⁷ 8 January 1992, *Türkiye*.

⁴⁸ 30 March 1992, *Hürriyet*.

events turned into a full-scale fighting. Upon this, former Prime Minister Süleyman Demirel discussed the escalation with former President Özal and stated that Turkey would raise the issue in the OIC in mid-April 1992. Turkey launched its diplomatic initiatives in mid-April 1992 and sent a diplomatic delegation to Belgrade in mid-April 1992 for a six-day visit to hold contacts with the political leaders of Serbia and Bosnia – Herzegovina and missions of the EC and the CSCE. Meanwhile, former Bosnian Deputy Prime Minister called his counterpart Erdal İnönü to say that despite the recent ceasefire, the Serb militia could not be controlled and asked for support.⁴⁹ After this, Turkish and Bosnian presidents exchanged their views on the situation after which Özal called upon George Bush, François Mitterrand, King Fahd, Khashemi Rafsancani, and Hosni Mobarak for support.⁵⁰ Nevertheless, the opposition parties such as the DLP accused the government of being indifferent to Bosnia – Herzegovina by stating that not even a single Turkish minister was sent to Sarajevo, but to Belgrade.⁵¹

4.2.1. PARLIMENTARY DEBATES IN THE YEARS OF WAR

In late April 1992, State Minister Akin Gönen (TPP) announced that Turkey had officially recognized Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia – Herzegovina, and Macedonia on 6 February 1992 and given the state of affairs at the material time, the relations with these new republics would be regulated by the Turkish Embassy in Belgrade. Gönen pointed out the appeal made by Bosnian Foreign Minister Haris Sladzic and Deputy Prime Minister Muhammed Cengic for support in face of increasing attacks on the

⁴⁹ 15 April 1992, *Hürriyet*.

⁵⁰ 19 April 1992, *Cumhuriyet*; 19 April 1992 *Türkiye*.

⁵¹ 27 April 1992, *Cumhuriyet*.

Muslims on Bosnia.⁵² In similar vein, Mustafa Baş (WP) emphasized that just as the country-wide spirit of support during the Turkish – Greek War in 1919 - 1922, the Turkish support to Bosnia must display the same intensity and vigor. As a member of parliament of the opposition, Baş criticized the government's attitude as being insufficient with respect to the arrest of Aliya Izzetbegovic. He particularly stated that after Izzetbegovic's arrest, the government preferred to question the accuracy of the event itself instead of showing an active stance, while Italy, for instance, expressly stated that Izzetbegovic must be released immediately. Baş's speech at the Assembly manifested the approach of the WP when he stated that they wanted to see the spirit of Sultan Murat and Osman Gazi in the government.⁵³

Upon Baş's statement, while endorsing such evaluations, Foreign Minister Hikmet Çetin (SDPP) asserted that the only viable solution could be found through diplomacy and that steps must be taken within the framework of international organizations. Çetin also added that any other solution would not be viable and make the situation even more complicated.⁵⁴ In early May 1992, Çetin submitted Turkey's appeal to the UN Security Council. The letter stated that international community should take on an active stance and the destruction of cultural heritage must be stopped. Recalling that Bosnia – Herzegovina was accepted as the 52nd member by the OSCE, Çetin maintained that it was upon Turkey's proposal that senior OSCE officials assessed the suspension of Serbia's membership and holding a meeting to discuss the force of any future sanctions.⁵⁵

⁵² *Turkish Grand National Assembly Journal of Minutes*, Session 69, Period 19, Legislative Year 1, 28 April 1992, vol. 9, pp. 395-396.

⁵³ *Turkish Grand National Assembly Journal of Minutes*, Session 72, Period 19, Legislative Year 1, 5 May 1992, vol. 10, pp. 247-248. İnönü had declared on 3 May that the event was serious and unacceptable. 4 May 1992, *Milliyet*.

⁵⁴ *Turkish Grand National Assembly Journal of Minutes*, Session 72, Period 19, Legislative Year 1, 5 May 1992, vol. 10, p. 249.

⁵⁵ *ibid.*, p. 250.

A week later, Bosnian Deputy Minister Muhammed Cengic addressed the Turkish parliament. Cengic first stressed that had there been no war in Bosnia, he would be very pleased as the first Bosnian official to address the Turkish Parliament after 125 years.⁵⁶ After briefly portraying the plight of the Bosnians, Cengic stated that they had been of the opinion that the West would not allow such a thing to happen in the middle of Europe and that the crises in Europe had now become a thing of the past. He emphasized that the weak measures taken by the UN did in no way suffice for even passing from one point to another in Sarajevo. That was why, said Cengic, the Bosnians looked to Turkey for help. This was not to suggest that Turkey should wage a war against Serbia but that it should protect the Bosnians. As mentioned in the previous section, Cengic stressed that the Bosnians did not have the means to build a body of resistance as the Federal Army held all the weapons.⁵⁷ Cengic also underlined that although there was news reporting that some generals in the Federal Army were discharged from office, they were discovered to be *de facto* on duty and were determined to wipe out the Muslims from the map of former Yugoslavia.⁵⁸ Cengic concluded that without any commitment by Turkey, he would not be able to return to Bosnia.

Upon the proposal by Adnan Kahveci (MP) and thirty other members of parliament regarding a general discussion on necessary measures to bring an end to the conflict in Bosnia and Sandjak, Kahveci maintained that the government did not take on an active stance. Kahveci particularly stated that the government had developed a new sort of diplomacy which was labeled as “statement diplomacy” instead of the “telephone diplomacy” which it had previously criticized. Stating that

⁵⁶ *Turkish Grand National Assembly Journal of Minutes*, Session 75, Period 19, Legislative Year 1, 12 May 1992, vol. 11, p. 21.

⁵⁷ *ibid.*, p. 22.

⁵⁸ *ibid.*, 23; 8 May 1992, *Hürriyet*; and 13 May 1992, *Hürriyet*.

this type of diplomacy proved ineffective during the Karabagh crises, Kahveci maintained that the OSCE was not an effective organization to deter Serbia and added in black humor that it was possible to describe the acronym as “*Allah’ın Gariplerinin İç Dökme Klübü*” (Poor Men’s Club of Effusion) in Turkish (AGİK).⁵⁹ Kahveci went on to argue that the government prevented Turkish Radio and Television (TRT) from broadcasting the developments so that the public would not be sufficiently informed while prominent TV channels in the world did the exact opposite. According to Kahveci, the reason behind this could be to keep the public attention down to curb any possible pressure on the government. Kahveci said that despite being the opposition, his party put forward proposals. As other members of parliament would stress, Kahveci invited the government to send arms to Bosnia in face of the fact that the Federal Army possessed all the arms.

In the same session, Mustafa Baş (WP) said that on 11 May 1992, the UN, the Red Cross and the EC had announced that they would withdraw their representatives which he thought would serve the Serbian interests as there would be no international deterrence mechanism left in the country.⁶⁰ Baş recalled that in the Falkland Islands War, Britain had found a prompt solution, and in the Gulf War, the U.S.A. took immediate action. However, there was nothing at stake for the great powers in the Balkans. Baş stressed that the allegation that the UN did not have enough finance was just that, an allegation. Taking religion as the departure point, he stated that upon the allegation that Libya had shot down a plane, Libya was imposed severe sanctions and Turkey was the first to act accordingly as a Muslim state. He proposed that the Poised Hammer (*Çekiç Güç*) troops be sent to Bosnia, and if not, the spillover of the clashes to Sandjak and Kosovo would be expected, and also added that sending arms

⁵⁹ *Turkish Grand National Assembly Journal of Minutes*, Session 75, Period 19, Legislative Year 1, 12 May 1992, vol. 11, p. 38.

⁶⁰ *ibid.*, p. 42.

and providing monetary aid was a duty for Turkey.⁶¹ While repeating the indifference of TRT to the matter, Baş noted one development as a positive measure and that was the submission by Abdullah Gül (WP) of a proposal to the Council of Europe signed by approximately twenty members of parliament suggesting that Serbia be removed from Council of Europe membership. He also maintained that the news claiming that Izzetbegovic wanted to take refuge in Turkey was lacked basis and had the possibility of creating a psychological breakdown among the Bosnians who struggled for survival.⁶²

The session proceeded with İsmail Cem speaking on behalf of SDPP and with emphasis that he spoke on behalf of his group and not the government. Cem described the situation in Bosnia as a massacre and not “war” and stated that he partly agreed with the previous arguments which particularly asserted that Turkey engaged in futile attempts by calling upon international organizations such as the OSCE.⁶³ The main problem according to Cem was the failure of aid attempts which included medicine and food. He proposed that Turkey withdraw its ambassador to Yugoslavia just as the EC had done. Different from previous arguments, Cem stressed that the suggestions regarding the arms transfer are proposals that add another degree of intensity to the problem and that they must be proposed after thorough research of availability and not with simple suggestions.⁶⁴

Cem’s speech was followed by Coşkun Kırca speaking on behalf of TPP. Kırca first and foremost emphasized that no issue resembled another in diplomacy and that every single issue must be assessed in its unique circumstances. Second, while protesting, it was necessary for Turkey to find a remedy. Kırca fully endorsed

⁶¹ *ibid.*, p. 43

⁶² *ibid.*, p. 45.

⁶³ *ibid.*, p. 46.

⁶⁴ *ibid.*, p. 47.

Cem's portrayal of the situation. He said that Germany and Austria were the only two states that supported Bosnia. France had recently begun to disapprove Serbia. Greece continued to act in harmony with Serbia which was lastly observed by Mitsotakis' visit to Belgrade. Turkey should expect opposition partly from Romania and even more from Russia due to historical reasons. Bulgaria's interest lied in balancing Serbia. The OIC countries were expected to show due interest. Kırca expressly stated that the issue of arms supplies should be the one that is the least mentioned both the by the government and the opposition.⁶⁵ If there was to be an arms procurement, said Kırca, it should be revealed years later as their transfer and use rested on keeping the issue confidential. Kırca invited Turkey to acknowledge that the UN peace forces could only be stationed in Bosnia after a ceasefire. As such, Turkey could do something else and it was to try to get the West and its organizations to think that the new Serbia did not and could not represent former Yugoslavia in legal terms and not to recognize it as a natural successor of the latter. Kırca added that the suspension of Yugoslavia's membership would not suffice and it should be stressed that Serbia could not fill in former Yugoslavia's seat in the OSCE. The second option could be to cut off diplomatic relations. Third, Turkey should immediately apply to the Security Council as Germany and Austria had done. Fourth, Turkey should invite the Security Council to implement the provisions of Section 7 of the UN Charter concerning aggression. Fifth, Turkey should invite the Security Council to impose an economic, trade, transportation, and communication embargo against Serbia. Sixth, talks within NATO should be started to discuss possible military measures.⁶⁶

⁶⁵ibid., p. 49

⁶⁶ ibid., pp. 50-51.

Following Kırca, Vehbi Dinçerler (MP) stated that Turkey faced a serious test in face of the fact that Foreign Minister Hikmet Çetin held the presidency of Council of Europe Committee of Ministers which put additional responsibility upon Turkey with respect to taking an active stance.⁶⁷ Dinçerler invited the government to apply the crisis management implemented during the refugee influx from Iraq to Turkey. Regarding the aid issue, Dinçerler maintained that the Bosnian Deputy Prime Minister Muhammed Cengic had come to Turkey before this visit on 12 May 1992 and that he was called to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Cengic and senior officials had lengthy talks with maps open upon which it was decided to send a hundred thousand tons of fuel-oil via one point through the sea. It was soon reported that at least twenty-five thousand tons had reached Bosnia. This meant that aid could reach although the airports and the railways had been closed.⁶⁸

Upon these discussions, State Minister and Deputy Prime Minister Erdal İnönü (SDPP) criticized those who perceived the war in Bosnia as a tool for domestic politics and asserted that Turkey did not act belatedly, particularly pinpointing Kahveci's statement. İnönü first stated that even prior to the clashes, an official delegation was sent to the region to submit Turkey's concerns. He further argued that attempts were made in the OSCE and the UN Security Council. The Foreign Minister had also sent a letter to the OIC for resource allocation. In reply, the President of the Islamic Development Bank sent a letter indicating that one million USD was allocated to meet the needs of the Bosnians.⁶⁹

The succeeding discussion in the Assembly was held on 20 May 1992. Apart from Bosnia, the Assembly also discussed the developments in Nagorno – Karabagh. Foreign Minister Hikmet Çetin (SDPP) maintained that the efforts were primarily

⁶⁷ *ibid.*, p. 54.

⁶⁸ *ibid.*, p. 56.

⁶⁹ *ibid.*, p. 61

directed to medicine and food aid. After talking the matter over with his French counterpart, he emphasized that opening and functioning of the airport in Sarajevo must be ensured under the supervision of international organizations.⁷⁰ After Hikmet Çetin's speech, Mesut Yılmaz (MP) delivered a speech on the general outlook of the situation in Bosnia. It was made clear by Yılmaz that there had been a quite important misunderstanding between MP and the government on the issue of sending troops to Bosnia. MP never supported any suggestion that included Turkey's unilateral intervention in military terms. It supported all diplomatic initiatives in which the government engaged. More importantly, Yılmaz described their point of divergence as follows: if the government took a diplomatic initiative as to halt the armed conflict, that diplomatic initiative must bear a sufficient degree of deterrence in order for it to be effective. According to Yılmaz, Turkey had the power of deterrence but it did not use it.⁷¹ Through the end of his speech, Yılmaz said that in case the Assembly opens the issue to discussion, MP would agree to grant authority to send troops to Bosnia.

In the speeches delivered out of the agenda in the same session, Bülent Ecevit (DLP) also dwelled on the issue and criticized those who maintained that the proposals by DLP were all based on military solutions. He particularly pinpointed Mümtaz Soysal's (SDPP) comment in which he accused those who wanted concrete and effective measures as "little Enver Pashas".⁷² However, Ecevit said that he never suggested Turkey become a party as interventionist into the war neither in Bosnia nor in Nagorno – Karabagh. He submitted his proposal in two headings the first of which suggested that a force unit similar to Poised Hammer must be set up in Bosnia if their

⁷⁰ *Turkish Grand National Assembly Journal of Minutes*, Session 78, Period 19, Legislative Year 1, 20 May 1992, vol. 11, p. 207.

⁷¹ *ibid.*, p. 208.

⁷² *ibid.*, p. 232.

duration of stay were to be prolonged. Second, Turkey should immediately call upon all countries of former Yugoslavia to convene in İstanbul and try to leave the EC out of the process.

It is seen that no particular session was held for the discussion of the issue in length after 20 May 1992. The developments in Bosnia, along with the Cyprus issue, were deliberated only after three months, on 25 August 1992. This extraordinary session was the discussion on Bosnia and Cyprus which involved heavy criticism of the government.⁷³ As the first speaker of this session, Kamran İnan (MP) recalled that the government must closely follow the developments as the events and their reflection on international TV channel commentaries signaled spillover possibility to Kosovo and Sandjak taking into account the fact that the fall of Bosnia was imminent.⁷⁴ İnan warned that Albania and Macedonia would be drawn into the conflict which could lead to a Third Balkan War. Therefore, the most viable strategy according to İnan was to issue an ultimatum to Serbia which would give Serbia twenty-four hours for ceasefire. If not obeyed, the next step would be to carry out an air bombardment. İnan observed that this was already echoed in the leading British newspapers such as *The Observer* and *London Times* and was not a new strategy. In line with the arguments of other members of parliament both from the government and the opposition, he maintained that Turkey had moral and historical responsibility which could have prompted Turkey to be preponderant in getting the issue discussed in the U.S. Congress and the European capitals, which he thought had not been accomplished yet.⁷⁵ Meanwhile, in mid-August 1992, Serbian prime Minister Milan Panic visited Turkey and asked not to intervene in the Bosnian conflict. Panic called

⁷³ 26 August 1992, *Cumhuriyet*.

⁷⁴ *Turkish Grand National Assembly Journal of Minutes*, Session 94, Period 19, Legislative Year 1, 25 August 1992, vol. 16, p. 44.

⁷⁵ *ibid.*, p. 47.

on the Turkish military to duty and proposed Demirel that the Yugoslav Army, under the command of the Turkish officers, seize all the weapons in Bosnia and demilitarize the area which of course was not welcome by Turkey⁷⁶. İnan said it was not acceptable to receive the Serbian Prime Minister in Ankara with an official welcome. However, more disturbing was a press statement which included the following remark: “Turkey and Yugoslavia invite all parties fighting in Bosnia to bring an end to war”.⁷⁷ İnan harshly criticized this statement as it implied that the offender and the victim were treated on equal grounds as two warring sides in the classical sense. İnan recalled the government repeatedly announced that no unilateral action would be taken but Turkey would be the first to take a step within the framework of the UN. However, France, and Britain unexpectedly declared that they would send 1,100 and 1,300 troops to Bosnia, respectively. Italy also announced that it would send 1,500 soldiers. İnan noted that in Turkey, there was only one news column reporting that 480 troops would be allocated within NATO.⁷⁸

Following the speech by İnan, İrfan Demiralp (TPP) began his words by stating that Turkey had done everything in order to ensure that war in Bosnia was brought to an end except for sending troops, just as Hikmet Çetin had remarked. The UN Security Council Resolution 770 and 771 had been issued as a result of intense diplomatic initiatives taken by the Coalition government under the leadership of Süleyman Demirel. Although Demiralp said both resolutions lacked the potential to a prompt solution to the situation, he asserted that getting the Security Council to issue the said Resolutions was itself a political success. He made an appeal to the government that it should revisit its diplomatic and political efforts in the OSCE, OIC and the UN. It was equally important to establish the proportion of troops for

⁷⁶ 13 August 1992, *Milliyet*.

⁷⁷ *ibid.*, p. 48.

⁷⁸ *ibid.*, p. 49.

every state within the UN in the framework of Resolution 770 and to undertake the coordinating function.⁷⁹

It was seen that the next speech by Ercan Karakaş (SDPP) was a criticism of international organizations but a full endorsement of government actions regarding the war in Bosnia. Karakaş held that the UN, the EC or the WEU had not shown the expected sensitivity during both the Croat – Serb war and the war in Bosnia that had been going on for eight months by then since the “the Arika plain did not smell of oil.”⁸⁰ Karakaş openly stated that SDPP was of the opinion that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs took the necessary steps in both Bosnia and Nagorno – Karabagh issues. On the other hand, he maintained that SDPP interpreted the opposition’s proposals as to direct military intervention to Bosnia and Nagorno – Karabagh as plain irresponsibility.

Nevertheless, the speech that involved the harshest criticism came from Necmettin Erbakan (WP) who accused both the government and the international organizations. Erbakan emphasized that the government acted so belatedly in convening the Parliament, that is, after Bosnia was almost totally destroyed. He saw a causal link between the events in Bosnia and what he called the influence of “certain Zionist and other” elements who infused in their societies the idea that Muslims were to be wiped out from Europe. Therefore, it was important that the Western intellectuals remedy this “disorder” in their societies for the sake of peace and stability.⁸¹ Pinpointing Boutros Gali’s statement that there were more important events than Bosnia in the world such as famine, drought, and poverty, Erbakan argued that such a mentality was utterly devoid of providing peace in the world. He said he was struck by the fact that the government strictly dismissed the arguments

⁷⁹ibid., p. 58.

⁸⁰ ibid., p. 59.

⁸¹ ibid., p. 62.

suggesting a polarization between Islam and Christianity while, for instance, Velibor Estovic, the Information Minister, said they had undertaken the mission of the Crusaders.⁸² Turkey had historical, humanitarian and strategic reasons to be involved according to Erbakan. He warned that if the Serbs accomplished their plan in Bosnia, they would proceed with Sandjak, Macedonia, Kosovo and Albania.

Erbakan's speech was an assertive one in terms of the accusations towards the government it involved. Erbakan argued that while WP members engaged in such efforts, the İstanbul and Ankara municipalities of SDPP ordered five hundred Ikarus public buses produced in Serbia. He added that while the Greeks procured arms to Serbia, the Turkish government did not provide arms to Bosnia for the reason that the arms had serial numbers on them which made them easy to be identified.⁸³ He called upon Demirel that these numbers could be concealed and it would not be such a daunting task. Drawing upon the financial contributions of Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, he asserted that Turkey simply watched what was going on while the Muslim states were doing their best of efforts. Erbakan's fears fundamentally centered on the allegations that the Bosnian children were taken to churches to be converted into Christianity. According to Erbakan, some ministers in the government stated in that respect that if these children were brought to Turkey they would fall into the hands of the tariqats and that was why they should not have been brought.⁸⁴ Erbakan stated that instead of mason forces, Turkey should cooperate with Muslim states. Recalling the letter by Hikmet Çetin to UN Security Council regarding military intervention, Erbakan maintained that this was a futile effort since the U.S.A. was already planning such an intervention at the material time. He concluded that the right thing

⁸² *ibid.*, p. 75.

⁸³ *ibid.*, p. 77.

⁸⁴ *ibid.*, p. 80.

was to say openly that Turkey shall resort to force along with Iran, Pakistan and Egypt if the UN did not intend to.⁸⁵

Upon such criticism, İnönü stated that Turkey simultaneously held the presidency of Council of Europe Committee of Ministers, the OIC, and the group of Islamic countries at the UN. İnönü said that Turkey showed every effort it could in the orientation of international community towards the issue and that Bosnia was recognized by many states and accepted by the UN thanks to Turkey's due efforts. The OIC foreign ministers convened in İstanbul in mid-June 1992 at the end of which the international community was called upon to intervene militarily. Furthermore, Turkey allocated a cargo aircraft by which \$ 1,7 million aid was sent to Bosnia by then. In reply to Erbakan's arguments, İnönü said that a total of sixteen deliveries were sent to Bosnia. The Red Crescent procured an aid of \$ 240 thousand including food and medicine which was delivered in November 1991. Three tons of medicine and other medical equipment were sent by Turkish Airlines May 1992. The Turkish cargo aircraft carried similar aid of ten tons to Zagreb. İnönü underlined that the accusations by the opposition were unsubstantiated as Turkey provided accommodation for more than 15,000 refugees. A Turkish vessel participated in the marine force stationed in the Adriatic for the supervision of the embargo on Serbia. The commander of the NATO group within this marine force was a Turkish officer.⁸⁶ İnönü reminded that Turkey had submitted the Action Plan for Bosnia to the ambassadors of UN Security Council to Ankara in early August 1992 emphasizing that Turkey was the only country to prepare and submit such a plan by then. The said plan proposed that the Security Council allow military intervention if the political efforts of the Security Council did not prove effective, the heavy artillery were not

⁸⁵ *ibid.*, p. 81.

⁸⁶ *ibid.*, p. 84.

handed over to the UN in two weeks, and the fighting did not end in forty-eight hours. In the military operation to be carried out, Banja Luka Airport used by the Serbs would be the first target. The secondary targets would be the heavy Serbian artillery deployed on Serbian hills. The neighboring states would be called upon to open their airports for use by the UN aircraft. The countries that possessed aircraft carriers would send their fleets to the Adriatic to support the operation. The Action Plan did not target Serbia proper but was against Serbian aggression in Bosnia.⁸⁷

After İnönü, Ecevit argued that Turkey did not have a well-defined Balkan policy. Ecevit stated that he had pointed out the need to formulate a Balkan policy back in 1990 when Yugoslavia had not yet disintegrated but that the dangers he had foreseen by then were not taken into account by the government. Ecevit also agreed that the conflict had turned into a Crusade against the Muslims and the Turks, pioneered by Serbia and its main supporter Greece.⁸⁸ In brief, this extraordinary session on Bosnia and Cyprus produced the following parameters to be observed: 1) The parliament does not and shall not accept any forced change regarding the territorial integrity and the boundaries of Bosnia, 2) The parliament is in solidarity with the Bosnian Muslims subjected to one of the most severe massacres of history and is prepared to extend aid, 3) The Turkish parliament deems international use of force necessary to end Serbian attacks as a humanitarian and peace-bound duty and expects the same from the international community and 4) Should the international

⁸⁷ *ibid.*, p. 95; Şule Kut, “Turkish Diplomatic Initiatives for Bosnia – Herzegovina”, p. 302; 8 August 1992, *Hürriyet*; 9 August 1992, *Hürriyet*; 7 August 1992, *Milliyet*. On 7 August 1992, Özal also called Bush and called for military intervention.

⁸⁸ *Turkish Grand National Assembly Journal of Minutes*, Session 94, Period 19, Legislative Year 1, 25 August 1992, vol. 16, pp. 106-108.

use of force be exercised belatedly, the parliament shall see it a humanitarian duty to take every effort to bring an end to Serbian attacks.⁸⁹

On 24 August, the UN General Assembly convened upon Turkey's initiative and accepted a resolution condemning the acquisition of territory by force in Bosnia which was interpreted as a notable success for Turkey. However, it was known that it was easier for the General Assembly to take such bold decisions as a body that did not have any effective sanctioning power.⁹⁰ In late August 1992, a conference was held by the initiatives of the EC in London attended by approximately 500 diplomats. The international diplomatic efforts displayed a turning point with the London Conference. While the pre-London efforts were targeted at ending Serb-Croat conflict, post-London efforts were a combination of efforts by the UN, the OSCE, and the OIC for Bosnia.⁹¹ At the conference, Hikmet Çetin stated that Turkey did not exclude the use of military power to end the conflict. Slovenia did not attend the conference while Macedonia stated that it could withdraw.⁹² After the conference, the talks of military intervention were shelved; the leaders issued a 96-hour ultimatum on Serbia.⁹³

After one month, the parliament convened in mid-September 1992 and the fourth session began with Adnan Kahveci's remarks. Kahveci preserved his criticisms towards the government. He stated that he had talked to one commander from Bosnia and that one of them said they had 5,000 people ready to fight yet they had neither weapons nor other auxiliary equipment.⁹⁴ He repeated that Turkey could at least give weapons for defense and open the \$ 35 million credit at the Eximbank

⁸⁹ *ibid.*, p. 113. The proposal was signed by Mustafa Kalemli (ANAP), Turhan Tayan (DYP), Yaşar Erbaz (MÇP), Aydın Güven Gürkan (SHP), Oğuzhan Asiltürk (RP) and Hüsamettin Özkan (DSP).

⁹⁰ Şule Kut, "Turkish Diplomatic Initiatives for Bosnia – Herzegovina", p. 305.

⁹¹ *ibid.*

⁹² 27 August 1992, *Cumhuriyet*.

⁹³ 28 August 1992, *Hürriyet*.

⁹⁴ *Turkish Grand National Assembly Journal of Minutes*, Session 4, Period 19, Legislative Year 2, 17 September 1992, vol. 17, pp. 158-159.

for use by Bosnia. Kahveci noted that he had talked over the matter with the Defense Minister yet the latter replied that there would be no arms transfer.⁹⁵ At one point, Kahveci did not refrain from saying that he had no hope from the government and held that while Turkey boasted about how it protected the lives of the Turkish Jews during World War II, it was devoid of showing even the sympathy for the Bosnians and their plight. He stressed that if the embargo had been imposed effectively in the long-term, then perhaps Serbia would pay indemnity for all the damages it caused. It was acknowledged by Kahveci that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was of the opinion that the embargo simply accelerated the massacre. Yet he suggested that it was upon the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to get the embargo modified in a way that would work for the Bosnians and not against them.

It was seen that Turkey switched track in autumn 1992. The government began to argue that in the absence of military help from the international community, Bosnia should not be deprived of the right of self-defense. By mid-autumn 1992, Ankara decided to concentrate its diplomatic efforts on trying to get the UN arms embargo revoked in the case of Bosnian government. Turkey formulated a threefold demand: for the lifting of the arms embargo, the establishment of safe havens, and limited military intervention.⁹⁶ When the U.N. Security Council adopted Resolution 781 banning all military flights in the Bosnian air space, excluding UNPROFOR and other flights supporting UN operations through mid-October 1992, Turkey began to press for its implementation. After the adoption of this Resolution, the Vance – Owen Plan was proposed to the Serbs, the Croats and the Muslims in Geneva in late October 1992. After Izzetbegovic's visit to Ankara in August 1992, Cyrus Vance and Lord Owen paid an official visit to Ankara. In early November 1992, Turkey

⁹⁵ *ibid.*, p. 160.

⁹⁶ Philip Robins, on <http://www.biu.ac.il/SOC/besa/publications/mfa3.html> as retrieved on 12 January 2006 07:30:24 GMT.

criticized the Vance – Owen Plan for creating ethnically pure zones, punishing the victim and encouraging the aggressor. The plan had a three part package comprising ten constitutional principles, a cessation of hostilities agreement and a map. It defined Bosnia – Herzegovina as a decentralized state, gave autonomy to the provinces but denied them any international legal character. Vance and Owen argued that the territorial implications in the proposals gave the message of withdrawal to Bosnian Serbs and that in order to convince the critics who accused them of rewarding ethnic cleansing they emphasized that the Serbs had to withdraw from nearly 40 % of their land holdings. From their own eyes, it seemed that the proposal of a decentralized state with no international legal character was not much of an issue when compared to the issue of portion of land the Serbs would have to withdraw.⁹⁷

It was observed that while Turkey’s allies in the West listened to the pleas of Turkish politicians and officials with respect, Turkey remained unable to realize its central goals. Through the end of 1992, rather than appealing for the international community to take on full action over Bosnia, the efforts of Turkey seemed to be focused on specific and limited diplomatic aims. As an example, foreign ministers of the Balkan states convened in İstanbul in late November 1992. The final declaration of this meeting centered on the aid issue. The draft resolution proposed by Turkey and the U.S.A. at the UN Human Rights Commission on 30 November – 1 December 1992 was adopted. The resolution defined the Serbs as the aggressor and the Muslims in Bosnia as the victim while confirming the view that the main actors of the cleansing campaign were the Serbian leadership in Bosnia, the Yugoslav Federal Army and the leadership of the Republic of Serbia.⁹⁸

⁹⁷ Şule Kut, “Turkish Diplomatic Initiatives for Bosnia – Herzegovina”, p. 306; and David Owen, *Balkan Odyssey*, pp. 94-159.

⁹⁸ *Turkish Grand National Assembly Journal of Minutes*, Session 34, Period 19, Legislative Year 2, 2 December 1992, vol. 22, pp. 103-104, see Orhan Kilercioğlu’s speech.

In early December 1992, the parliament voted for the government proposal that the government be given full authority to contribute to UNPROFOR according to Resolution 743 and for the deployment of troops in foreign countries which was published in the Official Gazette two days later. Following this, UN Security Council decided to intervene in Somalia which prompted the government to raise the issue of troop deployment on foreign territories. The parliament approved both authorizations and the international force in Somalia was later headed by a Turkish General, Çevik Bir.⁹⁹ However, the opposition criticized the government once again by claiming that the government decision concerning Bosnia was not noteworthy as it was not produced independently of other issues but was taken in relation to the humanitarian intervention in Somalia.¹⁰⁰ Two days later, Turkish Chief of Staff repeated in its Bosnia Report that unilateral intervention was impossible. The main reason in the report was the fact that due to the inability of fuel transfer in the air, the Turkish F-16s could fly only for a limited time.¹⁰¹ Eventually, the UN General Assembly adopted Resolution 47/121 which was proposed jointly by Bosnia and Turkey. Since the resolution condemned ethnic cleansing and stated that Bosnia had the right to self-defense and asked the Security Council to decide for military intervention unless the Serb militia attacks stopped by 15 January 1993, it was the closest UN resolution to Turkish views.¹⁰²

At the turn of 1993, with the idea that it might be effective on the West to take action, Hikmet Çetin appealed to the Islamic countries to impose an oil embargo on the Western states. However, Demirel argued that this appeal belonged to Hikmet

⁹⁹ Şule Kut, "Turkish Diplomatic Initiatives for Bosnia – Herzegovina", pp. 307-308.

¹⁰⁰ 10 December 1992, *Türkiye*.

¹⁰¹ 13 December 1992, *Cumhuriyet*.

¹⁰² Şule Kut, "Turkish Diplomatic Initiatives for Bosnia – Herzegovina", p. 308.

Çetin and that did not reflect a uniform government consensus.¹⁰³ To make things worse, it was quite unpleasant to see that Bosnia was disregarded in the Islamic Summit to be held in Dakar. It appeared that the Palestine Liberation Organization lobbying acts overweighed that of Turkey's initiatives for Bosnia since priority was given to discussing the Palestinians deported by Israel.¹⁰⁴

In the framework of new efforts, the Turkish delegation consisting of State Minister Orhan Kilercioğlu (TPP), İsmail Amasyalı (TPP, an MP who spoke Bosnian), medical staff, correspondents of the TRT, Anatolian Agency, and other press members flew to Zagreb in January 1993. The delegation had contacts with the Bosnian Deputy Prime Minister Hakkı Turajlić among other officials who said they received most of the aid sent and requested that Prime Minister Demirel be informed that 270 thousand people were confined in six regions and could not receive aid for nine months by then. Turajlić requested aid to be delivered by the UN helicopters into the said six regions.¹⁰⁵ The Bosnian Deputy Prime Minister also stated that after Demirel's last contact with Mitterand, there had been remarkable changes in the French stance and that he had been very pleased for that matter.¹⁰⁶ Due to heavy fire, Kilercioğlu had to hold contact with Turajlić at the airport. After the one-hour meeting, while Kilercioğlu flew back, Turajlić was assassinated by two Serb tanks and in the presence of the UN convoy.¹⁰⁷ Later on, the news reported that Deniz Baykal's statement that there were soldiers in the UNPROFOR who collaborated with the Serbs in the shooting was proved right.¹⁰⁸ Almost simultaneously, Demirel

¹⁰³ 6 January 1993, *Hürriyet*; 7 January 1993, *Türkiye*.

¹⁰⁴ 7 January 1993, *Milliyet*.

¹⁰⁵ *Turkish Grand National Assembly Journal of Minutes*, Session 53, Period 19, Legislative Year 2, 12 January 1993, vol. 27, pp. 18-19; and Şule Kut, "Turkish Diplomatic Initiatives for Bosnia – Herzegovina", p. 307.

¹⁰⁶ The delegation also took medical equipment worth \$ 300 thousand, clothes and food. 9 January 1993, *Türkiye*.

¹⁰⁷ 9 January 1993, *Milliyet*; 9 January 1993, *Türkiye*.

¹⁰⁸ 10 January 1993, *Sabah*.

and Kilercioğlu stated that the real target of the Serbs who shot Turajlić dead was the Turkish delegation.¹⁰⁹ President Özal argued that the assassination clearly showed to what extent the mediation efforts were undermined by the Serbs.¹¹⁰

During the short visit in Zagreb, the Croatian Deputy Prime Minister Granic was also contacted. The government in Zagreb stated that they did not trust the UN and said that Turkey must support Croatia in the OIC. The Turkish delegation submitted the urgent requests to the Turkish Foreign Minister and Prime Minister via telephone. These also included the continuation of financial and humanitarian aid among others. The Croatian officials also stated that they wanted Turkey to support the articles concerning Croatia in the conferences to be held in Dakar and Jeddah.¹¹¹ Shortly after the assassination, Özal went to Dakar for the Islamic Summit, yet declared in the Summit that there were no persuasive signs as to the willingness of the Western states to take effective measures as regards Bosnia.¹¹² Özal put forward a set of proposals including nine points concerning air bombardment, which was approved without any modification.¹¹³ All states agreed to force the UN to take effective measures and to send more aid to Bosnia. Özal also called upon the participants to cut off their relations with Serbia¹¹⁴ and stressed that it was not sufficient to see the U.S.A. willing to engage in a military intervention, and that Britain, France, Russia and China, as the other members of the Security Council, must also act accordingly.¹¹⁵ Özal stated further that the contacts held with Russian

¹⁰⁹ 10 January 1993, *Hürriyet*; 11 January 1993, *Sabah*.

¹¹⁰ 10 January 1993, *Sabah*.

¹¹¹ *Turkish Grand National Assembly Journal of Minutes*, Session 53, Period 19, Legislative Year 2, 12 January 1993, vol. 27, p. 21.

¹¹² 11 January 1993, *Hürriyet*.

¹¹³ 12 January 1993, *Cumhuriyet*; 12 January 1993 *Türkiye*.

¹¹⁴ 12 January 1993, *Hürriyet*.

¹¹⁵ 13 January 1993, *Türkiye*.

officials who were against military intervention had in fact been quite positive on the matter this time.¹¹⁶

Meanwhile, on the part of the government, it was interpreted that Turkey was seen as a strong and a reliable mediator. It was observed that Turkey's objective was to reforge the anti-Serb alliance between the Bosnian Muslims and the Croats. Within this framework, Stejepan Mesic, the President of the Croatian Assembly, held contacts with his Turkish counterpart Hüsametdin Cindoruk through late January 1993. After the meeting, Cindoruk stated that he felt as if he were listening to a medieval tyranny as Mesic briefed him on the war.¹¹⁷ It was seen that the emphasis on the limitations concerning a possible intervention was echoed more frequently although there was speculation outside Turkey that it planned to intervene by use of force by January 1993.¹¹⁸ The government and the military began to frequently draw attention to the issue.

In early January 1993, while speaking on behalf of his group, Atilla Mutman (SDPP) underlined that although it had the resolve, Turkey would not unilaterally engage in an intervention. First, any attack carried out outside the UN framework would not be legitimate. Second, Turkey would have to ask Bulgaria for air space permission and call off the blockade in the Adriatic Sea, both of which were impossible.¹¹⁹ Turkey eventually joined the NATO operation in 1993 within the UN Resolution 816 for the enforcement of the no-fly zone over Bosnia. A squadron of eighteen F-16s joined the operation.¹²⁰ This was followed by fervent demands of the

¹¹⁶ 13 January 1993, *Hürriyet*.

¹¹⁷ 22 January 1993, *Cumhuriyet*.

¹¹⁸ Duygu Bazoğlu Sezer, "Turkish Security in the Shifting Balkans: Reorientation to a Regional Focus", p. 104.

¹¹⁹ *ibid.*; *Turkish Grand National Assembly Journal of Minutes*, Session 53, Period 19, Legislative Year 2, 12 January 1993, vol. 27, p. 29 and pp. 30-37.

¹²⁰ Duygu Bazoğlu Sezer, "Turkish Security in the Shifting Balkans: Reorientation to a Regional Focus", p. 104. Upon the adoption of UN Resolution 816 on 31 March 1993 which allowed the member states to implement the no-fly zone by force, Turkey declared it would send eighteen war

opposition with respect to the proposal of holding a general session on the issues of Bosnia and Azerbaijan on 13 April 1993.¹²¹

Amidst these efforts, it was alleged that Turkey received an import of approximately \$ 7 million from Serbia. In a written question, the government was asked if this was true, and if so, what were the goods that Turkey “had to” import from Serbia. It was underscored that sustaining bilateral relations with the Serbs while requesting harsh measures against them was but hypocrisy. In reply, Hikmet Çetin stated in writing that there were no records of such a trade. The issue was also forwarded to the Undersecretariat of Treasury and Foreign Trade. The answer by both state bodies confirmed that there had been no record of import from Serbia between June 1992, i. e., the date of government’s ban on trade, until August 1993, the last date of the available record data.¹²²

While the fighting continued in early 1994, former Prime Minister Tansu Çiller and her Pakistani counterpart Benazir Bhutto went to Sarajevo and announced that they visited Sarajevo not as statespersons but as mothers and human beings. Following this visit, in February 1994, the bazaar in Sarajevo was bombarded killing around 68 and injuring 168 people.¹²³ In early February 1994, Kamran İnan put forward a number of proposals. According to İnan, the first step to be taken would be to withdraw the Turkish vessel from the Adriatic Sea as this made Turkey appear as if it was part of the ongoing international strategy. In line with the NATO decisions

planes to NATO’s “Operation Deny Flight”. The F-16s flew to Italy through the Mediterranean as Greece did not give upper flight permission. The operation began on 12 April 1993. See Şule Kut, “Turkish Diplomatic Initiatives for Bosnia – Herzegovina”, p. 311.

¹²¹ This proposal was given by Şevket Kazan (RP/Kocaeli) on behalf of RP. The proposal stated that Turkey could have used force within the framework of Article 51 of the UN Charter against the Serbs and the Armenians. *Turkish Grand National Assembly Journal of Minutes*, Session 90, Period 19, Legislative Year 2, 13 April 1993, vol. 34, pp. 13-14. See also *Turkish Grand National Assembly Journal of Minutes*, Session 115, Period 19, Legislative Year 2, 22 June 1993, vol. 37, pp. 11-13 and pp. 274-277.

¹²² *Turkish Grand National Assembly Journal of Minutes*, Session 57, Period 19, Legislative Year 3, 27 December 1993, vol. 50, pp. 380-381.

¹²³ 29 January 1994, *Milliyet*; 3 February 1994; and 3 February 1994 *Cumhuriyet*.

of June 1993, the Bosnian air space must be protected, the safety of aid corridors must be ensured and the air fleets at Aviano Air Base must be operated in case of an assault on the said aid corridors.¹²⁴

In February 1994, NATO gave an ultimatum by telling the Serbs to pull back all the heavy artillery. NATO announced that if the Serbs did not comply with the ultimatum it would bombard the Serb targets, which was welcomed by Turkey. The following day, news headlines observed that the new President Clinton gave clear signals to Greece and Russia in three ways: 1) NATO now openly confronted the Serbs, 2) the recognition of Macedonia after the NATO Summit, which was too sudden for Greece and 3) the decision to intervene implied that the U.S.A. was the only superpower.¹²⁵ Indeed, it was soon stated by Çiller that the NATO plan had already been proposed to the UN Security Council by Turkey in August 1992 and it was in essence the Turkish thesis.¹²⁶ Meanwhile, the war continued to have repercussions in the domestic politics. Çiller accused WP of not having sent the aid collected for Bosnia in late February.¹²⁷ It was soon reported that a certain amount of the aid which, according to Şevket Kazan's (WP) statements, were not sent via any bank, were found to be transferred via Faisal Finans to Germany.¹²⁸ When former Bosnian State Minister Hasan Muratovic stated that not a single currency had reached Bosnia in the form of aid,¹²⁹ the accounts of WP in Germany were frozen¹³⁰ and in May 1995, the Interpol initiated an investigation concerning WP.¹³¹

¹²⁴ *Turkish Grand National Assembly Journal of Minutes*, Session 68, Period 19, Legislative Year 3, 8 February 1994, vol. 52, pp. 149-150.

¹²⁵ 11 February 1994, *Sabah*.

¹²⁶ *ibid.*

¹²⁷ 23 February 1994, *Hürriyet*.

¹²⁸ 25 February 1994, *Cumhuriyet*.

¹²⁹ 25 February 1994, *Hürriyet*.

¹³⁰ 26 February 1994, *Sabah*

¹³¹ 11 May 1994, *Milliyet*.

By March 1994, the UN approved the deployment of Turkish troops in Bosnia.¹³² Following this, the Bosnians and the Croats signed a peace treaty in Washington to establish a federation.¹³³ Upon increasing Turkish efforts, the UN decided unanimously to send Turkish troops to Bosnia despite the Greek opposition. President Demirel openly expressed that Turkish troops did not go to Bosnia to revive the Ottoman Empire but to help bring peace.¹³⁴

By April 1994, Bülent Akarcalı (MP) touched upon the legal aspect of the problem as part of the efforts and put forward the issue of the international court found to establish the crimes and to try the guilty. Stating that the court could not function due to financial restrictions, Akarcalı asked in what ways the government would extend aid to this court in order for it to begin the trial of the crimes in Bosnia. In reply, Hikmet Çetin stated in writing that aside from the studies carried out in the Interministry Study Group set up to establish the amendments to be made in Turkish law, Turkey had given \$ 10,000 to be allocated in February 1992 to the relevant UN foundation research on mass rapes. Çetin added that the UN expert commission would visit the refugee camps in Turkey to be assisted by Turkish jurists and doctors.¹³⁵ Through mid-April 1994, Çetin made a detailed statement out of agenda regarding the latest developments in Bosnia. According to Çetin, Turkey not only called upon the OIC to convene but also made the OIC discuss an issue different from Israeli – Arab conflict during the presidency of Turkey, perhaps for the first time.¹³⁶

¹³² 6 March 1994, *Hürriyet*.

¹³³ 19 March 1994, *Sabah*.

¹³⁴ 25 March 1994, *Cumhuriyet*.

¹³⁵ *Turkish Grand National Assembly Journal of Minutes*, Session 85, Period 19, Legislative Year 3, 5 April 1994, vol. 56, pp. 376-377.

¹³⁶ *Turkish Grand National Assembly Journal of Minutes*, Session 88, Period 19, Legislative Year 3, 12 April 1994, vol. 57, pp. 242-247.

Turkey brought together the Muslims and the Croats for ten times in Turkey. Upon the initiatives of Turkey, the basis of trilateral cooperation between the Bosnian Prime Minister Sladzić and the Croatian Deputy Prime Minister Granić was established which was followed by the Washington Agreement. Addressing particularly the opposition, Četin emphasized that it would not be just to criticize the government when the Turkish position regarding the war had reached such a desired level despite the Greek opposition in international platforms. It was understood from Četin's remarks that the "desired level" included sending troops to Bosnia.¹³⁷

In the same session, Kamran İnan laid out his criticisms against both the government and the international community regarding the implementation of the no-fly zone as laid out in UN resolution 816. İnan argued that while there were six countries at the Aviano Air Base which would participate in the air force which consisted of the U.S.A., France, Italy, Britain, Holland, and Turkey, the defense ministers of the five countries convened at Aviano to discuss the decisions to be taken on the last day of the ultimatum issued i.e. on 20 February 1994. The ultimatum had been issued on 9 February 1994 and the last day for it was 21 February 1994. İnan pointed out that Turkey was not invited to this meeting which was an open disrespect. He went on to argue that the plan that Turkish Air Force would be used as supplementary and that it would not participate in the operation reflected mistrust on the part of NATO. Therefore, İnan called the government to pull back the eighteen F-16 war planes. Furthermore, İnan stressed that while a troop of 800 soldiers waited at the Esenboğa Airport, Boutros Gali stated that they had received only 3,500 troops but had originally requested 10,000 troops and that they "would have to" allow Turkish troops if they could not reach the sufficient number.

¹³⁷ *ibid.*, p. 248.

According to İnan, upon such a statement, the government should have announced that it would not send any troops.¹³⁸ İnan argued that the ultimatum which was supposed to be in force as of 21 February 1994 still was not implemented. To make things worse, the small amount of arms that the Bosnians possessed were collected which put them in a completely defenseless situation. İnan feared that given the economic crisis of April 1994 and all its recent consequences, the position of Turkey would appear weak in foreign issues. He concluded that they did not approve the Prime Minister's planned visit to the U.S.A. in such circumstances as he suggested that the Prime Minister would represent a weak position.¹³⁹

Ahmet Dökülmez' (WP) speech in the same session was centered on the reactions toward the creation of a new Bosnian state. Dökülmez recalled the letter by British Prime Minister John Major to Foreign Minister Douglas Hurd which stated that Britain would not be part of any policy that would support the creation of a Muslim state in the European continent. Later on, the news on one British TV channel reported that the said letter led to a popular indignation among the Bosnians and neither John Major nor Douglas Hurd stated that the news was unsubstantiated. That said, he argued that as RP, they did not approve any future confederation plans that involved the Croats and the Bosnians together and that the only viable solution was an independent Bosnian state. He also stressed that WP did in no way participate in unauthorized assemblies and demonstrations about Bosnia in Ankara and İstanbul.¹⁴⁰ Fahri Gündüz (SDPP) touched upon the same issue by maintaining that as a result of irresponsible broadcasts on TV which clearly abused public sensitivity, the groups which filled the streets in Ankara and İstanbul were primarily provoked by the political elements close to Algeria and Iran. The actual target of these illegal

¹³⁸ *ibid.*, p. 251.

¹³⁹ *ibid.*, p. 253.

¹⁴⁰ *ibid.*, p. 257.

assemblies who used the plight of the Bosnians as a political tool were the Turkish political parties, diplomatic missions, the TRT, the media correspondents, and the Turkish Grand National Assembly. The crowd, stressed Gündüz, chanted slogans of sharia and damned secularism.¹⁴¹ It seemed that the government would have to deal also with this issue as much as it had to deal with the Bosnian war itself.

In June 1994, the first and second group of Turkish troops went to Bosnia on 15 and 25 June respectively¹⁴² and arrived in Zenica in early July 1994 to participate in the UNPROFOR.¹⁴³ A week later, Demirel's planned visit to Sarajevo was cancelled due to serious Serb threat.¹⁴⁴ In late November 1994, while the war continued with intensified attacks, Vehbi Dinçerler put forward a list of proposals about what should be done. First and foremost, he proposed that subcommissions be set up in the Foreign Affairs Commission, Defense Commission, Justice Commission, and Human Rights Commission for the close follow-up and reporting of developments. Second, a research commission should be established in accordance with the by-law of the parliament. The said commission would undertake on-site research for a temporary period as almost all of the representatives of NATO member states did in Bihac for instance. Third, a joint action commission should be formed to coordinate the steps to be taken by the government, the military and the executive. Finally, Dinçerler suggested that a delegation should be formed to facilitate the follow-up and coordination of state efforts to be directed by the President himself. These proposals were received positively by the speaker of the parliament.¹⁴⁵ The Bosnia Inspection Commission was set up through mid-December

¹⁴¹ *ibid.*, p. 263; 13 April 1994, *Milliyet*.

¹⁴² 16 June 1994, *Milliyet*; 25 June 1994, *Türkiye*

¹⁴³ 9 July 1994, *Türkiye*.

¹⁴⁴ 15 July 1994, *Milliyet*.

¹⁴⁵ *Turkish Grand National Assembly Journal of Minutes*, Session 43, Period 19, Legislative Year 4, 29 November 1994, vol. 72, pp. 648-649.

1994 and conducted investigation in Turkey for two months and then in Croatia and Bosnia as the first field search with a view to providing support to the Turkish executive. The research visit took place in mid-February 1995. The fact that a Bosnia inspection commission was set up within the Parliament – although belatedly – was welcomed by Bosnian officials during the Commission’s visit in Bosnia which was carried out in three phases. The first stop was Croatia where the Commission had official contacts with the Speaker of the Croatian Assembly, the Speaker of the Federal Assembly, the Prime Minister, the leaders of the Islamic community, and Ambassador Akashi of the UN.¹⁴⁶ The Turkish delegation expressed its concerns regarding the safe delivery of aid to Bosnia through Croatia which was positively received by Croatia. The Croatian officials said that they would support the establishment of a federation in Bosnia and that they were determined to get the UN forces removed as of early July 1995. Following this, the delegation visited Bosnia where they met the Speaker of Bosnian Assembly, the Speaker of Federal Assembly, the Prime Minister, and President Aliya Izzetbegovic. Turkey agreed with Izzetbegovic’s statement that there was no peace in Bosnia but just a ceasefire, which was not adhered to by the Serbs. It was the common diagnosis of Izzetbegovic and the Turkish military in Bosnia that the fighting would begin in Bosnia again soon. Turkey was of the opinion that a multiethnic, multicultural, and multireligious state should be established in Bosnia and wanted the decisions of the UN and the Council of Europe be implemented.¹⁴⁷ The Turkish division in Bosnia did not merely participate in peace-keeping but also took part in humanitarian aid, restoration of cultural and historical heritage and of schools. Although this visit took place as planned, the plane carrying the Turkish delegation which would prepare for

¹⁴⁶ *Turkish Grand National Assembly Journal of Minutes*, Session 74, Period 19, Legislative Year 4, 14 February 1995, pp. 28-29.

¹⁴⁷ *ibid.*, p. 30.

Demirel's visit to Bosnia did not materialize.¹⁴⁸ It was observed that the UN waited until the last minute to give a definitive answer to Demirel who had been in Split and eventually announced that the planes would not fly to Sarajevo at the last minute in late February 1995.¹⁴⁹ It was soon reported that the Serbs would hit the plane carrying Demirel. The UN officials declared that the Serbs would hit the German cargo plane by missiles, thinking that it was carrying Demirel.¹⁵⁰ On the part of Turkey, the UN was seen as having undermined Demirel's visit. Demirel expressed his deep regrets.¹⁵¹ The repercussions of the event continued the following month as well and Boutros Ghali stated that the Turkish Embassy in Zagreb was in fact notified that Demirel would not be able to visit Sarajevo and expressed his regrets, too.¹⁵²

Another visit took place in late March 1995. During the negotiations in this visit, Bosnian and Croatian officials stated that the UNPROFOR heralded the delivery of aid and did implement the embargo on the Serbs. Nevertheless, the coordination of the issue improved later when the Presidency of the Refugees and Social Affairs took over administration of the relevant issue. The National Bank of Bosnia had also opened accounts in various countries.¹⁵³

When former Bosnian Foreign Minister İrfan Lubjankic was killed, the failure of the UN was proved once again, in late May 1995. Regarding the event, Abdullah Gül (WP) stated in early June 1995 that Turkey did not take all the efforts that it could and that as the news reports had reflected, considering future relations, it gave

¹⁴⁸ 26 February 1995, *Milliyet*.

¹⁴⁹ 28 February 1995, *Hürriyet*.

¹⁵⁰ 28 February 1995, *Sabah*.

¹⁵¹ 1 March 1995, *Türkiye*.

¹⁵² 10 March 1995, *Sabah*; 12 March 1995, *Türkiye*.

¹⁵³ *Turkish Grand National Assembly Journal of Minutes*, Session 95, Period 19, Legislative Year 4, 5 April 1995, vol. 83, pp. 326-327.

positive messages to Serbia while it should act as the “representative” of Bosnia.¹⁵⁴ Almost simultaneously, NATO and UN defense ministers and chiefs of staff convened in Paris to discuss an urgent intervention force of 4,000 soldiers.¹⁵⁵ Defense Minister Gölhan stated that Turkey would also participate with F-16s in this multinational urgent intervention force”.¹⁵⁶ Whether upon relevant news or not, it was interesting that Serb attacks on Turkish division in Zenica and Embassy in Sarajevo coincided Turkey’s relevant declaration.¹⁵⁷ When Demirel received Izzetbegovic’s urgent help call subsequently, he contacted eleven presidents and heads of government to stop the war in early July 1995.¹⁵⁸ From then on, it was seen that the UN became one of the targets of the Serbs who began to take UN soldiers hostage. The UN could not protect its own soldiers anymore and rumors spread that it would pull back. However, right after the UN headquarters in Sarajevo was hit by the Serbs injuring Colonel Mahmut Ergün and a French captain,¹⁵⁹ Turkey announced that it would not pull back.¹⁶⁰ Turkey and Bosnia signed an agreement on military cooperation on 10 August 1995.¹⁶¹

The belated NATO intervention began through the end of August, joined by sixty war planes including Turkish F-16s. The news reported that the attacks resembled the intervention in Iraq. A total of ninety targets of ammunition, command centers and defense systems were hit with approximately 300 sorties.¹⁶² Within a few days, the diplomatic contacts in Ankara suddenly gained acceleration. Izzetbegovic came to Ankara on 4 September and met former U.S. Deputy Secretary of State

¹⁵⁴ *Turkish Grand National Assembly Journal of Minutes*, Session 119, Period 19, Legislative Year 4, 6 June 1995, vol. 87, p. 389.

¹⁵⁵ 4 June 1995, *Türkiye*.

¹⁵⁶ 14 June 1995, *Cumhuriyet*.

¹⁵⁷ 18 June 1995, *Hürriyet*.

¹⁵⁸ 10 July 1995, *Türkiye*.

¹⁵⁹ 19 July 1995, *Milliyet*.

¹⁶⁰ 19 July 1995, *Cumhuriyet*.

¹⁶¹ 11 August 1995, *Cumhuriyet*.

¹⁶² 1 September 1995, *Hürriyet*.

Richard Holbrooke. Turkey reaffirmed its full support for Bosnia.¹⁶³ It was later reported that during his visit, Holbrooke stated that any peace operation would necessitate the participation of Turkey. The Bosnian peace plan was not publicly discussed by Holbrooke. It was argued that the U.S.A. wanted Turkey to use its influence upon the Bosnian Muslims in the future peace talks.¹⁶⁴

On 8 September, Foreign Ministers of Bosnia, Croatia and Serbia reached a compromise in Geneva. Bosnia was divided into “Croat – Muslim Federation” and “Republica Srpska” which meant that the Serbs officially recognized Bosnia.¹⁶⁵ The Serbs began to pull back in mid-September upon which NATO ended its air strikes.¹⁶⁶ Accordingly, the fighting parties convened in New York in late September for peace negotiations which would last for twenty-one days. The final document of the negotiation came into being as the Dayton Peace Accord and constituted the final settlement of the three-year fighting.

By and large, it was observed that the opposition parties were critical of the government’s policies mostly by way of alleging that they were ineffective, inadequate and devoid of any deterrence. While WP’s criticisms hinged more on the common denominator of religion as the departure point, other opposition parties, MP and DLP, stressed the lack of active stance on the part of the government and the lack of attempts of call on the international community to halt the conflict. Their common criticism was that the government did not have a well-defined Balkan policy. On the other hand, the statements of the government centered on the argument that Turkey would in no way engage in a unilateral intervention but act in compliance with the international community.

¹⁶³ 5 September 1995, *Türkiye*.

¹⁶⁴ 6 September 1995, *Cumhuriyet*.

¹⁶⁵ 9 September 1995, *Sabah*.

¹⁶⁶ 18 September 1995, *Cumhuriyet*; 19 September 1995, *Sabah*; and 22 September 1995, *Cumhuriyet*.

The written records in the *Turkish Grand National Assembly Journal of Minutes* display a sudden shift in the attitude toward Bosnia after the Dayton Peace Accord was signed on 21 November 1995 in Ohio. Although Turkish military existence continued in Bosnia, Turkish diplomatic/political and economic initiatives remained to be taken further. After the war had ended and Bosnia declared its independence, Turkish interest towards the region lost intensity. Although Turkish military existence continued in Bosnia, Turkish diplomatic/political and economic initiatives remained wanting. After the war ended and Bosnia declared its independence, Turkey's interest towards the region lost its former intensity, because Ankara had to prioritize other issues, such as PKK terrorism supported by its Syrian neighbor. Turkey's foreign policies towards Bosnia-Herzegovina and Serbia minded balances even during most challenging of times. Ankara acted along with the international community, but perhaps most significant, it refrained from turning the discourse on war into a matter of Christian-Muslim conflict.

Although the post-1995 period will be examined in detail below, it is worthy at this point to note that it was not until 2000 that the diplomatic/political relations with Bosnia were seriously re-evaluated upon the decision by Bosnia to establish diplomatic relations with the Greek Cypriots and the subsequent reaction in March 2000. Hüseyin Kansu, the Head of Bosnia – Herzegovina/Turkey Interparliamentary Friendship Group stated on 22 March 2000 that the issue must be assessed in view of both Turkey and Bosnia.¹⁶⁷ In the light of the fact that the Greek Cypriots attach importance to establishing friendly relations with those countries with which Turkey has close relations, it was understandable that such a development coincided a time when the Cyprus issue was debated once again with respect to Turkey's full

¹⁶⁷ *Turkish Grand National Assembly Journal of Minutes*, Session 70, Period 21, Legislative Year 2, 2 March 2000, vol. 29, p. 23.

membership in the EU in a process which involved mediated negotiations. Recalling that the same unrest had been experienced with Pakistan and the Central Asian Republics except for Azerbaijan and Turkmenistan, Kansu said Turkey would view the issue from both perspectives. According to Kansu, Bosnia was forced to establish diplomatic relations with the Greek Cypriots and this would hamper the recognition of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC) by Bosnia. Kansu said the Serbs and the Croats wanted to facilitate the accession of Southern Cyprus in the EU and to rebut Turkey's theses of Cyprus by forcing Bosnia.¹⁶⁸ Kansu also said it was worth to note that this decision was taken during the presidency of Croat Ante Jelavic on 11 October and was signed in New York on 7 February 2000. Aliya Izzetbegovic declared that this decision did not imply that an embassy would be opened in Southern Cyprus and that Bosnia had the resolve to open an embassy in the TRNC. Furthermore, it was known that although decisions were taken by absolute majority in the Council of Presidency, all the three members of the Council were obliged to put their signatures for any decision to be implemented. This, said Kansu, meant that Izzetbegovic would not sign. It appeared that although Bosnia was an independent state, the Bosnian officials at times felt compelled to act in accordance with the Western attitude which displayed a discord from the Turkish policies as the dispute on the Cyprus issue exemplified.¹⁶⁹ Upon such background, it is upon the succeeding section to examine the relations between Turkey and Bosnia in the post-1995 period.

¹⁶⁸ *ibid.*, p. 24.

¹⁶⁹ *ibid.*; and *Turkish Grand National Assembly Journal of Minutes*, Session 13, Period 22, Legislative Year 2, 4 November 2003, vol. 29, pp. 9-11, see Hüseyin Kansu's speech on Izzetbegovic on the occasion of his death on 19 October 2003.

4.2.2. LOSING MOMENTUM: THE POST-1995 PERIOD

The post-1995 period reflected stagnation in the intensity of Turkish-Bosnian relations in general. However, the bilateral visits did not lose their frequency. In June 1997, Izzetbegovic visited Ankara to discuss a number of issues in the agenda of the relations between the two countries. Most importantly, Izzetbegovic reminded the \$80 million credit to be given by Eximbank in accordance with the protocols signed by PM Necmettin Erbakan and his counterpart Hasan Muratovic in 1996. Later on, it was decided that the \$20 million of the said credit be given as a grant. However, only \$2,2 million was given to Bosnia although one year had elapsed. Furthermore, the way that Izzetbegovic raised another issue was telling. As the WP and TPP coalition (*Refah-Yol*) had not taken efforts in the restoration of the Mostar Bridge, Izzetbegovic brought the mayor of Mostar with him to hold contacts with President Demirel and to discuss the issue. Izzetbegovic also requested Turkey not to forget Bosnia's problems when dealing with its domestic problems.¹⁷⁰ During the Turkish delegation's visit in late January 1998 in Bosnia, the issue was talked over again. It was observed that Hikmet Çetin outlined Turkey's Bosnian policy for the post-1995 period. Çetin stated that Bosnia was a multicultural, multireligious, and multiethnic country, the borders of which were recognized internationally. Çetin stressed that Turkey would continue to give its support for the implementation of the Dayton Peace Accord in both civil and military terms.¹⁷¹ He noted that the two delegations dwelled on the importance of the return of Bosnians which would normalize life in Bosnia and stressed that the international community should continue to contribute in economic and infrastructure-related issues. After former Deputy Prime Minister and

¹⁷⁰ "Ödenek Ziyareti", 10 June 1997, *Hürriyet*.

¹⁷¹ "Çetin'den Bosna'ya Destek Sözü", 24 January 1998, *Siyah Beyaz*.

Defense Minister İsmet Sezgin's (TPP) visit in early February 1998, Hikmet Çetin visited Bosnia in mid-April for bilateral contacts.¹⁷²

The purpose of these visits was to keep the pace with the frequent visits by the Western leaders to Bosnia. A senior official at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs gave German Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel's most recent visit as an example and stated that Turkey should follow suit in that respect.¹⁷³ During his visit in mid-April 1998, İsmail Cem (DLP) made Turkey's Bosnian policy clear by way of stating that Turkey was equidistant to the three populations living in Bosnia. Cem added that Turkey acknowledged the difficulties concerning the implementation of the Dayton Peace Accord yet that it was the only viable alternative for Bosnia. It was soon reported that Cem's statement regarding the equidistance policy was a reply to the former Serbian Deputy Foreign Minister Dragan Bozonic's statement that the Republika Srpska was part of Bosnia and as such, they also wanted to establish friendly relations with Turkey.¹⁷⁴

However, a few days later, it was reported that Turkey did not have a definitive view regarding the Republika Srpska within Bosnia established as foreseen by Dayton although Turkey supported Dayton as a whole. It was also suggested that Turkish public opinion favored close relations with Muslim Bosnians yet the diplomats were of the opinion that it was necessary to establish relations also with the Serbs as it would serve to improve peace conditions in Bosnia.¹⁷⁵ Touching upon the same issue, İlter Türkmen also pointed out that although Turkey had a military existence for strategic reasons in Bosnia, this was not reflected onto other fields as economic and cultural relations. He suggested that the degree of the close ties with

¹⁷² "Çetin Bosna'da", 25 January 1998, *Yeni Asya*.

¹⁷³ "Cem Saraybosna'da", 15 April 1998, *Cumhuriyet*.

¹⁷⁴ "Türkiye'den Denge Politikası", 16 April 1998, *Cumhuriyet*; "Tarihi Bizden İyi Koruyorlar", 16 April 1998, *Zaman*; and "Cem: Barışın Yolu Dayton'dan Geçer", 16 April 1998, *Milliyet*.

¹⁷⁵ "Boşnaklardan Sitem", 17 April 1998, *Radikal*.

the Bosnians was exaggerated for a certain period of time which caused tension in the relations between Turkey and Serbia.¹⁷⁶

The frequent visits continued in June with former Bosnian Federation President Eyüp Ganic's official visit to Ankara. The two sides discussed how Turkey could contribute to the sustainability of the Federation mostly in the economic venue. It was observed that former Deputy Prime Minister Bülent Ecevit stated in accordance with Turkey's equidistance policy that the Bosnians, the Croats, and the Serbs took their best of efforts to live in peace.¹⁷⁷ The return of the refugees and the unrest in Sandjak were among the other issues discussed.¹⁷⁸ Two months later, Ecevit visited Bosnia. The visit centered on Turkish economic contribution, grants and credits. The Turkish delegation visited the Turkish division and attended August 30 ceremonies.¹⁷⁹

The same policy was observed in 1999, too. After former State Minister Sadi Somuncuoğlu's (NMP) visit in June 1999, President Demirel visited Bosnia in early December 1999.¹⁸⁰ This was Demirel's sixth visit to Bosnia and also to the Turkish division in Zenica.¹⁸¹ It was seen that Iran, Saudi Arabia, and Libya also contributed to restructuring of Bosnia in economic terms. The news reports wrote that although the Socialist approach was replaced with nationalism, and atheism was replaced with fundamentalist religious trends, Bosnia, as a war-torn country, did not lend itself to any of these trends.¹⁸²

¹⁷⁶ "Bosna'da Barış Kalıcı mı?", 12 June 1998, *Yeni Yüzyıl*.

¹⁷⁷ "Bosna'ya Yardım İnsanlık Görevi", 23 June 1998, *Cumhuriyet*.

¹⁷⁸ "Sancak da Zor Durumda", 23 June 1998, *Türkiye*; and "Bosna'ya Destek", 23 June 1998, *Hürriyet*.

¹⁷⁹ "Savaş Değil Gönülleri Kazanım", 31 August 1998, *Zaman*; "Ecevit Bayramı Zenica'da Kutladı", 31 August 1998, *Hürriyet*; and "Ecevit: Bosna'da Utanç Duydum", 1 September 1998, *Türkiye*.

¹⁸⁰ "Türkiye Az Konuştu Çok İş Yaptı", 24 June 1999, *Milliyet*; "Baba'yla Bosna Yollarında ...", 7 December 1999, *Radikal*; and "Bosna'da Duygulu Saatler", 8 December 1999, *Hürriyet*.

¹⁸¹ "Demirel: Asker, Bosna Gururum", 8 December 1999, *Hürriyet*.

¹⁸² "İç Savaş da Barış Görevi", 8 December 1999, *Milliyet*.

Eventually, the visits were postponed due to the Kosovo crisis and the earthquake in Turkey in 1999. The old hostilities were alleged to have ceased among the Muslim, Croat and Serb Presidents constituting the Council of Presidency and they were more open to acknowledging an increased role for Turkey. The fact that the Serb and the Croat Presidents mentioned “strategic partnership” with Turkey was telling in that respect. It can be argued that Demirel’s personal efforts had had a determining effect in the evolution of such a conjuncture.¹⁸³

However, the year 2000 displayed ups and downs in the bilateral relations. The ties between Turkey and Bosnia took on a rocky form when Bosnia decided to establish diplomatic relations with the Greek Southern Cypriots in February 2000 as mentioned above. The second negative development was experienced when Bosnia decided to impose a visa obligation on Turkish citizens in the same year. The Bosnian Ministry of Human Rights decided to do so on the grounds that many Turks had illegally passed through Bosnia to go to other countries in Europe. The Bosnian officials stated that approximately 6000 Turks were recorded as having passed via Bosnia to European countries. Former Ambassador Ahmet Erozan expressed Turkey’s concern duly by stating that this development would harm the relations after the decision to establish diplomatic relations with the Greek Cypriots. Erozan also stated that Turkey would do the same if Bosnia did not alter its decision.¹⁸⁴

By 2002, the restoration of the Mostar Bridge turned into an issue which eventually made the Ministry of Foreign Affairs take due efforts to support the bid winner Turkish construction company ER-BU. Such a step was taken upon the French move to assert the French company into the restoration process. When ER-BU informed the Ministry of Foreign Affairs that the French government opened a

¹⁸³ “Sıcak ve Güncel”, 8 December 1999, *Zaman*.

¹⁸⁴ “Bosna Türkiye’ye Vize Koyuyor” 22 October 2000, *Hürriyet*.

stone handicraft school in Mostar in order to win the bid, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs contacted the Ministry of Culture, the Office of the Prime Ministry, and the Presidency about what could be done. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs announced that the restoration would be undertaken even if it did not yield any profit.¹⁸⁵ The situation became even more unpleasant when the Italian President was invited to the symbolic opening ceremony on 27 June 2002. Erozan stated that he would not attend the ceremony to show Turkey's protest. It was argued that the event lacked official manners and seriousness.¹⁸⁶

Despite the previous negative developments, it appeared that Turkey's conduct of foreign policy towards Bosnia was preserved in essence. Within this framework, members of the Bosnia – Herzegovina Council of Presidency visited Turkey in early July 2002. Although Turkey officially invited the Bosnian member of the said Council, Beriz Belkic, who held the seat at the material time, it also invited the Croat member Jazo Krizanovic and the Serb member Zivko Rasidic. The issue of focus in the meetings was the UNPROFOR. The U.S.A. objected to the trial of UNPROFOR soldiers by the International Criminal Court and had accordingly vetoed the prolongation of UNPROFOR period of stay in Bosnia. In that respect, Belkic requested Sezer to use every means that Turkey could in order to lift the veto which was received positively by Sezer.¹⁸⁷

The reciprocal visits continued in 2003 with the Speaker of the Turkish Grand National Assembly Bülent Arınç's visit on 30 April 2003.¹⁸⁸ Following this visit in May, Adnan Terzic, former President of Council of Ministers, stated that Turkey was a model for Bosnia and EU membership was the future target for Bosnia until 2009.

¹⁸⁵ "Mostar Seferberliği", 22 January 2002, *Yeni Şafak*.

¹⁸⁶ "Mostar'da Tören Skandalı", 27 June 2002, *Hürriyet*.

¹⁸⁷ "Bir Ziyarete Üç Cumhurbaşkanı", 4 July 2002, *Star*; and "Üç Konuk, Bir Ev Sahibi", 4 July 2002, *Milliyet*.

¹⁸⁸ "Arınç Duygulandı", 1 May 2003, *Türkiye*.

During his visit in Ankara, Terzic stated that Bosnia took Turkey as a model.¹⁸⁹ By 2005, Turkey included Bosnia along with Macedonia, Tunisia, Iran, Morocco and Kyrgyzstan in its list of states subject to visa in accordance with the adjustment process with the EU. The EU Commission had called upon Turkey to revise its visa regime in its 2004 Regular Report.¹⁹⁰ As part of the frequent visits, Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan went to Bosnia to hold contacts with the members of Council of Presidents¹⁹¹ and Bülent Arınç accepted Şefik Caferovic, the Speaker of the Bosnian Assembly of Representatives, to discuss the situation of around 300 thousand refugees and land mines awaiting urgent solution. It was reiterated that Turkey would continue to give active support in calling for international support for Bosnia.¹⁹²

As one scholar has argued, if Bosnia had won its independence without war, if the Bosnian Muslims had not been subjected to ethnic cleansing, if the international community had not committed fatal mistakes as a result of which the Bosnians looked to Turkey for support, relations between Turkey and Bosnia would still develop on a friendly basis, yet they would not possess the nature of such a close alliance.¹⁹³ Turkey not only continues to contribute to Bosnia in economic, military, and humanitarian venues but also provides support in the reconstruction of the country and takes efforts to reinforce the Bosnian – Croatian alliance which it sees as the only way to protect the territorial integrity of Bosnia.¹⁹⁴ Ankara closely follows the developments in the region and preserves the pace of bilateral contacts. Yet, with

¹⁸⁹ “Bosna – Hersekli Bakan Terzic: Modelimiz Türkiye, Geleceğimiz AB”, 28 May 2003, *Cumhuriyet*; and “Avrupa mı, Amerika mı?”, 28 May 2003, *Star*.

¹⁹⁰ “AB Zoruyla Bosna’ya Vize”, 14 February 2005, *Hürriyet*.

¹⁹¹ “BM Kıbrıs’ta İyi Sınav Veremedi”, 18 February 2005, *Hürriyet*; and “AB Yalan Söyledi”, 18 February 2005, *Akşam*.

¹⁹² “Arınç’tan Bosna Mesaisi”, 29 April 2005, *Radikal*.

¹⁹³ Şule Kut, “Türkiye’nin Balkan Politikası”, Alan Makovsky and Sabri Sayarı eds., *Türkiye’nin Yeni Dünyası: Türk Dış Politikasının Değişen Dinamikleri*, (İstanbul: ALFA: 2002), p. 115.

¹⁹⁴ *ibid.*

the end of war, Bosnia has lost its previous diplomatic and political priority in Turkey's foreign policy agenda.¹⁹⁵

The current state of affairs between the two states hinges on several demands which remain to be fulfilled by both sides in the foreseeable future. Among others, three important points that Turkey hopes to see accomplished can be outlined as follows. First, Turkey wants that the Agreement on Educational Cooperation to be signed after the education reform carried out in accordance with the OSCE is completed. Second, Turkey calls upon Bosnia to provide the Turkish entrepreneurs with necessary facilities. Third, Turkey expects to see that the bureaucratic problems faced by Turkish citizens at border gates be eliminated. Bosnia wants Turkey's support for its membership in the PfP program, increased Turkish investment, support for the return of the refugees and the displaced; and the establishment of coordination between the EU Directorate in Bosnia and the General Secretariat of the EU Affairs in Turkey.¹⁹⁶

4.3. TURKISH FOREIGN POLICY TOWARDS SERBIA (AND MONTENEGRO)

After the end of the Cold War, particularly after the Bosnian war broke out relations between Ankara and Belgrade seemed to hinge on a complex reality: bilateral relations would witness a change for the worse as they both witnessed threat perceptions with the outbreak of war, which was not an issue in bilateral relations until then. Subsequently, although the components of economic relations were there,

¹⁹⁵ *ibid.*, p. 116.

¹⁹⁶ Report on Bosnia – Herzegovina, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2005.

they eventually fell victim to power politics with the war. Although Ankara tried to break out of the vicious circle of war through diplomatic means by actively trying to make its pleas be heard by the West, this concerned a larger picture whereby Turkey's relations with the Balkans was not totally free, but worked in the shadow of the U.S.A. as in the Cold War. The case study of post-Cold War relations between Ankara and Belgrade is also worthwhile to ascertain how relations could end up altered, as Slobodan Milosevic's latent designs came to surface. When ethnic problems appeared in Yugoslavia in the early 1990s with Milosevic's assumption of power, ensuing developments forced Turkish – Yugoslavian relations to a precarious situation.

After the declaration of independence by Croatia and Slovenia in 1991, Yugoslavia began to take efforts to be in good terms with Turkey with the aim of convincing Turkey not to support the secessionist movements in Yugoslavia. Within this framework, Slobodan Milosevic came to Ankara in January 1992, right after one week the former Yugoslav republics were recognized by the international community. Milosevic stated that “Turkey had shown that it followed a responsible policy by acting in accordance with the general international attitude that hoped to see Yugoslavia intact”.¹⁹⁷ The Serbian President was met by former Deputy Prime Minister Erdal İnönü and taken to Çankaya to hold contacts with President Demirel which would be the last meeting between Demirel and Milosevic. In a 2000 interview, Demirel stated that the message given to Milosevic during this one-day meeting was plain and clear: Turkey expressed its concerns and warned that Serbia would not be able to bear the results of bloodshed – if it should happen. The visit was

¹⁹⁷ “Demirel, Milosevic’i Anlatıyor”, Fikret Bila, 7 October 2000, *Milliyet*.

not planned; Milosevic was not invited, either. However, it appeared that the Serbian President came to express Serbian concerns more than to listen to Turkey's relevant fears regarding the situation. Milosevic expressed his content on Turkey's non-interventionist attitude which would in fact last short. Viewing the meeting in retrospect, Demirel argued that Ankara saw certain developments coming, however it appeared that the former Serbian President did not seem to have received the message given by Turkey as was seen by the subsequent bloodshed in Bosnia with Milosevic's return.¹⁹⁸

The Yugoslav government withdrew their Macedonian-origin Ambassador to Ankara in June 1991. From then on, Turkey's relations with Yugoslavia displayed a dual course: while the relations were strained due to the Bosnian War and the anti-Turkish attitude of ultranationalist Serbian leaders, the fact that Yugoslavia was the gateway for Turkish trade routes to Europe was the primary concern in Turkey's policy formulation.¹⁹⁹ Equally importantly, Turkey took efforts to avert an Orthodox – Muslim conflict in the region in respect of which it avoided to follow a policy not to antagonize Serbia's main ally Greece when the two states already had strained relations due to almost constant bilateral conflicts.²⁰⁰ While most criticism came from religious – nationalist circles, the official viewpoint in Turkey maintained that the developments should not be attributed to the Serbian government and the Serbian population, and that a differentiation should be made between them.²⁰¹

During the war, there appeared a contradiction in Yugoslavia's foreign policy and the Islamic countries and that included Turkey as well. While Yugoslavia's policies revolved around pragmatism, they also hinged on Serbian nationalism based

¹⁹⁸ *ibid.*

¹⁹⁹ Şule Kut, "Türkiye'nin Balkan Politikası", p. 110.

²⁰⁰ *ibid.*

²⁰¹ *ibid.*

on an anti-Turkish and anti-Islamic attitude.²⁰² According to Ivo Banac, this anti-Turkish and anti-Islamic attitude had its roots in the fall of individual South Slavic national elites and states to the Ottoman Turks with the process that began in 1389 with the Battle of Kosovo and ended in 1459 with the abolition of the vassal Serbian despotate.²⁰³ The Serbian uprisings against the Ottomans eventually assumed a suspicion of religious and national diversity.²⁰⁴ In the course of time, the opposition to diversity and the pursuit of homogenization materialized in the attempt to establish an ethnic unity which gave its initial signs in Milosevic's speech at the field of Kosovo on the occasion of the 600th anniversary of the Battle of Kosovo, an excerpt of which, as far as relevant, reads as follows:

I ... ask the critics of homogenization, why are they disturbed by the homogenization of peoples and human beings in general if it is carried out on the basis of just, humane, and progressive ideas, in one's own interests, and is no harm to others? Is this not the meaning, the aim, to which humanity has always aspired? Surely, the sense of the human community is not to be inhomogeneous, divided, even when its aspirations are progressive and humane?²⁰⁵

The unity Milosevic had in mind was opposed to Muslims and Turks in the region. Therefore, it was difficult to understand the framework of Yugoslavia's policies which were simultaneously based on Turcophobia and Islamophobia and

²⁰² Osman Karatay "Milosevic Dönemi Yugoslav Dış Siyaseti: Başarısız Bir Mirasyedilik Olayı" *Balkan Diplomasisi*, p. 148.

²⁰³ Ivo Banac "Nationalism in Serbia", *Balkans: A Mirror of the New International Order*, p. 133. See Norman Cigar, *Genocide in Bosnia* (College Station: Texas A & M University Press, 1995), pp. 11-21. In an attempt to explain the Battle of Kosovo as part of the myth making by the Serbian political and academic elite, Norman Cigar writes that this battle has been perceived by Western analysts as the root of an enduring Serbian – Islamic enmity and the root of the war in Bosnia. Cigar describes taking one such instance of past to explain and understand today's events as "mechanistic linear view". Cigar maintains that establishing linkages to past instances as the only way of explanation of today's events assumes that solution will be elusive and in fact is pointless to seek one.

²⁰⁴ *ibid.*, p. 150. Diminishing the autonomy of Vojvodina and Kosovo in 1989 was the first step towards full homogenization attempts. The new policy involved bureaucratic nationalism based on an openly nationalist program, military occupation, police repression, media manipulation, exploitation of national psychology, and party purges.

²⁰⁵ *ibid.*

having close relations with fundamentalist states such as Iran.²⁰⁶ More specifically, the official Yugoslav argument in the first half of the 1990s was based on the belief that Washington wanted to help establish a new Ottoman state through Turkey, which laid the basis of NATO attacks to build the alleged Green Corridor – the line densely populated by Muslims crossing Bosnia, Sandjak, Kosovo, Macedonia and Western Thrace.²⁰⁷ In a 1992 interview, Milosevic expressly stated that the Muslims in the Balkans were getting more and more fundamentalist as Izzetbegovic was in cahoots with the radical Islamic states as Iran, Libya, and Sudan had always been. He accused Izzetbegovic of being a fascist fundamentalist

who was jailed in 1947 under Tito for his membership in the underground ‘Young Muslims’ and his sympathies for the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem, Hitler’s war-time ally. We call it the Green Snake of Islam. It is crawling westward through the Balkans via Turkey, Kosovo and Macedonia.²⁰⁸

However, Turkey did not pursue a policy which would antagonize Serbia. Turkey’s Kosovo policy contributed to averting the deterioration of relations with Belgrade in that Turkey assumed a policy that supported the territorial integrity of Yugoslavia and described the problem as a human rights issue in all platforms.²⁰⁹

Although relations began to develop between Serbia and Turkey, they remained at minimum levels until at least four years after the Dayton Peace Accord was signed. Turkey and Serbia opened embassies reciprocally and bilateral contacts began by 1996.²¹⁰ Within this framework, Onur Öymen, the Undersecretary of the

²⁰⁶ Osman Karatay “Milosevic Dönemi Yugoslav Dış Siyaseti: Başarısız Bir Mirasyedilik Olayı”, pp. 149-152.

²⁰⁷ *ibid.*

²⁰⁸ Robert Kroon, “‘Serbs Will Not Be Cowed’ Leader Sees Need for Separate State within Bosnia”, 19 October 1992, *International Herald Tribune*.

²⁰⁹ Şule Kut, “Türkiye’nin Balkan Politikası”, pp. 110-111.

²¹⁰ *ibid.*, p. 111.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, went to Belgrade and he was told by Yugoslav officials that Yugoslavia did not support the PKK or its activities. The Turkish delegation touched upon the statement by the Office of Chief-of-Staff that Serbia appeared in the list of the countries providing the PKK with missiles. The Yugoslav officials reiterated that they were prepared and willing to cooperate against terrorism. This was the first high level visit after former Deputy Speaker of the Turkish Parliament Uluç Gürkan's visit to Belgrade. It was reported that the second and equally important issue on the agenda of this visit was economy in respect of which Turkish officials expressed their hope to see facilitated transit passages through Serbia.²¹¹ This visit was interpreted as being part of new openings within the framework of regionalism in foreign policy introduced by Özal. As one renowned columnist had observed back in 1997, there was no reason that could potentially impede the normalization of relations between Ankara and Belgrade given the Bosnian war had ended and that it was seen that the Milosevic government wanted to open a new page in bilateral relations.²¹² This was observed once again when the Serbian Academy of Sciences invited Professor Bozkurt Güvenç to the conference held on 15 December 1997. The title of the conference "The Balkans and the World Powers" and Professor Bozkurt's title "Cultural Consultant of the Turkish Presidency" were telling in that respect. Senior Turkish diplomats at the time also confirmed that the Serbs were willing to hold further high level contacts.²¹³

Turkey also reciprocated and invited Serbia to join the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC).²¹⁴ Former Prime Minister Mesut Yılmaz's talks with Milosevic during the 1997 Balkan Summit in Crete gave signals of normalization in

²¹¹ "Belgrad: PKK'yı Desteklemiyoruz", 28 July 1997, *Milliyet*.

²¹² "İyi Komşuluktan Öte", Sami Kohen, 1 August 1997, *Milliyet*.

²¹³ "Balkanlar ve Türkiye", Taha Akyol, 24 September 1997, *Milliyet*.

²¹⁴ Şule Kut, "Türkiye'nin Balkanlar Politikası", p. 111.

relations.²¹⁵ However, as mentioned above, the relations were strained once again when the crisis broke out in Kosovo in 1998 which put Turkey and Yugoslavia on opposite camps. It has been argued that Turkey saw Kosovo crisis as another grave mistake by the Serbs. Yet, it did not articulate the matter as fervently as it called for support during the Bosnian war. This policy received criticism from different circles in Turkey and also by the Kosovars. First, the criticism asserted that Kosovo would already be an independent state as was understood from the American policies based on restoration and aid plans toward the region.²¹⁶ Second, it was held that Turkey tied itself too much to the view that saw Serbia as Turkey's trade gateway to Europe. Third, Turkey conducted too much self-restraint so as not to be seen as attempting to revive the Ottoman heritage. The critics alleged that Kosovo was already swayed into bloodshed while Turkish officials emphasized the importance of its territorial integrity.²¹⁷ As the crisis continued, former Yugoslavian Foreign Minister Zivadin Jovanovic described the relations between the two countries as quite "normalized" in economic, cultural and, scientific venues but not as much in the political venue.²¹⁸ It seemed that the PKK problem reflected itself onto the bilateral relations once again as the newspaper columns pointed to a "Serbian – Greek – PKK" alliance in 1998 by writing how terrorists were financed and equipped with the provision of missiles and weaponry in Greece and Serbia and later sent to Damascus after being trained. It was

²¹⁵ "Girit'te Olumlu Sinyaller", 4 November 1997, *Sabah*.

²¹⁶ "Ankara – Bağdat – Belgrad", 13 June 1999, *Sabah*.

²¹⁷ "İğneyi Kendimize ...", 11 April 1999, *Sabah*; "Kosova", 25 March 1999, *Sabah*. See "Ankara'dan Siyasi Operasyon", 8 March 1998, *Milliyet*; "Balkanlar Atağı", 8 March 1998, *Cumhuriyet*; "Cem Ziyaretten Memnun Döndü", 9 March 1998, *Cumhuriyet*; "Cem'den Çözüm Önerileri", 9 March 1998, *Milliyet*; "Milosevic: Arnavutça Fizik Dersi Olmaz", Ertuğrul Özkök, 9 March 1998, *Hürriyet*; "Türkiye'nin 'Ağırlığı'", Sami Kohen, 10 March 1998, *Milliyet*; "Akan Kanları Artık Durdurun", Yavuz Gökmen, 10 March 1998, *Hürriyet*; and "Milosevic Cem'in Ziyaretinde Kosova'yı Yok Saydı", 10 March 1998, *Cumhuriyet*.

²¹⁸ "Sorun Ayrılıkçı Terörizm", Sami Kohen, Theodoros Pangalos, Zivadin Jovanovic (Interview), 9 June 1998, *Milliyet*.

alleged that the IGNA missiles were brought by the PKK owing to the good relations between Milosevic and Öcalan, and also to a Greek colonel's efforts.²¹⁹

In 1999, Darko Tanaskovic, the former Yugoslav Ambassador to Ankara, evaluated relations with Turkey as well as the Western states with respect to the Balkans. While Tanaskovic maintained that there were approximately 30 Kosovo-like places in the world, the West had chosen to target Kosovo and stated that the entry of the Turkish Army to Kosovo after 300 years was not something that should be turned into such an issue. Tanaskovic further said that if there was a commonality to be established between Kosovo and the Southeast of Turkey, it would only be the reality of terror and nothing else. He refuted the news reports reflecting his views as seeing a full similarity between the situation in Kosovo and the Southeast of Turkey.²²⁰

Just as NATO's response to Bosnia was too little and too late, it was too much and too soon for Kosovo. Turkey took part in the Kosovo operation with a relatively cautious attitude when compared to the Bosnian war due to the abovementioned reasons as well as the readiness of the international community to take harsh measures as opposed to the Bosnian experience.²²¹

After Vojislav Kostunica was elected President in the elections held in September 2000, the first meeting between the two states took place in October 2000 at the unofficial meeting of Presidents and Heads of Government within the Southeast European Cooperation Initiative (SECI) in Skopje. Former Prime Minister Ecevit held contacts with Kostunica and stated that the regional states were willing

²¹⁹ "Sırp – Yunan – PKK" İttifakı, 5 May 1998, *Sabah*.

²²⁰ "ABD Bölgeyi Karıştırıyor", 27 June 1999, *Cumhuriyet*. For a general account on territory and how it has come to shape the Serbian policies and identity, see George W. White, "Place and Its Role in Serbian Identity", in Derek Hall and Darrick Danta (eds.), *Reconstructing the Balkans – A Geography of the New Europe*, (Chichester: John Wiley and Sons, 1996), pp. 36-52.

²²¹ Şule Kut, "Türkiye'nin Balkanlar Politikası", p. 112. Turkey participated with eighteen F-18s in the operation which began on 24 March 1999. It also opened its borders to host approximately 20,000 refugees.

and ready to support Belgrade to which Kostunica reciprocated by way of stating that they also wanted to see improvement in the relations.²²² It has been argued that Kostunica's participation constituted the most important dimension of this meeting by way of which Belgrade showed that it was willing to integrate with the rest of Southeast Europe. It was argued that the past burdened relations between Belgrade and Ankara in fact stemmed from Milosevic's unilateral policies and that the bilateral relations have indeed been friendly ever since the end of World War I.²²³ However, it would not be erroneous to argue that bilateral relations had come to the verge of breaking pursuant to NATO attacks in which Turkey also took part. The new period of conciliation began with former Foreign Minister İsmail Cem's visit to Belgrade on 2 March 2001. It was the first high level visit after 5 October 2000 when Milosevic was ousted in Belgrade and replaced by Vojislav Kostunica.²²⁴ Cem held contacts with President Kostunica, Prime Minister Zoran Zinzić, and State Minister Rasim Ljajić after which it was decided that there would be increased cooperation between the two states. The diplomatic sources stated that the invitation of Cem by Kostunica for a separate meeting was interpreted as a sign of cordiality.²²⁵ Following this, former Foreign Minister Goran Svilanović paid an official visit to Ankara in April 2002 which was seen as part of the Yugoslav government's efforts to erase the vicissitudes of Milosevic period and to become a member of international community. Svilanović referred to Cem's visit in 2001 as the start point of future cooperation and stated that Yugoslavia supported the initiative for dialogue between religions and cultures as well as combat against terrorism. When asked how to restore the memories of Bosnia and Kosovo, two issues which shadowed the bilateral

²²² "Dirsek Teması", 26 October 2000, *Hürriyet*.

²²³ "Balkanlar'da İstikrarın Önemi," Semih İdiz, 26 October 2000, *Star*.

²²⁴ "Belgrad'la Yeni Dönem", 2 March 2001, *Hürriyet*.

²²⁵ "Belgrad'la Beyaz Sayfa", 4 March 2001, *Hürriyet*.

relations, it seemed that the Yugoslav Foreign Minister had positive expectations as he stated that the two states preserved the economic relations also during the war. According to Svilanovic, it was time to take economic relations even further.²²⁶ Svilanovic visited Turkey again in early February 2003 to hold contacts with former Prime Minister Abdullah Gül and former Foreign Minister Yaşar Yakış. The Serbian Foreign Minister said that he was quite hopeful concerning the new state of “Serbia and Montenegro” and that he expected to see Serbia and Montenegro in the EU in ten years’ time, that is, before Turkey became a full member.²²⁷ The same expectation was voiced also by the new President of Serbia and Montenegro Svetozar Marovic during his visit to Ankara in early December 2004. Marovic acknowledged the imprint put into the history of Southeast Europe by Turkey in respect of which he argued that Serbia and Montenegro and Turkey had common strategic priorities such as EU membership which could be accelerated if the two states took joint efforts.²²⁸ During the talks, President Ahmet Necdet Sezer said that further improvement in bilateral relations was essential for regional peace and stated that “Turkey and Serbia and Montenegro have accepted themselves as neighbors although they do not share borders.”²²⁹ It was argued that this visit was particularly important on the part of Serbia and Montenegro as to emphasize their resolve to enter NATO and to ask Turkey for due support.²³⁰

By September 2004, Turkey expressly stated that it strongly wished to see Serbia and Montenegro overcome possible obstacles to its entry into the Euro-Atlantic integration processes as soon as possible. However, it was added that Serbia

²²⁶ “Yugoslavya ile Yeni Başlangıç”, 11 April 2002, *Hürriyet*.

²²⁷ “İstanbul’da Başka Ülkenin Bakanı Oldu”, 6 February 2003, *Milliyet*. Svilanovic came to Turkey as the Foreign Minister of the Federation Republic of Yugoslavia. The name of the country was changed as Serbia and Montenegro on 4 February 2003. Svilanovic left Turkey as the Foreign Minister of Serbia and Montenegro.

²²⁸ “Kıbrıs’a Örnek Olabiliriz”, 12 February 2004, *Hürriyet*.

²²⁹ “Savaştan Barışa”, 13 February 2004, *Milliyet*.

²³⁰ “Sırbistan’a NATO Desteği”, 13 February 2004, *Hürriyet*.

and Montenegro must first meet the requirements for entry including full cooperation with the UN War Criminals Tribunal at The Hague.²³¹

The most recent contacts were held during Foreign Minister Abdullah Gül's visit in Serbia and Montenegro which took place following a visit to Kosovo which was administered by the UN and NATO since 1999. Gül and Boris Tadic, the President of Serbia, discussed the situation in Kosovo, EU integration and other topics. Given that Serbia wished to retain at least formal control over Kosovo, Tadic stated that Kosovo should remain part of Serbia and Montenegro and called for protection of all minorities in the province.²³² The official stance of Serbia and Montenegro was affirmed by Tadic's statement that an independent Kosovo would have serious implications for the region.²³³ However, Gül openly stated that Turkey wanted Kosovo to have a democratic multiethnic and structure where everyone was fairly represented.²³⁴ For further improvement of economic relations, Abdullah Gül and his counterpart Vuk Draskovic signed two agreements on the prevention of double taxation and on social security.²³⁵

In 27 February 2005, Serbia adopted a new law on citizenship with a view to facilitating citizenship procedures and thus to increasing the number of Serbian citizens while Montenegro continued to apply the related law in its previous form. In accordance with the said law put into effect on 27 February 2005, those who were born in Serbia and emigrated to another country for various reasons, their children,

²³¹ "Serbia – Montenegro, Turkey Sign Agreement on Military Cooperation", 7 September 2004, *Southeast European Times*, as retrieved on http://www.mfa.gov.yu/FDP/set_070904-e.html on 28 February 2006; and "Relations of Serbia, Turkey As Precondition For Stability, Tadic", 20 August 2004, Tanjug, on http://www.mfa.gov.yu/Bilteni/Engleski/b200804_e.html#N4.

²³² "Turkey's Foreign Minister Visits Serbia and Montenegro for Talks", *The Journal of Turkish Weekly*, 12 October 2005, on <http://www.turkishweeklynets/news.php?id=20653>, as retrieved on 28 February 2006.

²³³ "Gül'le Gece Diplomasisi", 13 October 2005, *Radikal*.

²³⁴ "Gül Leaves for Kosovo", 11 October 2005, on http://archive.turkishpress.com/news.asp_id=74375

²³⁵ "Gül'le Gece Diplomasisi", 13 October 2005, *Radikal*; and "Gül Leaves for Kosovo", 11 October 2005, on http://archive.turkishpress.com/news.asp_id=74375.

grandchildren or kinship, regardless of the fact that they had been born and raised in Serbian territory shall enjoy the rights guaranteed by the said law on the condition that they prove in writing that the applicants or their family members are of Serbian origin or were born in Serbian territory. The law does not stipulate settlement in Serbian territory which is an advantage for those who intend to apply. Irena Kuzmanovic, Vice Consul at the Serbia and Montenegro Consulate in İstanbul, stated that the law was new and yet they had received approximately 30 official applications.²³⁶

The new application by Serbia was interpreted as an effort to increase the number of citizens by Selim Yusufoglu, the Secretary General of Rumeli Turks Federation and Member of Bosnia – Sandjak Association, who stated that those who immigrated to Turkey were Muslim Bosnians, mostly from Sandjak, which implied that they would not be interested as opposed to Serbian expectations. Given Serbia's efforts concerning EU integration, it appears that Serbia introduced the said law to act in accordance with the EU laws and regulations. Yet, it is not likely to receive much attention as far as the Bosnian Muslims in Turkey are concerned.

There remains a set of issues awaiting solution on Serbia's road to the EU and the rest of Southeast Europe. The EU declared that there were still some obstacles to start accession negotiations with Serbia and Montenegro in early October 2005. The prospective membership of Serbia and Montenegro is pronounced as 2010. This may be seen as too early a date when compared to Turkey's relevant experience and expectations. In fact, Belgrade's foreign policy has to resolve two major issues: 1) its Kosovo policy and 2) the recent separation of Montenegro from Serbia. Last but not

²³⁶ "Sırlar 'Vatandaş' Topluyor", Yasin Uygur, 2 May 2005, *Aksiyon* on <http://www.aksiyon.com.tr/yazdir.php?id=21080> as retrieved on 4 March 2006 5:31:51 GMT.

least, there is overwhelming pressure and criticism towards Serbia concerning the handover of Radko Mladic.²³⁷

As far as the status of Kosovo is concerned, it is known that the international attitude has come to be supportive of independence while calling upon the Albanians to give Serbs their minority rights as expressed by Richard Holbrooke, Former U.S. Special Envoy to Bosnia, in an interview on 11 March 2006.²³⁸ On the other hand, Turkey supported the full implementation of UN Resolution 1244 and continues to contribute to security and stability in Kosovo in KFOR and OSCE mission with its military existence and police²³⁹ while Serbia wished to retain at least formal control over Kosovo as mentioned above. In face of the recent declaration of independence by Kosovo, Serbia will have to reshape its Kosovo policies radically and that is what has exacerbated the rift between the pro-European and conservative groups in the Serbian parliament which resulted in an early election in 2008. Turkey, on the other hand, supports Kosovo's recent independence while trying not to strain relations with Serbia and Russia.

The second and equally important issue concerned the separation of Serbia and Montenegro. In accordance with the agreement between Serbia and Montenegro dated 14 March 2002, both Serbia and Montenegro were entitled to hold a referendum for independence as of February 2006.²⁴⁰ Accordingly, Montenegro submitted an official proposal of separation in February 2006 stating that the union did not function effectively and its institutions were sluggish. In the draft document signed by Montenegrin President Filip Vujanovic and Prime Minister Milo

²³⁷ "Sırbistan Karadağ Pazarlığı", 10 October 2005, BBC Turkish.

²³⁸ Live interview on CNN International after Milosevic was found dead in his cell, 11 March 2006.

²³⁹ "Tükiye, Sırbistan – Karadağ ve Kosova İlişkileri", on <http://www.bilimarastirmavakfi.org/html2/yayinlar/yayinlargiris.html> as retrieved on 22 February 2006 06:13:49 GMT.

²⁴⁰ "Karadağ'ın Bağımsızlığına Yeni Bir Engel", Erhan Türbedar, 12 February 2005, on <http://www.turksam.org/tr/yazilar.asp?kat=53&yazi=169>

Djukanovic, it was said that Montenegro favored a new, permanent and a more stable model which would eliminate the current shortcomings. Prime Minister Djukanovic further stated that due to its previous problems related to nationalism and the Kosovo issue, Serbia shadowed the efforts of Montenegro for entering the EU.²⁴¹ While the EU preferred to see a union in which the two states take part on the eve of the referendum,²⁴² the U.S.A. supported an independent Montenegro as from the U.S. viewpoint, it would not work with more than one prime minister, foreign minister and internal borders.²⁴³ By 4 March 2006, all of the 68 members of parliament present out of 75 at the session voted for referendum to be held on 21 May 2006 in Montenegro. The polls before the referendum showed that 41.4 % of the population supported independence; 32.2 % were against; 14.9 % abstained and 11.4% did not comment on the issue.²⁴⁴

While Serbia and Montenegro took efforts to restore its image and become integrated to the international community, the news that Milosevic was found dead in his cell evoked various arguments as to divine justice, total defeat of Serbia,

²⁴¹ “Karadağ, Sırbistan’dan Ayrılmak İstiyor”, 23 February 2005, *Deutsche Welle*, on <http://www.turkatak.gen.tr/index.php?option=content&task=view?id=71&Itemid=2> as retrieved on 26 February 2006 00:11:52 GMT.

²⁴² Erhan Türbedar, “Karadağ’ın Bağımsızlığına Yeni Bir Engel”, 12 February 2005, on <http://www.turksam.org/tr/yazilar.asp?kat=53&yazi=169>

²⁴³ Live interview on CNN International after Milosevic was found dead in his cell, 11 March 2006. Except for the common military and also the air traffic control, Montenegro was independent from Serbia. It had chosen its own bishop back in 1993 rather than accepting the appointed Serbian bishop, which was then seen as a step toward independence. Montenegro began to use the German Mark in 1996 upon foreign recommendation and now it has become a Euro zone in which the Serbian Dinar is accepted in a few touristic places. Serbia and Montenegro had separate customs procedures, economic policies and executive, as well as two Central Banks. The difference was observed also in privatization, foreign trade, consumption tax, and general taxation. Montenegro adopted a new flag, a new national anthem, and a national day in July 2004. A National Movement was formed in 27 January 2005 in order to keep Serbia and Montenegro together, the leaders of which are Montenegrin academics and politicians residing in Serbia. See Can Karpat, “Sırbistan ve Karadağ: Mutsuz Çift Boşanma Yolunda mı?” on <http://www.axisglobe.com/article.asp?article=596> as retrieved on 3 March 2006 01:13:37 GMT.

²⁴⁴ “Sırbistan Karadağ Yol Ayrımında”, 4 March 2006, *Yeni Mesaj*, on http://www.yenimesaj.com.tr/index.php?sayfa=dünyadan&haberno=10095&tarikh=2006_03-04 as retrieved on 6 March 2006 16:10:27 GMT. For more information on the topic, see Erhan Türbedar, “Sırbistan’ın Listesi Karadağ’ı Kızdırdı”, 21 June 2005, on <http://www.avsam.org/TR/gunlukyazdir.asp?ID=636> as retrieved on 24 June 2005 06:20:49 GMT.

elevation of Milosevic to a hero, etc. It is dubious that the tribunal in the Hague has had any chastening effect upon the ultranationalist Serbs²⁴⁵ bearing in mind the fact that Milosevic remained somehow as a symbol of Serbian nationalism that Kostunica, whom the opposition swept into power initially, indeed, balked at handing him over to The Hague.²⁴⁶ Just as there are factions in Russia nostalgic for Stalin and those in Germany nostalgic for Hitler, Milosevic still has supporters although a few. It can be argued that the issue is not all over but close to the end. Milosevic's death is not likely to matter a lot; his removal from Belgrade had already removed him from Serbian domestic and foreign policy. Eventually, Montenegro declared independence forming a new European state and dissolving the last shred of the former Yugoslavia on 2 June 2006. The independence ceremony was not attended by any Serbian official and Prime Minister Kostunica did not congratulate Montenegrin leaders on the results.²⁴⁷ Now, in face of the possibility that with Milosevic dead, there is an opportunity that Serbia's main opposition party and the Socialist Party would not miss the time to elevate Milosevic posthumously to a national hero. That implies a remaining threat to the security of the Balkans, particularly in respect of Kosovo's recent independence and talks of change in the administration of Bosnia - Herzegovina.

In sum, relations between Turkey and Serbia followed a dual course after the Bosnian War, which indicated a complex reality: relations were strained but Ankara had to take into account the fact that Yugoslavia was the gateway for Turkey's trade routes to Europe. While Turkey actively tried to make its pleas concerning the war be

²⁴⁵ "The Death of Milosevic", 14 March 2006, *International Herald Tribune*.

²⁴⁶ "For Serbs, Milosevic's Death Removes a Stain", by Milan Panic, a Serbian-American biomedical entrepreneur who was Prime Minister of Yugoslavia from 1992 to 1993, 15 March 2006, *International Herald Tribune*; Ferai Tınç, "Milosevic, Ölümüyle de Sorun", 13 March 2006, *Hürriyet*; and Hasan Ünal, "Milosevic Hangi Sırları Götürdü?", 16 March 2006, *Milli Gazete*.

²⁴⁷ Predrag Milic, "Montenegro Declares Its Independence From Serbia", 4 June 2006, *The Washington Post*.

understood by the West through diplomatic means, it realized that this was limited as its relation to the Balkans worked in close connection with that of the USA.

Turkey also had to avert the arguments that it tried to play the Muslim card in the Balkans. After the Dayton Peace Accord was signed, Turkey and Serbia embarked on a process of reconciliation in 1996. However, relations took on a rocky form once again with the Kosovo crisis in 1999. When Milosevic was ousted to be replaced by Vojislav Kostunica, disrupted relations were said to have originated from the former's policies, otherwise bilateral relations have always been cordial since the end of World War I.

After Kosovo declared independence and was recognized by Turkey in February 2008, Ankara was determined to maintain good relations with Belgrade. Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan stated that Serbia had an important role and responsibility in the future of the Balkans and that Turkey attached importance to improving relations and cooperation with Serbia both on a bilateral and a regional basis. However, Serbian officials did not balk at withdrawing Vladimir Curgus, Serbian ambassador to Ankara in protest when Turkey decided to recognize Kosovar independence.²⁴⁸ The Serbian ambassador left Turkey few days after Kosovo's declaration of independence by handing out a note of protest to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Expressly stating that bilateral relations should not be expected to be the same any more, the ambassador said that they expected Turkey to revise its decision concerning Kosovar independence.²⁴⁹ The first ostensible sign of this policy was Serbia's refusal to allow Süha Umar, Turkish ambassador to Belgrade, to submit his credentials to be able to start his official duty in May 2008, not to mention Serbian demonstrators' pelting stones earlier at the Turkish embassy in Belgrade

²⁴⁸ 'Turkey Recognizes Kosovo, Advises Parties to Stay Calm', 20 Feb. 2008, *Turkish Daily News*.

²⁴⁹ 'Serbian Envoy Leaves Turkey in Protest', 21 Feb. 2008, *Turkish Daily News*.

only few days after the declaration of independence.²⁵⁰ The Turkish ambassador performed his duties however, as such he was not expected to receive high level acceptance. It can be expected that relations may further deteriorate as Turkey now opened an embassy in Kosovo. In the short- and medium-term, bilateral relations strained since the wars in Bosnia and Kosovo have yet to lend themselves to reconciliation between the two states due to divergent stances on Kosovo. Consequently, reciprocal strains continue but the job got done although in low profile. Şule Kut's apt prognosis of 'duality in relations' remains constant. Neither Turkey nor Serbia need attract additional enmities, and Ankara's good will may be a significant component for Serbian legitimacy in international affairs.

4.4. TURKISH FOREIGN POLICY TOWARDS CROATIA

Although there was an overwhelming pro-independence mood in Croatia, the Tudjman administration hesitated a long time over declaring independence from Yugoslavia and pressed for a confederal option due to the combined Serb Army pressure in 1991.²⁵¹ Eventually, Croatia declared independence a few hours before Slovenia did on 25 June 1991. As one Croatian career diplomat had put it back in 1998, in historical terms the relations between Turkey and Croatia were defined by competing national interests. However, the two states now share the common view that the EU and NATO are the basis of stability and peace in the Balkans and

²⁵⁰ Barçın Yinanç, 'Serbia Snubs Turkish Envoy', 2 May 2008, *Turkish Daily News*.

²⁵¹ Christopher Cviic, *Remaking the Balkans*, p. 74. Unlike Slovenia, Croatia could not retain any arms and military equipment at the time of the changeover in 1990. The weaponry was impounded by the Yugoslav Army which refused to sell any more weapons to Croatia. Shortly after the Serb rebellion in August 1990, Croatia trained approximately 20,000 gendarmes and armed them with light weaponry.

Europe.²⁵² The diplomatic and political relations between the two states were established in 1992 after Turkey recognized the independence of Croatia on 6 February 1992. Turkey upgraded its Consulate General in Zagreb to embassy level the same year in September. The Turkish Embassy in Zagreb officially opened and started to function on 1 April 1993.²⁵³ Although Turkey had the will and the resolve to establish good relations with the newly emerged states in the region, relations with Zagreb were particularly important to the Bosnian War.²⁵⁴ The basis of close relations were the attempts to establish a joint front between Croatia and Bosnia in respect of which Turkey assumed an active role along with the U.S.A. and Germany to form the Bosnian – Croat Federation with the 1994 Washington Agreement.²⁵⁵ Indeed, diplomatic and political relations between Zagreb and Ankara retained its importance as high level visits and bilateral agreements implied. Although there was an alleged discord between Turkish and Croatian stance during the war, Croatian Head of Assembly Stejepan Mesic's visit in Ankara indicated that the two states had similar concerns on the question of Bosnia as former President of Turkish Grand National Assembly Hüsametdin Cindoruk stated on 21 January 1993.²⁵⁶ Similar views were confirmed by Croatian Deputy Prime Minister Mate Granic during Hasan Celal Güzel's visit in Zagreb two weeks later.²⁵⁷

On 18 March 1994, when Croatia and Bosnia signed an agreement to establish a federation, Turkey's role as an active mediator was acknowledged. Hikmet Çetin made Turkey's position clear by emphasizing that there could be no

²⁵² Miomir Zuzul, "Croatia and Turkey: Toward Durable Peace in Southeastern Europe", *Perceptions*, 3(3) (September – November 1998), pp. 82-88.

²⁵³ Yüksel Söylemez, "An Overview of Developments in Turkish – Croatian Relations and Some Turkish Views on the Tragedy in Bosnia – Herzegovina", *Turkish Review of Balkan Studies* (3) (1994 – 1995), p. 59; and 28 August 1992, *Cumhuriyet*.

²⁵⁴ Şule Kut, "Türkiye'nin Balkanlar Politikası", p. 116.

²⁵⁵ Pınar Yürür, "Tarihi Süreç İçerisinde Hırvatistan Dış Politikası", *Balkan Diplomasisi*, p. 223; and Şule Kut, "Türkiye'nin Balkanlar Politikası", p. 116.

²⁵⁶ 22 January 1993, *Cumhuriyet*.

²⁵⁷ 7 February 1993, *Milliyet*.

genuine solution to war unless the Serbs pulled back completely and the refugees returned home safely.²⁵⁸ Although the Washington Agreement was a significant accomplishment, Turkey preserved cautiousness by way of stressing that the application of the agreement was now more important than the signing of the agreement.²⁵⁹ Addressing the joint session of the Croatian Parliament *Sabor* on 16 July 1994, former President Demirel remarked that as the mastermind of the new Federation, Turkey would continue to sustain its mission in the region and would like to see the Bosnian Serbs join in, which would serve their self-interest and to the interest of all concerned.²⁶⁰

Besides common Turkish and Croatian European orientation and values, Croatia's interests in developing closer relations with Turkey is prompted by Croatia's concern about regional policies with respect to a Balkan integration.²⁶¹ Croatia aspires to become part of Western institutions and welcomes the fact that Turkey has a similar understanding of Western orientation which it has made clear since the end of World War I.²⁶² Accordingly, Turkey's role in stabilizing Southeastern Europe as a responsible and conducive actor was confirmed once again through the end of war in 1995 by Franjo Tudjman as being the strongest regional power.²⁶³

Given that Turkey's relations with Croatia are likely to be linked to Croatian – Bosnian relations, the three states have developed a system of trilateralism to further their relations as of 1994 which provided a forum for periodic consultations and discussions on how to overcome the bottlenecks in the Bosnian – Croat

²⁵⁸ 19 March 1994, *Sabah*; and 20 March 1994, *Hürriyet*.

²⁵⁹ 21 March 1994, *Cumhuriyet*; and Yüksel Söylemez, "An Overview of Developments in Turkish – Croatian Relations and Some Turkish Views on the Tragedy in Bosnia – Herzegovina", p. 58.

²⁶⁰ 17 July 1994, *Sabah*; and 18 July 1994, *Cumhuriyet*.

²⁶¹ Miomir Zuzul, "Croatia and Turkey: Toward Durable Peace in Southeastern Europe", pp. 82-88.

²⁶² *ibid*; Şule Kut, "Soğuk Savaş Sonrası Türkiye'nin Balkan Ülkeleriyle İlişkileri", p. 398.

²⁶³ 2 September 1995, *Hürriyet*.

Federation and on the need to create a Federation Army.²⁶⁴ By 1996, Tudjman referred to Turkish – Croatian political relations as “extremely good” yet stated that economic relations had not so far matched the intensity of political ties.²⁶⁵

President Demirel’s visit to Croatia at the invitation of President Tudjman confirmed the existing good relations in September 1997. In the wake of this visit, Dr. Ivica Tomic, Croatian Ambassador to Turkey, stated that the solidity of bilateral Croatian – Turkish relations can be substantiated by the fact that cooperation with Turkey has great importance in fulfilling each of four major strategic tasks of Croatian foreign policy: accomplishment of the peaceful reintegration of the Croatian Danube region; implementation of the Dayton Peace Accord and support of the Bosnia – Herzegovina Federation; admission in Euro – Atlantic organizations, and the improvement and development of relations with other non-European countries.²⁶⁶ On the part of Turkey, this visit was of utmost importance given the fact that Serb – Greek – Russian alliance had proved a failure for peace in the region and that was why Turkey’s relations with Croatia was a strategic one along with Bosnia, Macedonia, Romania, and Bulgaria.²⁶⁷ President Demirel did not visit Croatia for the mere purpose of returning Tudjman’s visit or to fulfill the requisites of international protocol. On the background of the said visit was the objective to carry Turkey’s foreign policy optimization to world state level in line with Özal’s foreign policy understanding which saw Turkey at the center of Balkan – Middle East – Caucasus triangle. Although this visit *prima facie* could be seen as a step to improve bilateral relations with Croatia, it was indeed carried out to contribute to future security in

²⁶⁴ “Turkey, Croatia and Bosnia to Hold Tripartite Talks”, 27 May 1996, *Turkish Daily News*.

²⁶⁵ Yusuf Kanlı, “Croatia is a Central European Country”, 18 June 1996, *Turkish Daily News*.

²⁶⁶ “Exemplary Relations between Croatia and Turkey”, 30 May 1997, *Turkish Daily News*.

²⁶⁷ Taha Akyol, “Hırvat Ülkesi”, 23 September 1997, *Milliyet*. See “Altın Fırsatı Kaçırmayalım”, 24 September 1997, *Sabah*; “Demirel’e Laiklik Övgüsü”, 24 September 1997, *Hürriyet*; and Taha Akyol, “Balkanlar ve Türkiye”, 24 September 1997, *Milliyet*.

Bosnia. Last but not least, it can be argued that Turkish foreign policy was conducted with Demirel's personal attempts after 1995, due to mostly which the Croatian attitude toward Bosnia displayed a conciliatory nature after Dayton and equally importantly averted collaboration with the Serbs.²⁶⁸ Demirel's humorous and meaningful remark "I deserved it!" at the honorary doctorate ceremony at Zagreb University when he was given a plate by Rector Zeljko Katic was a telling moment in that respect.²⁶⁹

The two states took a step on 13 March 1998 to boost bilateral cooperation by signing two protocols on developing political consultation mechanisms and cooperation between educational centers. Former Croatian Foreign Minister Mate Granic, who was on an official visit to Turkey, and his counterpart İsmail Cem signed protocols after having talks on bilateral and regional issues. The parties discussed how to strengthen the position of the Bosnia – Herzegovina Federation and how to increase the effectiveness of Turkey and Croatia regarding the full implementation of the Dayton Peace Accord. Mutual concerns over Kosovo were another important point on the agenda. Granic expressed readiness to boost bilateral cooperation and praised Turkey's efforts to end the war in Bosnia and asked for Ankara's support for Croatia's bid for NATO and expressed Croatia's support for Turkey's bid for a non-permanent seat in the UN Security Council in the 2000 - 2002 period.²⁷⁰ Three months later the same year, the two states stepped up joint efforts to carry out a more effective offensive against drug-trafficking and other crimes. The two interior ministers, Murat Başesgioğlu and Ivan Penic, met in İzmir to discuss

²⁶⁸ Although Demirel's conduct of foreign policy did not match that of Özal in its entirety, it had commonalities as was observed in the case of the Balkans. Sabahattin Önkibar, "Demirel Hırvatistan'a Niçin Gitti?", 24 September 1997, *Türkiye*; and Yavuz Donat, "Yeni Mesajlar", 25 September 1997, *Milliyet*.

²⁶⁹ Taha Akyol, "Hırvatlar ve Türkler", 25 September 1997, *Milliyet*.

²⁷⁰ "Turkey, Croatia Expand Bilateral Cooperation", 14 March 1998, *Turkish Daily News*.

bilateral issues, particularly the fight against drug-trafficking and the deterioration of the situation in Kosovo.²⁷¹

By 1999, Turkey and Croatia paved the way for accelerated bilateral relations by signing five cooperation agreements after a meeting between visiting President Franjo Tudjman and his counterpart Süleyman Demirel. The agreements signed on 10 February 1999 covered an array of issues, including cooperation in justice, science, technology, customs services, agriculture and veterinary services. As in the previous bilateral meeting, Demirel and Tudjman said they exchanged views on a number of issues and voiced concern over Kosovo. The two leaders hoped that the Dayton Peace Accord would be fully implemented.²⁷² Although the visit did not attract the attention of Turkish media as much as it should, it was noted that good relations between Turkey and Croatia would have a positive impact on the future of Bosnia in the short- and medium-term since as a country that aspired to be a member of NATO and the EU, Croatia's officials were cognizant of the fact that Croatia would need Turkish support in international platforms as much as Turkish officials acknowledged that friendly relations with Croatia would increase Turkey's influence on this west most point of the region.²⁷³

When Tudjman died in December 1999 and his party was defeated in the general elections in January 2000, it was argued that conditions were better than ever for peace and stability to return to the area. More specifically, experts maintained that not only the authoritarian Tudjman regime did pursue hostile policies both towards the Serbs and his Bosnian allies, but also prevented a number of items in the

²⁷¹ "Turkey, Croatia To Intensify Joint Combat Against Crime", 18 June 1998, *Turkish Daily News*.

²⁷² "Turkey, Croatia Boost Bilateral Cooperation", 12 February 1999, *Turkish Daily News*; "Croatian President Tudjman Visits Turkey", 11 February 1999, *Turkish Daily News*; "Hırvatistan'la 5 İşbirliği Anlaşması", 11 February 1999, *Cumhuriyet*; and "Hırvatlarla Daha Sıkı İşbirliği", 12 February 1999, *Radikal*.

²⁷³ Hasan Ünal, "Hırvatistan Neden Önemli?", 15 February 1999, *Zaman*.

Dayton Peace Accord from being implemented. Concerning these historic developments in Croatia, Besim Spahic, Bosnian Ambassador to Ankara, stated that after Tudjman, a new epoch would come in which the Dayton Peace Accord would be implemented. It was known that Tudjman was strongly resented by the Bosnians to host intentions of partitioning their country and annexing parts of it. However, when asked his opinion on Demirel's attending Tudjman's funeral as the only head of state, the Ambassador refrained from commenting and only said that "the President had his own reasons for attending". Yet, whether the Croats perceived this as a support to Tudjman's antidemocratic policies or a moral outside support to Croatia in its transitional period was disputable.²⁷⁴ On the other hand, Turkey's Balkan policy received criticism once again as it was seen that Turkey's policy was not likely to change after Tudjman's death and the new elections since it focused solely on EU integration at the time. Early prospects alleged that there was a chance of Turkey being affected by a possible application from Zagreb to the EU as Croatia was more advanced than Turkey in economic terms.²⁷⁵

By February 2001, Croatia's new President Stipe Mesic visited President Ahmet Necdet Sezer and voiced Croatia's concern over membership in the EU and NATO.²⁷⁶ On 3 July 2001, Sezer returned Mesic's visit. The two leaders agreed that exchanging views in every area regarding the EU membership processes of the two countries could create new cooperation areas.²⁷⁷ The same year, on 17 November, Neven Mimica, the Croatian Minister for European Integration, said that Turkey

²⁷⁴ Selçuk Gültaşlı, "Tudjman's Demise Likely to Bring Stability to Balkans", 6 January 2000, *Turkish Daily News*; and Semih İdiz, "Türkiye'nin Stratejik Ortağı Hırvatistan", 30 May 2000, *Star*.

²⁷⁵ see Selçuk Gültaşlı, for Hasan Ünal's argument in "Tudjman's Demise Likely to Bring Stability to Balkans", 6 January 2000, *Turkish Daily News*. See also Selçuk Gültaşlı, "Croatia Seeks to Improve Relations with Turkey", 30 May 2000, *Turkish Daily News*.

²⁷⁶ "Hırvat Başkan Milosevic Zulmünü Anlattı", 8 February 2001, *Hürriyet*; and Taha Kıvanç, "Hırvat Cumhurbaşkanı Çankaya'da", 11 February 2001, *Yeni Şafak*.

²⁷⁷ "Sezer in Zagreb to Boost Relations", 4 July 2003, *Turkish Daily News*; "AB'ye Uyum Koşulları Çağdaşlığın Yoludur", 4 July 2003, *Hürriyet*; "Hırvat Vekillerden Sezer'e Alkış Yağmuru", 4 July 2003, *Akşam*; "Sezer Calls On Croatia to Develop Bilateral Trade", 5 July 2003, *Turkish Daily News*.

already had candidate status as of December 1999 and was expected to obtain a date for negotiation at the European Council. Mimica stated that since Turkey was further along on the road towards the EU membership, Croatia could benefit from the Turkish experience arising from its candidate status, particularly concerning pre-accession assistance.²⁷⁸ Nevertheless, it was observed that during the EU meeting between the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the member states, before 3 October, the so-called “Croatia front” against Ankara was becoming larger. Turkey’s relations with the EU assumed a rocky outlook as Austria, Hungary, Slovakia, and Slovenia stated that it would be difficult for them to accept the fact that the negotiations with Turkey would begin before Croatia was granted a date for negotiation.²⁷⁹ The Austrian stance focused on not to guarantee that the negotiations will end with the full membership; to discuss other alternatives to full membership; and to emphasize the capacity of the EU to absorb a new member. In contrast, Jack Straw, the former British Foreign Minister, stressed that there was no link between the negotiations with Turkey and the starting of negotiations with Croatia.²⁸⁰ The same point was voiced once more in late September by former Croatian Prime Minister Ivo Sanader in that it was not right to establish a linkage between the negotiations of the two states.²⁸¹

As a clear indication of Croatia’s political will for furthering cooperation with Turkey, Croatian President Stejepan Mesic visited Turkey in early December 2005 at a time when his country’s agenda had been busy with the newly started EU negotiations and the 2000 budget which was adopted by *Sabor* only few days before

²⁷⁸ “Mimica: Croatia Can Benefit From Turkey’s EU Experience”, Interview With Ambassador (Rtd) Yüksel Söylemez, 17 November 2003, *Turkish Daily News*.

²⁷⁹ Can Karpat, “Anti – Turkish ‘Croatian Front Is Growing”, on http://www.axisglobe.com/print_article.asp?article=254

²⁸⁰ *ibid.*

²⁸¹ “Hırvatlar: Durumumuz Farklı”, 1 October 2005, *Sabah*; see also “Hedefimiz AB Üyesi Olmak”, interview with Damir Perincic, Consul General of Croatia to İstanbul, 25 September 2005, *Cumhuriyet*.

Mesic's arrival in Turkey. Mesic expressly stated that Turkey helped Croatia significantly during the war yet now they were looking for partnership and wanted to enhance cooperation with Turkey.²⁸² During the visit, Turkey and Croatia signed agreements in various fields such as free trade, supporting mutual investments, double taxation and a cooperation protocol between the Croatian Bank for Reconstruction and Development (HBOR) and Turkish Eximbank.²⁸³ Although political figures voice their concern that the membership of both states should not be linked but treated separately, expert opinions point out that Turkey is likely to have a difficult time in convincing not only the politicians but primarily the public opinion of EU countries that its accession to the EU should take place before Croatia.²⁸⁴ Despite the significant number of high level visits since the end of Cold War between the two states, it can be argued that as previously mentioned, Turkey's relations with Croatia is likely to be linked to Croatian – Bosnian relations as the system of trilateralism launched by the three states in the second half of the 1990s indicates.

4.5. TURKISH FOREIGN POLICY TOWARDS MACEDONIA

Unlike the other former Yugoslav republics, Macedonia displayed hesitation with regard to declaring independence.²⁸⁵ Indeed, Macedonia had shown its will to

²⁸² Yüksel Söylemez and Emine Kart, "Turkey, Croatia: Shared EU Destiny to Boost Mutually Beneficial Cooperation", 8 December 2005, *Turkish Daily News*.

²⁸³ "Mesic: A United Europe Will Exclude Possibility of War", 8 December 2005, *Turkish Daily News*.

²⁸⁴ Round Table Report "Negotiating the EU Accession of Turkey", 17 October 2005, on <http://www.imo.hr/europa/conf/turkey/report.html> as retrieved on 3 February 2000 10:06:30 GMT.

²⁸⁵ Şule Kut, "Türkiye'nin Balkanlar Politikası", p. 117. For detailed information on Macedonia's domestic and foreign policy issues between 1990 and 2005, see Abdülmecit Nuredini,

establish close relations with Turkey even before it declared independence in mid-September 1991.²⁸⁶ Before Turkey announced that it recognized Macedonia on 6 February 1992, former Prime Minister Demirel gave an interview for the Macedonian daily *Nova Makedonya* published in Skopje and stated that Turkey would recognize Macedonia in late January.²⁸⁷ It was emphasized by Fahri Kaya, former member of Macedonian Council of Presidency and former deputy Foreign Minister, the recognition of Macedonia by Turkey would mean that it would have a say over the new map to be drawn in the Balkans.²⁸⁸ Turkey recognized Macedonia with the name “Republic of Macedonia” as written in the constitution of the country which proved to have an antagonizing effect on the part of Greece.²⁸⁹ It has been argued that the relations in the first five years improved better than expected, however it was equally maintained that although the dispute between Macedonia and Greece had been one factor that pulled Turkey and Macedonia closer, it cannot be suggested that it was the only factor that shaped future bilateral relations between Turkey and Macedonia.²⁹⁰ To give a couple of factors, the fact that almost 85 % of the Turkish population in former Yugoslavia lived in the Socialist Federation Republic of Macedonia²⁹¹ and that Macedonia tied high hopes to Turkey for the solution of the problems it faced in the aftermath of the Yugoslav disintegration had not been less important.²⁹²

“*Makedonya’nın İç ve Dış Politika Sorunları*”, A Master’s Thesis Submitted to the Department of International Relations, Sakarya University, 2006.

²⁸⁶ Şule Kut, “Soğuk Savaş Sonrası Türkiye’nin Balkan Ülkeleriyle İlişkileri” p. 398.

²⁸⁷ 17 January 1992, *Sabah*.

²⁸⁸ 20 January 1992, *Milliyet*.

²⁸⁹ Şule Kut, “Türkiye’nin Balkanlar Politikası”, p. 117.

²⁹⁰ Şule Kut “Soğuk Savaş Sonrası Türkiye’nin Balkan Ülkeleriyle İlişkileri” p. 399.

²⁹¹ *ibid.*

²⁹² Murat Hatipoğlu, “Kuruluşta Günümüze Makedonya Cumhuriyeti’nin Dış Politikası ve Balkan Ülkeleriyle İlişkileri (1991–2000)” in *Balkan Diplomasisi*, p. 179.

After Turkey recognized Macedonia, the diplomatic relations began in late August²⁹³ and Turkey was the first state to open an embassy in Skopje.²⁹⁴ In November 1992, former Macedonian President Kiro Gligorov stated that they saw Turkey as one of the key states that would shape peace in the Balkans and described the recognition by Turkey as a very positive step.²⁹⁵ It has been suggested that Gligorov's positive approach towards Turkey and his due style in foreign policy had been particularly important in maintaining the fragile domestic peace in his country.²⁹⁶ When Gligorov stated that Turkey had extended invaluable help which would not be forgotten by the Macedonians, he referred to Turkish aid to Macedonia which proved vital in the winter of 1992 when the country had to face the Greek embargo and reminded Özal's subsequent statement that those who threatened Macedonia would find Turkey as a party.²⁹⁷

Such an open support raised many question marks on the part of Greece. Greece interpreted this support as a move toward encircling Greece. The Albanian minority alike expressed restlessness regarding Ankara's support for Orthodox Macedonians ruling the Albanian minority.²⁹⁸ Although Turkish foreign policy towards Macedonia was criticized by some circles in Turkey and Albanians in Macedonia on grounds of being pro-ethnic Macedonian, it can be maintained that ethno-religious ties were not seen as primary instruments in Turkey's foreign-policy making towards Macedonia. It is true that the existence and prosperity of approximately 100,000 Turks in Macedonia was an important consideration, yet although Turkish support in line with this consideration increased the political and

²⁹³ 28 August 1992, *Cumhuriyet*.

²⁹⁴ Murat Hatipoğlu, "Kuruluşun Günümüze Makedonya Cumhuriyeti'nin Dış Politikası ve Balkan Ülkeleriyle İlişkileri (1991–2000)", p. 179; and Şule Kut, "Türkiye'nin Balkanlar Politikası", p. 117.

²⁹⁵ 15 November 1992, *Cumhuriyet*.

²⁹⁶ Şule Kut "Soğuk Savaş Sonrası Türkiye'nin Balkan Ülkeleriyle İlişkileri" p. 399.

²⁹⁷ *ibid.*

²⁹⁸ Şule Kut, "Türkiye'nin Balkanlar Politikası", p. 118.

social prestige of the Turks in the country, it was not equally projected onto their economic standing.²⁹⁹

In February 1993, President Özal paid an official visit to Macedonia yet Süha Noyan, former Ambassador to Macedonia, was not included in the visit which was seen as part of Özal's own way of acting in foreign policy.³⁰⁰ Özal stated that Greece engaged in unnecessary confrontation over the name of Macedonia and that implied open chauvinism.³⁰¹ Pointing to the issue, Lieutenant General Erdoğan Özal, Head of Operations Section at the Chief of Staff, criticized Greece of conducting "an emotional, fanatic, and imperialist policy" towards Macedonia.³⁰² As Greece's hostile policies continued to grow, Turkey's support to Macedonia increased duly. Former Foreign Minister Hikmet Çetin visited Macedonia after he paid an official visit to Albania in early December 1993. Çetin held contacts with former Foreign Minister Stevo Crvenkovski and President Kiro Gligorov and the two states signed a political cooperation agreement.³⁰³

As Gligorov's statement in 1994 that "Turkey has always been a guarantor state for Macedonia"³⁰⁴ implied, Turkish – Macedonian relations has assumed an alliance nature by 1995.³⁰⁵ In 1995, approximately 30 agreements were signed between the two states which was an indication of growing relations. In early February 1995, former Minister of Culture Timurçin Savaş stated that the signing of

²⁹⁹ idem, "Soğuk Savaş Sonrası Türkiye'nin Balkan Ülkeleriyle İlişkileri" p. 399. See İlhan Uzgel, "Balkanlarla İlişkiler" in Baskın Oran ed., *Türk Dış Politikası*, p. 506 on the Turkish minority in Macedonia. For a compact account on the religious and national identity of Turks in Macedonia, see Baskın Oran, "Balkan Müslümanlarında Dinsel ve Ulusal Kimlik (Yunanistan, Bulgaristan, Makedonya ve Kosova Üzerine Karşılaştırmalı Bir İnceleme)", *AÜSBF Dergisi*, 48 (1–4) (January – December) 1993, pp. 116–119; and idem, "Balkan Türkleri Üzerine İncelemeler (Bulgaristan, Makedonya, Kosova)", *AÜSBF Dergisi*, 48 (1–4) (January – December), 1993, pp. 131–142.

³⁰⁰ 17 February 1993, *Hürriyet*.

³⁰¹ 21 February 1993, *Cumhuriyet*.

³⁰² 26 April 1993, *Hürriyet*.

³⁰³ 8 December 1993, *Hürriyet*.

³⁰⁴ 3 July 1994, *Cumhuriyet*.

³⁰⁵ Şule Kut, "Türkiye'nin Balkanlar Politikası", p. 118

a cultural agreement was under way.³⁰⁶ The two states concluded the Military Training and Cooperation Agreement on 14 July 1995 during Demirel's visit to Macedonia.³⁰⁷ Demirel delivered a speech at the Macedonian parliament which received remarkable applause. Demirel criticized the Greek threat toward Macedonia and stated that Macedonia should take its place in the family of nations as an independent state.³⁰⁸ Turkey and Macedonia signed the Skopje Document on "Mutually Complementary Confidence and Security Building Measures" in late July 1995.³⁰⁹ In mid-September, with the U.S.A. acting as the mediator, Macedonia made certain changes regarding the name, the flag and the constitution of the country, all of which were stipulated by Greece and it was eventually recognized by the U.S.A. and Greece with an agreement signed in New York.³¹⁰ From then on, Macedonia's relations with its neighbors improved, yet Turkey's interest diminished in comparison to the 1992-1995 period as was the case for Turkey with other Balkan states. While Turkey lagged behind other states in respect of trade and investment in Macedonia, Greece's activities in the same venue increased.³¹¹

Macedonian President Kiro Gligorov started an official visit in Ankara as part of similar trips by Balkan leaders as Turkey sought to reassert its role in the Balkan peninsula. Foreign Ministry officials stated that talks between Macedonian and Turkish delegations were to focus on economic matters.³¹² After the fall of Erbakan government in 1997, the relations between Ankara and Skopje gained new momentum. Turkey chose Macedonia as a base for trade to regional states. Pointing

³⁰⁶ 6 February 1995, *Türkiye*.

³⁰⁷ 14 July 1995, *Cumhuriyet*.

³⁰⁸ 15 July 1995, *Hürriyet*.

³⁰⁹ 21 July 1995, *Cumhuriyet*.

³¹⁰ 15 September 1995, *Cumhuriyet*.

³¹¹ After Greece recognized Macedonia, it lifted the embargo which had lasted for 16 months by then. Yugoslavia recognized Macedonia on 8 April 1996. Albania had recognized Macedonia with the name Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia back in 1994.

³¹² "Macedonian President Kiro Gligorov Begins Visit to Turkey", 29 June 1996, *Turkish Daily News*.

to the fact that there had been almost no customs fees between Macedonia and Greece, the diplomatic sources stated that if Turkish investors chose Macedonia as a base, they would easily reach Yugoslavia, Bosnia – Herzegovina and regional states. During Foreign Minister İsmail Cem’s visit to Skopje in October 1997, Macedonia asked for Turkish support for membership in NATO, BSEC and the EU. Cem referred to the cooperation between the “Balkan project,” in respect of which he underlined that the project was not directed against any state.³¹³ This visit was the first high-level visit since two and a half years by then.³¹⁴ However, the meeting of the EU Council of Ministers in Luxembourg evoked more repercussions but Cem’s visit did not receive equal attention in the media. During the visit, a project similar to GAP (*Güneydoğu Anadolu Projesi/Southeast Anatolia Project*) called the “Vardar Project” was announced together with the prospective sale of CASA planes. This was one of the visits that followed in the ensuing years upon which it was argued that the Mesut Yılmaz government tried to put the Balkan policy back on track which was heralded in the *Refah-Yol* coalition period due to discord between Çiller and Erbakan³¹⁵, although some arguments still held that as Macedonia and Greece had entered thaw by boosting their ties, Turkey still faced the reality that the attempts remained only in words.³¹⁶

In late April, former Macedonian Foreign Minister Blagoy Handziski came to Turkey for a two-day official visit at the end of which Foreign Minister İsmail Cem stated that Macedonia’s membership to NATO was essential and that Turkey wholeheartedly supported Macedonia’s bid and was ready to do its utmost on this

³¹³ “Cem’in Balkan Gezisi Başladı”, 28 October 1997, *Cumhuriyet*.

³¹⁴ Şule Kut, “Türkiye’nin Balkanlar Politikası”, p. 119.

³¹⁵ Ergun Balcı, “Cem’in Balkan Gezisi”, 31 October 1997, *Cumhuriyet*.

³¹⁶ Metehan Demir, “Collapsing Turkish Policies in Balkans Corner Ankara”, 29 March 1998, *Turkish Daily News*.

issue.³¹⁷ The Macedonian Foreign Minister expressed satisfaction with the level of ties, adding that Turkey was the country with which Macedonia had signed the greatest number of bilateral agreements.³¹⁸ At the end of the meeting, Handziski stated that the meeting was very productive as they had discussed the enhancement of financial and technical support provided by Turkey to the Macedonian Army, cooperation and defense projects, the plans for opening a Turkish Cultural Center in Skopje among others which included Cem's proposal for starting direct flights from Turkey to Macedonia.³¹⁹ Almost three months after this visit, former Prime Minister Mesut Yılmaz paid a two-day official visit to Macedonia which was the first Turkish visit at the ministerial level to the country. The delegations discussed the improvement of bilateral trade, educational issues, and Kosovo problem.³²⁰ Mesut Yılmaz and his counterpart Crvenkovski signed the joint declaration on trade. Former Minister of Labor and Social Security Nami Çağan and his Macedonian counterpart Naser Ziberi signed the Agreement on Social Security. Kemal Gürüz, President of Turkish Higher Education Board (YÖK), and former Macedonian State Minister Vlado Naumoski signed the agreement on the equality of diplomas between the two states. Yılmaz's visit to Macedonia marked the beginning of Turkish Airlines flights from Istanbul to Skopje.³²¹ In October 1998, President Demirel paid a two-day visit to Macedonia aiming to boost bilateral relations. The talks centered on the Kosovo issue and a possible intervention and its ramifications in the region. In the economic realm, the talks concentrated on the possible contribution that Turkish

³¹⁷ "FM Cem Stresses Importance of Macedonia's NATO membership", 21 April 1998, *Turkish Daily News*.

³¹⁸ "Makedonya'ya NATO Desteği", 21 April 1998, *Zaman*.

³¹⁹ "Turkey Pledges to Maintain Support for Macedonia", 22 April 1998, *Turkish Daily News*.

³²⁰ "Yılmaz Makedonya'da", 7 July 1998, *Akşam*.

³²¹ "Prime Minister Yılmaz Visits Macedonia to Boost Bilateral Relations", 7 July 1998, *Turkish Daily News*; "Merhaba Üsküp", 7 July 1998, *Hürriyet*; Emin Pazarcı, "Makedonya'daki Türkiye", 8 July 1998, *Akşam*; and Cem M. Kozlu, "Balkanların Denge Ülkesi; Makedonya", 9 July 1998, *Yeni Yüzyıl*.

contracters can make to the construction of a major highway that will connect Bulgaria's Black Sea port of Varna with the Adriatic port of Dures via Skopje. The final details of a free trade agreement between Turkey and Macedonia as well as the opening of Ziraat Bank in Skopje were discussed.³²² It was observed with this meeting that although the fifth visit was paid at the presidential level and a total of 32 agreements had been signed by 3 October 1998, what was critical was the economic venue given that Greece and Russia tried to enhance their influence in the region.³²³

When the Kosovo crisis broke out, Ankara speeded up diplomatic efforts with NATO and other regional states to end the crisis while it continued its humanitarian efforts for Kosovar refugees who had fled Serbian atrocities. Upon a series of ministerial level visits to the region by the U.S.A. and Western states, Demirel decided to pay another visit to Macedonia and Albania in early April 1999 to examine the plight of Kosovo refugees.³²⁴ Demirel had earlier appointed Turkish Ambassador to Belgrade, Ahmet Acet, as his special envoy for Kosovo and sent him to Macedonia and Albania prior to his visit to the two states. Regarding the refugee flux, Macedonian Prime Minister Lubco Georgievski praised Turkey's efforts in alleviating Macedonia's huge refugee burden. It was reported in the news columns that billions of Turkish lira from state funds were allocated to meet the needs of the refugees in Kırklareli refugee camp.³²⁵ In early April, a total of 1,000 Kosovar

³²² "President Demirel in Macedonia to Boost Bilateral Relations", 3 October 1998, *Turkish Daily News*; Yılmaz Öztuna, "Demirel Makedonya'da", 2 October 1998, *Türkiye*; "Makedonya'da Gündem Kosova", 1 October 1998, *Yeni Yüzyıl*; Sabahattin Özkibar, "Demirel'le Üsküp", 3 October 1998, *Türkiye*; İsmet Berkan, "Skopce'den Çıktık Yola", 3 October 1998, *Radikal*; "Demirel'den Şam'a Uyarı", 3 October 1998, *Milliyet*; "Demirel'den Güvenli Makedonya Çıkarması", 3 October 1998, *Sabah*; "Demirel: Devletin Görüşü", 3 October 1998, *Zaman*; "Suriye'yi Devlet Adına Uyardım", 3 October 1998, *Türkiye*; Taha Akyol, "Makedonya Notları", 3 October 1998, *Milliyet*; "Balkanları Unutmadık", 4 October 1998, *Güneş*; and Zeynep Atikkan, "Balkanlaşma Değil Avrupalılaştırma", 4 October 1998, *Hürriyet*.

³²³ Kenan Akın, "Makedonya ve Türkiye", 4 October 1998, *Türkiye*; Mustafa Ünal, "Bursa'nın Devamı Olan Şehir", 4 October 1998, *Zaman*; "Demirel: Makedonya ile Ebedi Dostuz", 4 October 1998, *Türkiye*.

³²⁴ "Balkanlar'a Demirel Damgası", 8 April 1999, *Hürriyet*.

³²⁵ "Demirel to Visit Albania, Macedonia", 8 April 1999, *Turkish Daily News*.

refugees were airlifted from Macedonia to Turkey bringing up to nearly 8000 the number taking refuge in the refugee compound or those taken in by relatives.³²⁶ It would be recalled that it was Turkey that proposed to take in approximately 20,000 refugees from Macedonia and Albania without any prior request by the two states and that Ankara did so not only for humanitarian concerns but also for alleviating the burden of the two fragile countries.³²⁷

In early 2000, a serious diplomatic crisis with Macedonia broke out due to Macedonia's preparation to recognize Southern Cyprus at a time when relations between Greece and Macedonia had already entered thaw after Macedonia changed its flag.³²⁸ Ankara asked Macedonia to suspend the issue until a final solution for the Cyprus was reached.³²⁹ However, in fact, Fazıl Keşmir, Turkey's ambassador to Skopje, had stated on a Macedonian TV channel that the diplomatic relations would be cut off and the embassy would be closed if Macedonia recognized Southern Cyprus.³³⁰ It was also noted that the Macedonian media warned the government that relations with Turkey would deteriorate as one comment in the Macedonian paper *Dnevnik* wrote "the closest friend" would be lost if Macedonia recognized Southern Cyprus.³³¹ In March 2000, the members of parliament in the Interparliamentary Friendship Groups initiated a "letter diplomacy" by way of which it was recalled that Turkey was the first state to open an embassy in Macedonia. Turkey had helped Macedonia with its government, diplomats, military, and financial resources just as it had assisted Bosnia – Herzegovina. It was argued that the journalists who accompanied Demirel in his official visits to the Balkans or elsewhere had constantly

³²⁶ *ibid.*

³²⁷ Şule Kut, "Türkiye'nin Balkanlar Politikası", p. 119.

³²⁸ "Makedonya ile Diplomatik Kriz", 19 January 2000, *Akşam*.

³²⁹ "İkinci Darbe", 1 March 2000, *Sabah*.

³³⁰ "Makedonya ile Diplomatik Kriz", 19 January 2000, *Akşam*.

³³¹ *ibid.*

written that the Constitution required an amendment in order to make it possible for Demirel to be re-elected as it would be difficult to find a similarly powerful figure who would have a visible influence on the leaders of the Balkans as well as on the Middle East and the Turkic republics.³³² Following this diplomatic crisis, Macedonia entered into a chaos environment as of February 2001. A group named *Ushtaria Çlirimtare Kombetare* (UÇK – National Liberation Army) launched attacks in the areas densely populated by the Albanians. Until February 2001 however, Macedonia had been referred to as a “model” in the war-torn Balkans.³³³ The motives and demands of the Albanian militants reportedly reflected an array of issues: 1) they did not threaten the territorial integrity of Macedonia; 2) they demanded that Albanians were granted constituent nation status and equal rights with the Macedonians; 3) they asked for the unitary political structure in Macedonia replaced with a Macedonian – Albanian Federation. They also stated that they wanted to annex the Albanian-intense regions with Kosovo. Some also implied that they were after Greater Albania in the Balkans.³³⁴

As the clashes continued, Turkey repeatedly stated that it supported the territorial integrity of Macedonia and condemned the militia acts. In early March 2001, President Sezer maintained that respect for internationally recognized borders was the basic condition for regional stability. Sezer conveyed the same message to

³³² “Ne Oldu Nevşehir’in Elde Kalan Patateslerine?”, 2 March 2000, *Sabah*.

³³³ Birgül Demirtaş-Coşkun and Emir Türkoğlu, “Makedonya Bıçak Sirtında: Balkanlar’ın Eski ‘Model Ülke’si, Yeni İstikrarsızlık Unsuru mu?”, in Murat Hatiploğlu (ed.), *Dünden Bugüne Makedonya Sorunu* (Ankara: ASAM, 2002), p. 119, citing Farimah Daftary, *Interethnic Relations in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and the Role of the Local NGO Sector in Promoting Inter-Ethnic Communication, Report on a Fact-Finding Visit, 12-19 July 2000*, p. 1; and Michael Schmidt-Neke, “Makedoniens Albaner: Konfliktpotential oder Stabilisierungsfaktor”, *Südosteuropa*, 48 (3-4), 1999, p. 191. Just on the eve February 2001, Turkish Foreign Minister İsmail Cem who paid an official visit to Macedonia said that Macedonia and Turkey were “excellent examples of how ethnic minorities can be an advantage and not a problem”: “Turkey Places Special Importance on Stability in the Balkans”, 3 February 2001, *Turkish Daily News*.

³³⁴ Birgül Demirtaş-Coşkun and Emir Türkoğlu, “Makedonya Bıçak Sirtında: Balkanlar’ın Eski ‘Model Ülke’si, Yeni İstikrarsızlık Unsuru mu?”, pp. 131-132. For the possible reasons of the attacks, see *ibid.*, pp. 133–134.

his counterpart Boris Trajovski on a telephone conversation and assured him of Turkey's continued support for security in Macedonia.³³⁵ The officials of the Foreign Ministry also made a statement that Ankara condemned all sorts of terrorism and emphasized the urgent need to stop the terrorist attacks on the northern borders of Macedonia.³³⁶

Ankara's close follow-up of the developments did not only concern the Turkish minority in the country but also the spill-over effect of the clashes in the region. One Turkish columnist even asserted that the Bosnian Serbs and the Croats still possessed similar aspirations to take back "what was taken from them".³³⁷ The Macedonian crisis also came at a time when Turkey and the EU were at odds over the developing European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP). While Turkey wanted to have a seat at the decision-making mechanisms of the ESDP, the EU stated that only the members could have a say during the process of decision making. Former Defense Minister Sabahattin Çakmakoglu had already offered thousands of Turkish troops to the European Army in case Ankara was admitted to the decision making process. In that respect, it was argued that while there was a good chance that Turkey could increase its influence and use the occasion to push ahead of the ESDP agenda, it was also argued that Turkey did not have such a vision. Turkey was militarily the strongest state in the region and this crisis could be a chance for Turkey to be dominant in the Balkans and the Foreign Ministry was criticized for not having a devised and well-worked strategy for the Balkans. The Albanians, meanwhile, stated that Turkey could not do anything in the Balkans because "Ankara had been heeding

³³⁵ "Cumhurbaşkanı Sezer: Sınırlar Değişmez", 7 March 2001, *Akşam*.

³³⁶ "Ankara'da Makedonya Endişesi", 7 March 2001, *Hürriyet*; "Turkey Deeply Concerned Over Violence in Macedonia", 9 March 2001, *Turkish Daily News*.

³³⁷ Semih İdiz, "Yüklü Dış Politika Gündemi", 10 March 2001, *Star*.

Athens' calls not to get involved in regional politics for the sake of a possible EU membership".³³⁸

As the clashes continued increasingly, Macedonian Foreign Minister Sırcan Kerim came to Ankara and asked for support. Turkey and Macedonia reached a compromise for continued defence aid to Macedonia. Macedonian officials said they did not want military support from Turkey yet added that they would like Turkey to assume a more effective role in the NATO.³³⁹ In this regard, Sezer said that Turkey was concerned about the possibility that the clash may spill over Tetovo and noted that the NATO decision to deploy 1,000 troops on the Kosovo – Macedonian border was a positive development.³⁴⁰

Meanwhile, Erdoğan Saraç, the leader of the Macedonian Turkish Democratic Party came to İstanbul. Saraç stated that the Macedonian government did not duly deal with the domestic issues as the latest developments had shown. He further argued that the clashes proved that the claim that there were friendly relations between the communities in Macedonia lacked basis and showed his party's opposite views had been proved right.³⁴¹ Saraç shared the view that Macedonia's territorial integrity must be preserved and he rejected any proposal supporting a federation to be established between the Macedonians and the Albanians. He argued that the Turks should be included in the negotiations to take place between the Macedonians and the Albanians, warning that giving privilege to only one ethnic group would cause further deterioration in the inter-communal relations.³⁴² Finally, a peace agreement was signed in August 2001 in Ohrid, according to which the Albanians agreed to

³³⁸ "Can Turkey Benefit From Unrest in Macedonia?", 10 March 2001, *Turkish Daily News*.

³³⁹ "Üsküp'e Savunma Yardımı", 18 March 2001, *Cumhuriyet*; and "Turkey Condemns Violence, Refugee Inflow Continues", 22 March 2001, *Turkish Daily News*.

³⁴⁰ "Sezer'den Telefon: Makedonya'yı Kaygıyla İzliyoruz", 22 March 2001, *Hürriyet*; and "Sezer'den Siyasi Destek Mesajı", 22 March 2001, *Cumhuriyet*.

³⁴¹ Ayhan Katırcıkara, "Makedonya ve Türkiye Hattı", 26 March 2001, *Türkiye*.

³⁴² Birgül Demirtaş-Coşkun and Emir Türkoğlu, "Makedonya Bıçak Sirtında: Balkanlar'ın Eski 'Model Ülke'si, Yeni İstikrarsızlık Unsuru mu?", p. 135.

hand over their weapons to NATO in return for a constitutional amendment which would improve their legal status. Turkey announced that it was pleased by the truce reached between the Albanian and Macedonian parties.³⁴³ A week after the agreement was signed; Macedonia Foreign Minister Ilinka Mitreva came to Turkey for a two-day official visit and asked for more effort. Mitreva also thanked Turkey for its decision to send troops to Macedonia.³⁴⁴ The Macedonian Foreign Minister also asked for financial aid yet it was not possible to extend economic aid due to the ongoing crisis in Turkey by then. This led to interpretations that Turkey's image in the region maintained its importance in spite of the economic crisis.³⁴⁵

Macedonia had elections in mid-September 2002 after which Turkey stated its consent that Turkish minority was justly represented in the parliament. Leader of the Turkish Democratic Party Kenan Hasipi stated that his party won two seats within the scope of "Together for Macedonia" election alliance and presented his thanks to Turkey for support in the elections.³⁴⁶ The last of the bilateral visits, which take place almost annually, was in mid-June 2006 during which it was reiterated that Turkey would continue to support Macedonia's NATO bid. The talks focused on fostering mainly economic cooperation along with commercial, military and cultural cooperation. Macedonian Prime Minister Vlado Buckovski said the two countries had perfect ties in the political field.

Macedonia gained EU candidacy status in mid-December 2005 and expects invitation for membership in the following NATO summit. Turkey has already

³⁴³ "Ankara Pleased by Truce in Macedonia", 15 August 2001, *Turkish Daily News*. Despite the agreement, the clashes between the guerillas and the army continued the day after the truce was signed.

³⁴⁴ "Macedonia Asks for More Help in Securing Truce", 22 August 2001, *Turkish Daily News*.

³⁴⁵ "Üsküp'e Manevi Destek", 22 August 2001, *Cumhuriyet*; and Sami Kohen, "Türkler İçin de Daha İyi", 23 August 2001, *Milliyet*.

³⁴⁶ "Macedonian Turks Thank Turkey for Support in the Elections", 20 September 2002, *Turkish Daily News*. The population of Macedonia is around 2 million; 67 % of which is Macedonian, 23 % Albanian, 4 % Turkish, 2 % Greek, 2 % Serbian, and 2 % other groups.

repeatedly stated its support for Macedonia's integration into these organizations and is likely to continue to do so in the ensuing years.

4.6. TURKISH FOREIGN POLICY TOWARDS ALBANIA AND KOSOVO

As the most isolated and the weakest communist state in the 1970s, Albania found itself in an even weaker and more fragile environment in 1991. As such, Albania paid particular attention to its relations with Turkey and wanted to establish good bilateral ties. Albania asked for electricity supply of 150 million kW from *TEK* (Turkish Electricity Institute) in 1990 when President Özal and his counterpart Ramiz Alia had contacts in late September the same year.³⁴⁷ The appeal made by Albania in 1990 did not merely concern economic venue; it included urgent diplomatic and humanitarian support in respect of which Turkey supported Albania's bid for European organizations, extended diplomatic, military, police, and judicial assistance and accepted Albanian students in Turkish universities. The absence of any major dispute in bilateral relations coupled with such support and Albania was seen as the natural ally of Turkey.³⁴⁸ Turkey also played an important role in Albania's entrance into the BSEC. As a secular country, Albania became a member of the OIC despite opposition from certain factions in the country.³⁴⁹

Turkey and Albania signed the Agreement on Friendship and Cooperation during Demirel's visit in Albania in June 1992³⁵⁰ and Turkey stated that it would

³⁴⁷ İlhan Uzgel "Balkanlarla İlişkiler", p. 502; 25 September 1990, *Milliyet*; and 29 September 1990, *Güneş*.

³⁴⁸ Şule Kut "Türkiye'nin Balkanlar Politikası", p. 102.

³⁴⁹ İlhan Uzgel "Balkanlarla İlişkiler", p. 503.

³⁵⁰ 1 June 1992, *Hürriyet*; and 1 June 1992, *Sabah*.

extend a \$ 50 million humanitarian and technical aid to Albania.³⁵¹ The two states also signed the public safety cooperation protocol in early August 1992.³⁵² Such an improvement in bilateral relations made former Greek Foreign Minister Andonis Samaras define Albania as part of the alleged “Muslim Axis” led by Turkey in the same year.³⁵³ The high level visits continued the following year. President Özal gave certain recommendations in his speech at the Albanian parliament in February 1992. Özal advised the Albanian officials to draw up a 15-year plan, to focus on tourism and service sectors and to improve relations with Macedonia.³⁵⁴ In the same year, Albanian officials stated that they would like to build a more systematized cooperation with Turkey and described the main deficiencies as threefold: inadequate levels of coordination concerning the issues envisaged in bilateral agreements; lack of implementation of decisions jointly taken; and lack of any tactical studies (in the military field) and lack of any relevant consensus.³⁵⁵ Despite such conditions, Turkey and Albania strengthened their relations. In 1993, Albanian Prime Minister Alexander Meksi paid an official visit to Turkey. The following year, Albanian President Sali Berisha visited Turkey and asked Turkey’s support in the economic and security field as well as support for Albania’s NATO bid and for peaceful solution of the problems in Kosovo.³⁵⁶ However, bilateral relations lost momentum as of 1995 when Greece translated its aggressive approach into a friendly one in respect of regional states. Greece and Albania settled their bilateral disputes concerning the rights of the Greek minority in Albania and the situation of illegal Albanian workers in Greece. Greece lifted its veto concerning the EU aid to Albania

³⁵¹ Birgül Demirtaş-Coşkun “Arnavutluk’un Dış Politikası ve Balkanlarda Arnavutluk Sorunu”, in Ömer Lütem and Birgül Demirtaş-Coşkun (eds.), *Balkan Diplomasisi* (Ankara: ASAM, 2001), p. 87.

³⁵² 7 August 1992, *Cumhuriyet*.

³⁵³ Şule Kut “Türkiye’nin Balkanlar Politikası”, p. 102.

³⁵⁴ 20 February 1993, *Hürriyet*.

³⁵⁵ Mehmet Yılmaz, “Türk Dış Politikasında Arnavutluk”, A Master’s Thesis Submitted to the Department of International Relations, Gazi University, 2001, p. 108.

³⁵⁶ *ibid.*, p. 109.

and the beginning of mutual visits between the two states added on to the positive change in bilateral relations. Moreover, Greece succeeded in pulling Albania to its side by extending economic aid in 1997.³⁵⁷

In 1997, a financial crisis swayed the country into chaos and serious internal conflict. In face of thousands of demonstrators filling the streets and demanding the compensation of their money siphoned by the bankers, Albania had to call upon international support to quell the riots. The Berisha government faced the most difficult period of its six years in power by then as it had to deal with criticism from both the victims and the opposition.³⁵⁸ Meanwhile, Albania began to conduct equidistance policy in its relations with Turkey and Greece. Although this can be interpreted as playing both sides against each other, from the official Albanian point of view, Albania had good relations with both countries.

Although Turkey participated in the international force with 800 troops within the UN umbrella with Resolution 1101, it was seen that it ranked after Italy and France which contributed with 2,500 and 1,000 troops respectively.³⁵⁹ The almost inherent discord in bilateral relations with Greece was observed once again when Greece objected to the Turkish troops' location of deployment in Albania.

³⁵⁷ *ibid.*, p. 112.

³⁵⁸ "Başkan'ın Büyük Savaşı", 3 February 1997, *Milliyet*. Albania's fate was tied to what was called the pyramid schemes after the collapse of communism. In Carlos Elbirt's words, depositing money with the hope of reaping high interest rates became a national sport in Albania. In the early 1990s, the young private sector generated a huge amount of domestic savings along with remittance of Albanians working abroad. The new group of inexperienced account owners became an easy target for swindlers promising high interest rates for those holders of money who joined their schemes. The swindlers did not possess enough money to pay the interest rates. The way their system was supposed to work was to pay their obligations to people who joined, by way of taking from the next wave of investors; in other words, taking from investor A and giving it to investor B. This was why the system was called pyramid schemes. This meant that the system depended on the bottom layers of deposits growing fast. However, a crisis erupted in 1997 when the system eventually collapsed. The Central Bank of Albania froze \$ 250 million to protect the depositors and the banking system. The government later returned the \$ 250 million to the depositors. Both the people and the opposition blamed the government. The government did neither ask for nor advise the pyramid schemes, yet it tolerated them, according to the victims and the opposition. For more information see Carlos Elbirt "Albania Under the Shadow of the Pyramids" on <http://www.worldbank.org/html/prddr/trans/so97/albania2htm> as retrieved on 21 June 2006, 02:12:42 GMT; and "The Impact of the Kosovo Conflict on Albania" on www.seerecon.org/albania/documents/impact_of_kosovo_conflict_on_albania.pdf. "Arnavutluk'la İlgili Son Haberler (2)", 27 May 1997, *Türkiye*.

Greece did not want the Turkish troops to be deployed in the south of the country where Greek minority lived. Former Greek Defense Minister Chohalopoulos stated that “they did not think Turkey was directly affected by the developments in Albania and that the situation in Albania must not constitute a reason for Turkey’s hegemonic tendencies”. The Greek Defense Minister did not refrain from saying that any change in the status quo in respect of Turkey’s relations with its neighbors would be an element of bargain in Turkey’s entrance in the EU.³⁶⁰ Almost a year later, in February 1998, during Albanian President Recep Meydani’s visit in Ankara, it was stated that relations between Albania and Turkey were of an exemplary nature. President Demirel expressed his consent to see Albania strengthen its democracy after the difficult period it faced in 1997.³⁶¹ Yet, it was to be observed in the ensuing years that Albania was closer to Greece than to Turkey. However, the crisis to draw Albania closer to Turkey erupted in Kosovo in March 1998 when Milosevic’s latent Greater Serbia designs came to the surface once again.

4.6.1. TURKISH FOREIGN POLICY TOWARDS KOSOVO

Turkey and Kosovo developed intimate political and cultural relations during both the Ottoman state and the republican era. Central to such amicable relations was the positively perceived heritage of shared history as well as the often expressly pronounced will on both sides to further improve the existing ties. When the post-Cold War era set in, Kosovo’s particular situation concerning independence presented its problematic nature in a different context. While Turkey wanted to take

³⁶⁰ “Mehmetçik’e İtiraz” 7 April 1997, *Milliyet*.

³⁶¹ “Türkiye – Arnavutluk Sorunsuz İki Ülke” 13 February 1998, *Siyah Beyaz*; and “Balkanlardaki Örnek İşbirliği” 13 February 1998, *Milliyet*.

due efforts for a viable solution for Kosovo's status, it had to do so when it was also dealing with the repercussions of the problem in domestic politics and its implications due to the sensitive nature of the issue for Turkey. By 1999, Turkey not only participated in the decision making process that resulted in the air attacks on Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY) but also contributed with its own military. In the ensuing years, Turkey's Kosovo policy was framed around Kosovo's final status, the preservation of the vested interests of the Turks in Kosovo as well as their representation in Kosovo's political and administrative structures, and bilateral economic and military relations. Prior to Kosovo's declaration of independence on 17 February 2008, Turkey stated that it would be supportive of an independent Kosovo with a UN Security Council resolution. More importantly, considering that a new and a just solution was necessary, it conducted lobbying activities at the UN and tried to seek support from the Security Council members to back UN Special Envoy Martti Ahtisaari's report: a pattern of behavior not so common for the status quo-oriented Turkish foreign policy.

The problem in Kosovo proved to be the most complicated and difficult to deal with in the Balkans for Turkey in the post-Cold War era. It would be remembered that Turkey acted with a clear stand with respect to the crises in Bulgaria, Bosnia and Macedonia. However, the crisis in Kosovo put forward certain implications as it was based on demands of central administration as opposed to separation and simultaneously of the unification of Albanians in Albania, Kosovo, and Macedonia.³⁶² When unrest in Kosovo turned into armed conflict in March 1998,

³⁶² The Kosovo problem is one of the most complicated problems in the Balkans. In the war between the Serbs and the Ottomans, Serbian King Lazar was killed in June 1389 in Kosovo Polje and the Serbs were defeated. Sultan Murad I was also killed by a Serb in the battle. Kosovo remained under Ottoman administration until 1912 but was given to the Serbs afterwards. It was given to Yugoslavia after World War II and was granted autonomy with the 1946 Constitution. The Albanians reacted against Kosovo's status in Yugoslavia and their rights were improved with the 1974 Constitution.

Turkey supported Kosovar Albanians against the Serbs for the following reasons. The Kosovar Albanians were mostly Muslim and Turkish public opinion was favorable towards them. Turkey would not afford to assume a pro-Serbian stance or act neutrally after the Bosnian experience. Furthermore, Turkey had close relations with Albania and this was particularly important in respect of Albania's relations with Greece. In addition, Serbs were committing severe human rights violations in Kosovo and had no prestige after the war in Bosnia. The U.S. stance was important for Turkey and Washington wanted urgent action in Kosovo.³⁶³ Although these factors were enough to prompt Turkey to take due effort, they were accompanied with certain difficulties.

4.6.1.2. 1990 - 1998 PERIOD

While Kosovo's situation preserved its protracted problematic nature for regional and global relations, it also did so for Turkey in the post-Cold War era. While Turkey acted with a rather clear attitude towards the crises in Bulgaria, Bosnia-Herzegovina,

Through the end of 1989, however, Serbia annulled Kosovo's autonomy and Albanians were deprived of their rights. The Albanians declared the Republic of Kosovo in 1991 and cut off ties with the Serbs. United under the leadership of Ibrahim Rugova, they launched a passive resistance. As this did not yield the desired result, the UÇK launched armed attacks upon which the Serbs initiated ethnic cleansing on the Albanians. Eventually, NATO attacks began on 24 March 1999 without the UN Security Council Resolution. Yugoslavia accepted the plan put forward by the U.S.A. and the international force named KFOR (Kosovo Force) was deployed in Kosovo. An estimated 850 thousand people were forced to flee to Macedonia and Albania, with an additional few hundred thousand internally displaced. Most of the refugees to Macedonia and Albania were Kosovo Albanians while most of the internally displaced persons were ethnic Serbs who fled to avoid acts of reprisal. In June 1999, Serbia withdrew from Kosovo. The UN passed Resolution 1244, establishing an international presence and interim administration UNMIK (UN Mission in Kosovo), among other things in order to assure the refugees' safe return. However, the KFOR proved ineffective in preventing the clashes between Albanians and few Serbs afterwards. See İlhan Uzgel "Balkanlarla İlişkiler", p. 509; "Humanitarian and Rehabilitation Assistance To Kosovo 1999 – 2003", on <http://www.un.dk/NR/rdonlyres/0585B925-95DB-4489-B94A-27A19F2B80A6/0/20045KosovoUK.doc>; and Emir Türkoğlu "Kosovo Arnavutlarının Milliyetçiliği", Birgül Demirtaş-Coşkun and Ömer Lütem eds., *Balkan Diplomasisi*, pp. 103–130.

³⁶³ İlhan Uzgel "Balkanlarla İlişkiler", p. 509.

and Macedonia, the crisis in Kosovo put forward certain difficulties as it was based on demands of separation. For Turkey, whose foreign policy attaches importance to territorial integrity of countries, this was a big question. When the dormant unrest in Kosovo turned into armed conflict, bringing once again to the surface Milosevic's designs for Kosovo in March 1998, Turkey supported Kosovar Albanians against the Serbs for a number of reasons. After the Bosnian experience, the path Turkey would follow would not be based on acting neutrally or assuming a pro-Serbian stance. Furthermore, Turkey had close relations with Albania and this was particularly important in respect of Albania's relations with Greece through Turkey's lens. In addition, Serbs were committing atrocities in Kosovo and had no prestige after the war in Bosnia. The U.S. stance was important for Turkey as Washington urged action in Kosovo. Last, but not least, Turkish public opinion was favorable towards the Kosovar Albanians.³⁶⁴

These factors prompted Turkey to take due effort, though there would be certain difficulties ahead. The translation of the problem into armed conflict in 1998 destroyed regional stability to which Turkey attached importance. The problem of Kosovo made relations between Albania and Macedonia tense, which put Turkish diplomacy into a tricky situation. What placed Turkey in an even more difficult situation with regard to supporting the Kosovar Albanians' separatist attempts was the Kurdish problem in Turkey.³⁶⁵ Although Turkey initially could not deal with the Kosovo problem as much as it should, it switched track after the armed clashes started. Until the beginning of the armed conflict, what the Serb officials heard from Turkish officials was that Turkey saw the issue as the domestic problem of Serbia.³⁶⁶

³⁶⁴ İlhan Uzgel "Balkanlarla İlişkiler", p. 509.

³⁶⁵ *ibid.*, p. 510.

³⁶⁶ Hasan Ünal "Türkiye Kosova Sorununa Uyanıyor", *Zaman*, 9 March 1998; "Tiran'dan Kosova'ya Açık Destek", *Cumhuriyet*, 16 March 1998.

In face of the fact that Turkey's previous interest for the Balkans diminished in the 1995 – 1997 period with the signing of the Dayton Peace Accord, it was essential to take due efforts as a key actor that could contribute to the stability in the region. In this context, Foreign Minister İsmail Cem visited Belgrade in early March 1998 after the contacts held with UN Secretary-General and the foreign ministers of the regional states. Cem proposed a 3-stage plan to Slobodan Milosevic according to which the clashes would be stopped immediately; the enhanced rights granted by the 1974 Constitution would be given back; and the autonomy of Kosovo would be restored. Turkey took due efforts to enhance its Albanian policy by emphasizing that the protection of all minorities in Kosovo was important.

It was observed that this was expressly conveyed to Albanian Prime Minister Pandeli Mayko during his visit in Turkey in early March 1998. In fact, this policy was formulated rather belatedly in face of relevant criticism which asserted that Turkey should be active with regard to Kosovo; should try to convince the U.S.A. that it was necessary to resolve the issue within the framework of territorial integrity of FRY; and act as a mediator. It was equally important to state that Turkey would not welcome separatist tendencies from Albanians in Macedonia. Such a policy was a comprehensive one which covered not only the Albanians of Kosovo but also of Albania and Macedonia. This implied that in due course, Turkey's efforts would draw Albania and Macedonia closer to Turkey as well as Romania and Bulgaria. That, in turn, would make Turkey an important actor in the U.S. perspective.³⁶⁷ The official Albanian viewpoint expected Turkey to exert more pressure on Belgrade.

³⁶⁷ Hasan Ünal "Kosova Krizi Türk Diplomasisi İçin Fırsat Yapılmalıdır" *Zaman*, 13 March 1998; idem "Türkiye Kosova Konusunda Adım Adım İlerliyor" *Zaman*, 19 March 1998; idem, "Balkanlar'da Arnavut Meselesi ve Türkiye" *Avrasya Dosyası*, 4 (1-2) Autumn 1998, pp. 146-149; Sami Kohen, "Kosova İçin Eylem Zamanı", *Milliyet*, 8 August 1998; "Mayko, Kosova İçin Ankara'da", *Zaman*, 4 March 1998; and Hasan Ünal "Mayko'ya Yardım Edilmeli", *Zaman*, 4 March 1998.

Saimir Bala, Albanian Ambassador to Ankara, stated in an interview that Turkey should exert pressure on Belgrade both in the context of bilateral relations and the NATO.³⁶⁸

4.6.1.3. 1999 NATO INTERVENTION

When conflicts escalated in 1998, İbrahim Rugova began to seek support in Turkey and stated that they expected more support from Turkey than any other NATO country.³⁶⁹ When Belgrade rejected an internationally-brokered peace deal, which had been signed by the Kosovo Albanians, international peace monitors evacuated Kosovo. Thereafter, NATO prepared for imminent air attack. At the time, although analysts did not expect Turkey to take an active part in the operations, Ankara prepared its air, naval, and land forces, which was confirmed by Air Force Commander General İlhan Kılıç's statement that Turkey had eleven F-16s at NATO bases in Italy. Defense Minister Hikmet Sami Türk also stated that Turkey prepared for a possible involvement in a NATO strike saying that Turkish air force was on duty, one of the warships was in the Adriatic and the army prepared a battalion although a land operation was out of question.³⁷⁰

At the time, Turkey had made arrangements to receive more than 20,000 refugees in Turkey and established camps for another 20,000 refugees in Macedonia and Albania which was a decision as part of the NATO effort to help frontline countries to handle the burdens of the flow of refugees.³⁷¹ In late May 1999, the

³⁶⁸ Leyla Tavşanoğlu "Tiran'dan Kosova'ya Açık Destek", *Cumhuriyet*, 19 March 1998.

³⁶⁹ "Kosovan Leader Rugova To Seek Support in Turkey", *Turkish Daily News*, 11 August 1998.

³⁷⁰ "Ankara Preparing For NATO Strike", *Turkish Daily News*, 25 March 1999.

³⁷¹ "The Kosovo Cross", *Turkish Daily News*, 12 May 1999.

Pentagon said that 54 American F-15 and F-16 fighter jets would be deployed in June 1999 at three Western Anatolian air bases that Turkey opened for use by NATO. Although Turkish officials did not make any statement about direct Turkish participation in the NATO air strikes, Pentagon spokesman Kenneth Bacon stated that eighteen Turkish jets would also take part in the air strikes.³⁷²

As clashes continued, Turkey acted in accordance with the West and supported the economic embargo on FRY and announced that it would contribute to aerial maneuvers over Albania and Macedonia. When the talks did not yield the desired effect, NATO launched air attacks on FRY in late March 1999. Turkey not only participated in the decision making process that resulted in air attacks on FRY, but it also contributed with first eleven and then eighteen F-16s and sent a fleet to the Adriatic to supervise the embargo on FRY. Moreover, the Council of Ministers took a decision to open Balıkesir and Bandırma airports at the disposal of NATO war planes and to open Çorlu airport at the disposal of tanker planes. Due to the agreement reached between FRY and NATO in mid-June 1999, there remained no need to use these air bases. The UN established a group for counseling which consisted of G-7 countries, Russia, China, Holland, Greece, and Turkey. Turkey decided to send 1,000 troops to participate in the KFOR to be deployed around Mamusa, Dragas and Prizren, densely populated by the Turks and Gorani's.³⁷³

Seeking to assume an active role in post-war Kosovo, Turkey expanded efforts to secure a concrete Turkish participation both in the peacekeeping mission

³⁷² "54 US, 18 Turkish Jets To Be Deployed for Kosovo Strikes", *Turkish Daily News*, 22 May 1999.

³⁷³ İlhan Uzgel, "Balkanlarla İlişkiler", p. 512; "Ankara'da Zor Karar", *Hürriyet*, 14 April 1999.

and the reconstruction plans in the region. Turkish Battalion Force set off for Kosovo in early July 1999.³⁷⁴

4.6.1.4. POST-2000 PERIOD

4.6.1.4.1. TURKEY AND THE TURKS IN KOSOVO

Kosovo's outlook by 2000 was still far from boding well as there was still no permanent administration model and ethnic tension was still in the air. Accordingly, Prime Minister Bülent Ecevit did not balk at calling for the protection of the rights of the Turkish minority during talks with Albanian Prime Minister Ilir Meta in Tirana in late February 2000. The Albanian Prime Minister stated that their purpose was to protect the rights of all minorities including the Turks.³⁷⁵

Indeed, the question of situation of the Turks in Kosovo had become an issue at times after 1989, when Milosevic annulled Kosovo's autonomy, causing the Albanians to go on a general strike. Around 150,000 Albanians lost their jobs and subsequently were deprived of other rights. However, the Turks in Kosovo who were only around 60,000 did not follow suit because as opposed to almost 2 million Albanians, the Turks in Kosovo were not in a position which would afford engaging in acts of reprisal against the Serbs, which, if attempted could wipe out Turks from the map of Kosovo. Concerning the issue, Ankara wanted the Turks in Kosovo not to participate in the general strike, and not to leave their homes and jobs. Throughout 1990s, Turkey's Kosovo policies were argued to have worked to the detriment of the

³⁷⁴ Today Turkish unit comprises of around 1000 personnel. On 29 May 2007, Turkey took over the leadership of Southern Task Force for May 2007 - May 2008 period to leave the duty to Australia in May 2008.

³⁷⁵ "Arnavutluk'a Askeri Yardım", *Cumhuriyet*, 29 February 2000; "Kızacaklar Ama Tebrik Ederim", *Hürriyet*, 1 March 2000; "Ecevit: Teşekkürler", *Zaman*, 1 March 2000.

Turks in Kosovo. For instance, when Rugova asked support from Özal for the recognition of the Republic of Kosovo declared by the Kosovar Albanians back in 1992, Ankara replied that it give political support but would not recognize the Republic of Kosovo. It supported a solution within the framework of FRY's territorial integrity and under the constitution. Such an approach was said to have created a pro-Serbian Turkey image in the eyes of the Kosovar Albanians, and negatively effected the Turks' position in Kosovo. After the NATO intervention, Turks in Kosovo faced pressures when Albanians attempted to ban the use of Turkish language and to suspend the employed from offices, which caused Ecevit to call for the protection of the rights of the Turks in Kosovo in Tirana in 2000 as mentioned above.³⁷⁶

However, closer analysis showed that although this was *prima facie* a sound attempt by Ankara, in fact it was not for a number of reasons. First and foremost, it was not right to see Albania proper as the leader of Kosovar Albanians as there were important political, cultural, and economic differences among Kosovars and Albanians. Furthermore, to assume that the political figures in Albania and Kosovo had positive considerations regarding each other was erroneous.

It was known that there was a nationalist cooperation between İbrahim Rugova, the leader of Kosovar Albanians, and Sali Berisha, the Prime Minister of Albania. However, the socialist Prime Minister Fatos Nano who came to power after Berisha in 1997 had so much of a pro-Greek attitude that he lost Kosovar Albanians' confidence. Later on, when the clashes began in Kosovo, Nano tried to create a divide within the UÇK. Rugova and his administration considered that these were

³⁷⁶ For detailed information see Erhan Türbedar, "Tarihte Değişen Siyasi ve Sosyal Dengeler İçinde Kosova Türkleri", Erhan Türbedar (Ed.) *Balkan Türkleri, Balkanlarda Türk Varlığı*, Ankara, ASAM, 2003, ss. 61-97.

planned by Nano and the Greek intelligence.³⁷⁷ In March 2000, it was estimated that Rugova, together with former Prime Minister Buyar Bukoshi, would announce an overwhelming victory in the then upcoming elections. Rugova and Bukoshi did not favor the administration in Albania. It followed that, under such circumstances, the official Turkish attempts to talk to the officials in Tirana rather than talking to Rugova and Bukoshi was seen as part of the not well-worked Balkan policy of Turkey.³⁷⁸

During the talks held between the Albanian and Turkish officials in April 2005 at the Turkish parliament, Zyhidi Pepa, head of the Albania – Turkey Interparliamentary Friendship Group stated that unless Kosovo gained a definitive status, the problems in the Balkans were not likely to be eliminated. Pepa conceded to the fact that it was necessary for Kosovo to grant equal rights to everyone, yet it was a difficult task and asked for U.S. and Turkish support.³⁷⁹

4.6.1.4.2. KOSOVO AND THE SOUTHEAST OF TURKEY

To add onto the complexity of the situation, while Turkey was dealing with the problem in Kosovo, arguments that no similarity existed between the situation in Kosovo and the Southeast of Turkey as opposed to the arguments that rejected NATO intervention emerged as yet another issue for Turkey to deal with.³⁸⁰ At the center of the arguments that the situation in Kosovo and the Southeast of Turkey

³⁷⁷ Hasan Ünal, “Arnavutluk, Kosova ve Kosova Türkleri”, *Zaman*, 3 March 2000.

³⁷⁸ *ibid.*

³⁷⁹ “Arnavutluk – Türkiye Dostluk Grubu, TBMM’nde Temaslarda Bulundu”, 13 April 2005, *Turkish Grand National Assembly Press Statements*, http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/develop/owa/web_basin_aciklamalari.aciklama?pl=21842.

³⁸⁰ For a detailed analysis of the issue, see Uğur Baştürk, “The Comparison between Kosovo Question and Turkey’s Southeast Question”, a Master’s Thesis Submitted to the Department of International Relations, Bilkent University, August 2004.

resembled was the assertion that two different groups who saw themselves separate existed in these regions. Second, these groups were scattered throughout two or more states and were inclined to unite under a common state. Third, both tendencies were taken to violent acts by two separatist organizations. Fourth, both regions were backward in economic terms, which, the people living in these regions thought, was the result of a deliberate state policy.³⁸¹

However, these arguments were devoid of ground since, first and foremost, Kosovo was given an autonomous status during the leadership of Tito, yet Turkey has always been a unitary state. For instance, the fact that there have been and are village guards, most of whom are of Kurdish origin, in the Southeast of Turkey who serve for the preservation of the unitary state status and the territorial integrity of Turkey against terrorist acts is self-explanatory when compared with the hostile social (non)communication between Serbs and Albanians in Kosovo. Furthermore, people of Kurdish origin in Turkey serve in all state institutions and at every level including high level political posts. However, for instance, it would be too optimistic to expect to see a Kosovar Albanian to hold a top level political post in the Serbian parliament because neither the Albanians would be inclined to live in Belgrade nor the Serbians would welcome such an idea as there has been no intermingling between these two populations throughout the years.

Still, this is not to say that Albanian population was a closed one, because they lived in togetherness with their Muslim neighborhoods. Furthermore, while intermarriage between people of Kurdish and Turkish origin in Turkey is very common, intermarriage among Albanians and Serbs in Kosovo is a social phenomenon which is almost nonexistent. This social fact regarding the Serbs and

³⁸¹ İlhan Uzgel, "Balkanlarla İlişkiler", p. 510.

Albanians, which hinges on viewing themselves as “the other”, is nothing new and dates back to ages; to the Ottoman Empire, Serbian Kingdom, SFRY and FRY periods. In addition, while the Albanians in Kosovo live in compact places, people of Kurdish origin live everywhere including big cities and coastal areas in Turkey.³⁸² Thus, the situation in Kosovo and the Southeast of Turkey does not present a common ground upon which to build an argument of similarity. It can be argued that the social and political facts mentioned concerning these two regions seem to point out to the fact that while there is an identity conflict in Kosovo between Serbs and Albanians, the same cannot be maintained for Turkey’s southeast.

4.6.1.4.3. KOSOVO’S STATUS NEGOTIATIONS AND TURKEY

Living through many troubled periods through its history, Kosovo embarked a new period with Rugova’s death in January 2006. Unlike other Balkan leaders, Rugova was a politician who was successful at not swaying his people into war. Rugova’s death came at a very critical period as the negotiations on the status of Kosovo were scheduled to start in January 2006 in Vienna, which meant that the negotiations would be postponed for at least one month. It was among the expectations that domestic politics in Kosovo could be altered in the post-Rugova period. To give an example, it was argued that the Kosovo Democratic Union (LDK) founded by Rugova could witness divides within in the future.³⁸³

³⁸² Hasan Ünal, “Balkanlar’da Arnavut Meselesi ve Türkiye”, *Avrasya Dosyası*, Vol. 4, No. 1-2, Autumn 1998, p. 149; Can Karpat, “Turkey’s Kosovo Policy: Inexistent, Hesitant or Prudent?”, on <http://www.axisglobe.com/article/asp?article=580>.

³⁸³ Erhan Türbedar, “Rugova’nın Ardından”, 3 February 2006, ASAM, <http://www.asam.org.tr/yyazdir.asp?ID=989&kat1=23&kat2=>.

The first round of postponed talks for Kosovo's future status was held between the Serbian and Kosovo delegations in Vienna on 20 and 21 February 2006. After that, a total of 19 rounds of negotiations took place.

In early February 2007, Ministry of Foreign Affairs Deputy Undersecretary Ambassador Ahmet Acet visited Kosovo and announced that Turkey's support for Kosovo would continue after status negotiations were finalized. Prime Minister Çeku also asked for Turkey's support.³⁸⁴ Turkish officials were cognizant of the fact that there was no concrete outcome from the said negotiations but a visible discord among the parties and they continued to preserve a stance which was in line with international community. After the final proposal by UN Special Envoy Martti Ahtisaari was submitted to UN Security Council in late March 2007, Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs reiterated Turkey's approach and confirmed its support for the said proposal by way of stating that Turkey preserved its view that a just and sustainable solution which would not lead to new tension or clashes in the foreseeable future be found. It was also stressed that as things stood as of March 2007, it was considered that a decision by UN Security Council which would replace Resolution 1244 was the only way to establish stability in Kosovo and the region.³⁸⁵

Turkey's approach to the Ahtisaari report was one which supported Kosovo's

³⁸⁴ Enis Tabak, "Çeku, Türkiye'nin Kosova'nın Güçlü Bir Destekçisi Olmasını Bekliyoruz", *Anka*, 6 February 2007.

"Türkiye'den Kosova'ya 'Statü Sonrası Destek' Mesajı", *Anka*, 7 February 2007, Until late March 2007, 17 rounds of talks took place in Vienna between Serbia and Kosovo for establishing the final status of Kosovo. Martti Ahtisaari submitted his proposal to the parties in early February 2007. Following this, after organizing two additional rounds of talks, Ahtisaari submitted his proposals to UN Secretary-General in mid-March and then to the Security Council in late March 2007. In his proposals, Ahtisaari clearly stated that Kosovo's status should be independence supervised by international community. Serbs had rejected Ahtisaari's report of 2 February earlier demanding that all provisions treating Kosovo as an independent state be amended. Yet, in Ahtisaari's proposals submitted in March 2007, it was seen that mainly technical amendments were made in the report and the remaining provisions were preserved in essence. What stood most significant in the report were some amendments regarding the rights of the minorities in Kosovo other than Serbs, one of which envisages the use of Turkish as a formal language along with Bosniac language and Roman; see Erhan Türbedar, "Kosova'ya Denetimli Bağımsızlık Önerisi", ASAM, 28 March 2007, <http://www.asam.org.tr/tr/yazigoster.asp?ID=1499&kat1=23&kat2=>.

³⁸⁵ "Dışişleri Kosova Sorununa Acil Çözüm İstedi", *Anka*, 30 March 2007.

independence within the framework of a UN Security Council resolution, one which also did not engage in any speculations about the recognition of independence. In that respect, Turkey's approach was in line with the Balkan states which supported Kosovo's independence. Turkey had repeatedly expressed stated that the recognition of Kosovo's independence can be within the framework of a UN Security Council resolution. Furthermore, to this end, it conducted lobbying activities at the UN and asked UN Security Council members' support.³⁸⁶

Although Ahtisaari stated in early April 2007 that he would not want to describe the process launched with his proposal as a marathon, but may be at least a 10,000 meter run, Russia's customary pro-Serbian attitude said otherwise. Even during these negotiations that took place in early April 2007, Russia's UN Ambassador Vitaly Churkin insisted that Serbian President Vojislav Kostunica as the representative of a UN member state address a closed council meeting in its chamber while Kosovo President Fatmir Sejdiu speak to the council members informally in basement conference room; and in fact this was what happened. Kostunica stated with satisfaction that the plan for the future status of Kosovo was not accepted by the Security Council. Moreover, he reiterated Serbia's offer of "substantial autonomy" for Kosovo and insisted on further negotiations with a new envoy to replace Ahtisaari. Ahtisaari did not balk at saying that this year or even more had been lost. On the other side, Britain's UN Ambassador Emyr Jones Parry rejected these statements by Kostunica by saying that any suggestion that the proposals had been refused or that a new negotiator was sought had been erroneous.³⁸⁷

³⁸⁶ Statement by Volkan Türk Vural, Undersecretary, Turkish Coordination Office in Prishtina, Kosovo Radio and Television – RTK, 6.10 pm, Turkish news, 16 August 2007.

³⁸⁷ Edith M. Lederer, "US, Key European Nations Support Kosovo Independence, Russia Sympathizes With Keeping the Province Part of Serbia", *The New Anatolian*, 5 April 2007.

As talks for Kosovo's future status approached the latest round in early December 2007, no breakthroughs were achieved. The Kosovar leaders were reported to be preparing to declare unilateral independence while the Serbian officials announced they would employ all diplomatic and legal means to annul such an independence declaration. The U.S.A. was expected to recognize Kosovo's independence rather rapidly and Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice stated that Washington would not support more negotiations after 10 December 2007. However, at the time, the EU did not present a unified approach towards a possible independence declaration. Key countries such as the UK, France, Germany, and Italy were supportive of Kosovo's independence while some members were expected to follow suit in a more slowly fashion.

Meanwhile, Russia preserved its staunchly opposed position towards Kosovo's independence. Russia's accustomed support to Serbs would be recalled as the underlying reason behind its current attitude, however the more convincing rationale is perhaps marked in Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov's argument that Kosovo's independence will set a precedent for the rest of the world: "Certainly the way the Kosovo crisis is resolved will set a precedent, and it is not because we say it will, and not because our partners, for example, say it will not. It is not up to them or us to decide. A precedent will be set only because it will take place,"³⁸⁸ which implied Russia's concerns especially over Abkhazia. Russia called for more talks on the issue between the Kosovar Albanians and Belgrade, which the U.S.A. rejected as a whole. However, it was in fact Belgrade who put forward the argument that Kosovo's independence would set a precedent in the world, with the aim of preventing states in similar situation from supporting Kosovo's independence. Later,

³⁸⁸ "Kosovo: Internationally Mediated Talks End Without Deal", *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty*, 8 December 2007.

this strategy was voiced further by Vladimir Putin after January 2006 for Russia's own foreign policy considerations. It is widely accepted by Moscow officials that the West has been building an international system designed for its own interests since the end of the Cold War. On that account, it can be argued that Putin's 'marketing' of the domino effect argument was carried out with a view to strengthening Russia's own foreign policy objectives. Consequently, Kosovo turned into an issue between the U.S.A. and Russia and also between the West and Russia, which pulled Brussels even closer to Washington.³⁸⁹

After Kosovo finally declared independence on 17 February 2008, Turkey was one of the first countries to recognize Kosovo. The following day, Foreign Minister Ali Babacan stated that Turkey welcomed the independence of Kosovo, underscoring also the importance of improving regional and bilateral relations between Turkey and Serbia as well as Turkey's resolve to contribute to the development of Kosovo.³⁹⁰ Throughout the status negotiations process, Turkey's policy towards Kosovo has been one which supported independence while also trying not to strain relations with Serbia and Russia. At first sight, Turkey's efforts not to upset relations with Russia and Serbia might have implied that Turkey followed a neutral policy concerning the issue. However, as already mentioned, Turkey expressly supported a new opening which could replace UN Resolution 1244 to establish permanent stability in Kosovo and the region, which indicated its non-pro status quo position. According to Turkey, the case of Kosovo and its independence process is unique. Nevertheless, it can hypothetically be argued that temporal and spatial conditions can also change in the ensuing years, which may - or

³⁸⁹ Erhan Türbedar, "Kosova'nın Bağımsızlığı ve Muhtemel Etkileri", *Stratejik Analiz*, Vol. 8, No. 95, March 2008, pp. 29-31.

³⁹⁰ Statement of H.E. Mr. Ali Babacan, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Turkey, Regarding the Recognition of Kosovo by Turkey, 18 February 2008, http://www.disisleri.gov.tr/MFA/HomePageTopPart/SM_Kosovo_18February2008.htm

again, may not - bring to pass similar cases. In this connection, Russia's relevant statements about the recognition of TRNC, and about Abkhazia for that matter, do not seem to have parallelism in Ankara's relevant policies. In the short- and medium-term of this new conjuncture, Turkey's policy towards Kosovo is likely to be based on preserving its participation in the international military existence in the country, trying to improve economic ties by participating more in bids, and strengthening political and diplomatic relations which primarily concerns the preservation of the rights of the Turks in Kosovo. Turkey upgraded its diplomatic mission in Kosovo to an embassy. After the Constitution of Kosovo enters into force on 15 June 2008 and the UN leaves, Turkey is expected to bolster bilateral relations with Kosovo through new openings in political, economic, and cultural spheres. An example in this respect is the prospective establishment of the a Middle East Technical University campus in Kosovo.

Turning back to the bilateral relations between Turkey and Albania since the end of the Kosovo crisis, they continued particularly with a view to ensuring economic and military cooperation. President Demirel paid an official visit to Albania and Macedonia in April 1999. Central to the agenda of this visit were Kosovo problem, stability in Albania, and the situation of the refugees.³⁹¹ In 2000, Turkish and Albanian presidents and prime ministers along with other regional states participated in the Southeast European Cooperation Process (SEECP) Heads of State and Government Summit. In early 2000, Prime Minister Ecevit paid an official visit to Albania. This visit was the first of its kind, that is, by a Turkish Prime Minister to Albania, after eight years by then. Shortly afterwards, President Demirel went to Albania for an official visit to discuss issues on Kosovo and other regional and

³⁹¹ Mehmet Yılmaz, "*Türk Dış Politikasında Arnavutluk*", p. 112.

international issues of mutual concern. The third high-level visit in the same year took place by Albanian Prime Minister Ilir Meta's visit which was primarily on economic field.³⁹² In September 2005, Turkey and Albania signed an agreement on Turkish Armed Forces' assistance to the Albanian Army concerning the allocation of military equipment totaling \$ 2,5 million to contribute to the restructuring of the Albanian military and integration into NATO. Turkey also assists Albania in the field of logistics and police training.³⁹³ Albania takes efforts to integrate into Euro-Atlantic structures; to combat organized crime and corruption; to accelerate justice and police reforms; and to improve public administration. The coalition government formed by Sali Berisha secured the highest number of votes in the July 2005 elections and received the vote of confidence in early September 2005. Both Turkey and Albania are cognizant of friendly bilateral relations. What remains to be done on the part of Turkey is to increase investment and continue to extend military assistance. This is imperative in respect of Turkey's overall Balkan policies as it implies taking efforts not to see Albania being distanced from Turkey and in close relations with Greece in political, economic and military fields.

³⁹² *ibid.*, pp. 112-114. On the other hand, at the turn of the 2000s, Turkish government's Albanian policy hinged on several factors: 1) following a policy to support democracy and market economy in Albania; 2) solution and internationalization of the 'Albanian issue' on grounds of respect for commitment arising from international documents; 3) prioritizing relations with the U.S.A. and Western European states with respect to Albania; 4) following the process of integration in Europe as well as integrating into European political and economic organizations; 5) prioritizing relations with Germany and Italy; 6) taking every effort to stop the policy of pressure and cruelty on the Albanian minority in former Yugoslavia to help them have the right to legitimate political will; 7) recognizing Macedonia on the condition of respect for the rights and free movement of Albanians in Macedonia; and 8) taking efforts to help Kosovo to be recognized and working for the peaceful solution of the problem.

³⁹³ "Ankara Hosts Albanian Chief of Staff for Second Time in 2005", 14 December 2005, *Turkish Daily News*.

4.7. TURKISH FOREIGN POLICY TOWARDS BULGARIA

Contemporary writings on Turkish – Bulgarian relations are replete with the argumentation that bilateral relations between Turkey and Bulgaria currently display an exemplary nature and this dissertation shall be no exception in this sense. Since the creation of Bulgaria as an independent state, Turkish – Bulgarian relations have been both cordial and strained, and sometimes even confrontational. Being two neighbors in a volatile region as the Balkans, two countries improved their relations exclusive of the assimilation period against Turkish minority. In the post-Cold War era, central to the improvement in relations was the reciprocation of the two states by reconciling the memory of the assimilation period, which was brought to pass initially in the diplomatic – political field, backed by military and economic fields: a process not so common in international relations.

After almost 500 years of Ottoman rule, following the Turco – Russian War (1877 – 1878), and the Treaty of San Stefano (1878), an autonomous Bulgaria was proclaimed, to be replaced by the Treaty of Berlin in the same year. The treaty prepared the ground for independent Bulgaria which was to materialize in 1908.³⁹⁴ In the Balkan Wars (1912 and 1913), the Ottomans fought against Bulgaria, Serbia,

³⁹⁴ For more information and the argument that although the Bulgarian population received the Ottoman administration positively, and even saw it as a savior while the Bulgarian chieftains opposed it, see Beğlan Toğrol, *112 Yıllık Göç, (1878 – 1989)*, (İstanbul: Boğaziçi University Publications, 1989), pp. 11 – 14. The author notes that Bulgarian history and literature books refer to the Ottoman rule as 500 years of slavery. For a comprehensive account on ancient and modern history of Bulgaria, see Arthur May Hyde, *A Diplomatic History of Bulgaria, 1870 – 1886*, (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1974); Ömer Turan, *The Turkish Minority in Bulgaria (1878 – 1908)*, (Ankara: Turkish History Foundation, 1998); Richard J. Crompton, *A Concise History of Bulgaria* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997); for a compact analysis of the recognition of Bulgaria by the Ottoman state and ensuing relations, see Hasan Ünal, “Ottoman Policy during the Bulgarian Independence Crisis, 1908-1909: Ottoman Empire and Bulgaria at the Outset of the Young Turk Revolution”, *Middle Eastern Studies*, (34)4, October 1998, pp. 135-176; Yusuf Sarınoy, “Osmanlı Devleti’nin Bulgaristan’ın Bağımsızlığını Tanıması ve Türk – Bulgar İlişkilerinin Gelişmesi (1908 – 1914)”, *Osmanlı ve Cumhuriyet Dönemi Türk – Bulgar İlişkileri Sempozyumu, Eskişehir Osmangazi University*, (İstanbul: Bayrak, 2005), pp. 133 – 137; for bilateral relations in the immediate aftermath of Bulgarian independence, see Yasemin Avcı, “Bağımsız Bulgaristan ile Osmanlı Devleti Arasında ‘Modern Diplomasi’ (1908 - 1912)”, *ibid.*, pp. 291 – 296.

Greece and Montenegro, and lost Rumelia with the Treaty of London (1913). In World War I, Bulgaria allied with Germany, Austria – Hungary, and the Ottoman Empire. After the defeat, Bulgaria’s anti-monarchist politician Alexander Stamboliski’s Bulgarian Agrarian Nationalist Union (BANU) took power in the country. As the major support for the agrarians came from the peasants, among whom were also Turkish peasants, they were granted certain cultural rights and the number of Turkish members of parliament increased in the assembly. When Alexander Stamboliski was assassinated in 1923, a coalition of BANU opponents, namely IMRO (a pro-autonomy Macedonian armed organization), the National Alliance, army factions, and social democrats, took control in the country under the leadership of right wing politician Alexander Tsankov who would set up a fascist party in 1932. Following this, a rightist coup took place in 1934, Bulgaria allied with the Axis powers during World War II, and the authoritarian regime in Bulgaria administered a stricter control towards Turkish schools.³⁹⁵

Although many of the problems in bilateral relations were apparently resolved in the 1920s, Bulgaria’s revisionist attitude in the Balkans in the 1930s due to emerging as a landlocked country after World War I said otherwise as the country increasingly became closer to Italy and Germany; prompting Turkey, Greece, Yugoslavia and Romania to sign the Balkan Entente against Bulgaria in 1934. Yet still, Bulgaria’s relations with Turkey were relatively friendlier compared to those with its other neighbors.³⁹⁶ However, the agreements proved short-lived as other treaties of nonaggression and friendship of the 1920s came to be labeled as a period

³⁹⁵ Beğlan Toğrol, *112 Yıllık Göç (1878 – 1989)*, p. 18. For information on the problem of Thrace in Turkish – Bulgarian relations after World War I, see Romyana Komsalova, “I. Dünya Savaşı Sonrası Bulgar – Türk İlişkilerinde Trakya Sorunu (1919 – 1925)”, *Osmanlı ve Cumhuriyet Dönemi Türk – Bulgar İlişkileri Sempozyumu*, *Eskişehir Osmangazi University*, (İstanbul: Bayrak, 2005), pp. 129 – 132.

³⁹⁶ Cengiz Hakov, “İki Dünya Savaşı Arası Dönemde Bulgaristan – Türkiye Siyasi – Diplomatik İlişkileri (1919 – 1938)”, *ibid.*, pp. 153 - 156. The problems were related to the return of refugees to Eastern Thrace and their property, minority rights, and Bulgarian schools in Turkey.

of pactomania. When World War II broke out, the only state in the Balkan peninsula which remained out of war proved to be Turkey.³⁹⁷ At the end of World War II, Bulgaria came under Soviet invasion and occupation which resulted in the establishment of the Communist regime in the country in 1947. From then onwards, bilateral relations between Ankara and Sofia would take a new turn for the worse as Bulgaria would become a member of the Warsaw Pact and Turkey would seek admission to NATO. From the end of World War II, to the inception of the Cold War, the threatening attitude of the Soviet Union towards Turkey as well as Greece, and the Greek Civil War, fostered and supported by the Soviet Union, strained the relations between Ankara and Sofia. Meanwhile, the Korean War broke out, which would have an indirect impact on Balkan developments. This war impelled Yugoslavia to cooperate with the West as well as Turkey and Greece, and drove Turkey and Greece to seriously ponder entering NATO. At such a conjuncture, Bulgaria forced around 250,000 Turks to migrate to Turkey after one month had passed since the end of the Korean War, which Turkey interpreted as a Soviet move.³⁹⁸

When the Communists came to power in Bulgaria, particularly the Stalinists in 1949, an iron curtain divided the two states in addition to the geographical borders.³⁹⁹ The minority issue which had been out of the agenda in Albania, Hungary, Romania and Bulgaria reappeared as a political tool to be used by the Soviet Union after Yugoslavia was excluded from Cominform. In the process of decision-making concerning deportation, Bulgaria's domestic politics and the

³⁹⁷ Kalina Peeva, "Balkanlardaki Siyasi Durumun Değişimi ve Bulgaristan ve Türkiye Dış Politikalarının Yakınlaşması (1935 – 1938)", *ibid.*, pp. 313 – 316.

³⁹⁸ Oral Sander, *Balkan Gelişmeleri ve Türkiye (1945 - 1965)* (Ankara: Sevinç Publishing House, 1969), pp. 69 – 71.

³⁹⁹ Sibel Turan, "Türk Dış Politikasına Yön Veren Etkenlerin Işığında Türk – Bulgar İlişkilerinin Yeri ve Önemi Üzerine Bir İnceleme, 1923 – 2004", *Osmanlı ve Cumhuriyet Dönemi Türk – Bulgar İlişkileri Sempozyumu*, *Eskişehir Osmangazi University*, (İstanbul: Bayrak, 2005), p. 303.

Turkish minority proved to be influential. In 1950, the Bulgarian Ministry of Agriculture decided to establish collective farms in south Dobruja, which it had taken from Romania back in 1940, where around 150,000 Turks lived. Moreover, the process of mechanization in agriculture launched by the Bulgarian government in 1944 had been accelerated in this region, which implied that the land owned by the Turkish minority did not belong to them any more, creating unemployment, and thus constituting the main reason for forcing the Turkish minority to emigrate in 1950.⁴⁰⁰ The relations between Turkey and Bulgaria had already started to deteriorate by 1947 and became even more strained in 1948 when two Turkish aircraft were shot down in Bulgarian airspace. Following this, Turkey demanded withdrawal of the Bulgarian attaché to Ankara and Bulgarian soldiers attacked a border police station close to Lalapaşa. The repercussions of this event on the part of the Turkish government proved strong. The Bulgarian media launched a strong anti-Turkish campaign. While tension was still in the air, Turkey's consulate – general in Plovdiv was attacked. On 10 August 1950, Bulgaria sent a note to Turkey stating that around 250,000 Turks would be sent to Turkey in three months. Until early November 1951, around 150,000 Turks were deported to Turkey. Due to being on opposite camps, bilateral relations remained cold and became even more strained in 1961 when Turkey sent a

⁴⁰⁰ Oral Sander, *Balkan Gelişmeleri ve Türkiye (1945 - 1965)*, pp. 69 - 72. An agreement signed in 1925 arranged migration between the two states, in accordance with which the parties would not prevent those who wanted to migrate from doing so. The agreement provided that the refugees would be provided assistance if need be. Within this framework, almost 100,000 refugees came to Turkey every year until the outbreak of World War II. The refugees could sell their movables and take the worth of their immovables with them. Even until 1950, the Turkish minority did not appear to be an issue in relations as Foreign Minister Hasan Saka stated in September 1947: "... I would not argue that the current situation in Bulgaria is more unfavorable than that of the previous or more precisely, the situation before the World War II ... there is no probability of taking new measures that would bring about a definitive result." (p. 74). The deportation in 1950 resulted in an exchange of notes between the two governments and the subsequent straining of the relations. The Bulgarian government was accused of trying to make the refugees acquire property in Turkey, to send the Roma people along with the Turkish minority and thus to cause another problem for Turkey, to send Communist spies to Turkey, and to destroy Turkish economy by creating additional population. (p. 77). When Turkey closed border gates and stated that it would refer the matter to the United Nations, relations entered a thaw and a bilateral agreement was concluded after which the borders were re-opened and re-closed in 1950 and 1951, respectively.

note to Bulgaria again on minority rights violations. Turkish – Bulgarian relations entered a new period with the thaw in the Cold War after the Cuban missile crisis (1962), when peaceful coexistence approach was in the air. Bilateral visits resumed in 1966.⁴⁰¹ The 1970s has been described as a “goodneighborliness decade” in relations - especially in the economic venue - started with Prime Minister Süleyman Demirel’s visit to Bulgaria in 1970 and followed with two agreements on energy and tourism the same year.⁴⁰² However, improvement in relations came to an abrupt end again in 1984 due to Bulgarian President Todor Zhivkov’s forced assimilation campaign towards the Turkish minority, a policy which would be implemented by Sofia until 1989, causing another mass exodus to Turkey.

Against this background came the Bulgarian coup in November 1989 with the collapse of the communist regime in Sofia led by the Bulgarian Communist Party (BKP). From then on, Turkish – Bulgarian relations entered a transition period. Bulgaria accepted that the assimilation process of 1984 – 1989 had been a grave mistake which was contrary to Bulgarian domestic law and international obligations.⁴⁰³ The first election in the new multiparty system took place in 1991 from which the Movement of Rights and Freedoms (MRF) of Turks in Bulgaria emerged as a key party. Immediately thereafter, President Zheliu Zhelev and his party, Union of Democratic Forces (UDF), announced their resolve to improve ties

⁴⁰¹ Pars Tuğlacı, *Bulgaristan ve Türk – Bulgar İlişkileri*, (İstanbul: Pars Publications, Cem Publications, 1984), pp. 133 – 135.

⁴⁰² Yordanka Bibina, “20. Yüzyılın 70’li Yılların İlk Yarısında Bulgar – Türk İlişkileri”, *Osmanlı ve Cumhuriyet Dönemi Türk – Bulgar İlişkileri Sempozyumu, Eskişehir Osmangazi University*, (İstanbul: Bayrak, 2005), pp. 317 – 321.

⁴⁰³ *Turkish Grand National Assembly Journal of Minutes*, Session 64, Period 18, Legislative Year 3, 16 January 1990, vol. 39, p. 82; for a compact account on the change in Bulgaria’s official policies after the fall of Communism towards Turkish and other ethnic minorities in Bulgaria, see Ivan Ilchev and Duncan M. Perry, “Bulgarian Ethnic Groups: Politics and Perceptions”, *RFE/RL Research Report, Weekly Analyses From The RFE/RL Research Institute*, 2(12), 19 March 1993, pp. 35 – 41.

with Turkey.⁴⁰⁴ In the wider international context, the disappearance of blocs, emergence of a multipolar system, loosening in extreme ideologies, emergence of sub-systems, and the rise in integration trends certainly helped shape the future context of post-Cold War Turkish – Bulgarian relations.⁴⁰⁵ Bulgarian foreign policy agenda was now directed by Europeanization efforts, efforts to overcome economic problems, the unrest concerning the newly emerged Macedonia, and the attempt to restore the deteriorated relations with Turkey due to past assimilation campaigns on the Turkish minority in Bulgaria. The focal points in foreign policy for Turkey in the same period were the PKK problem, the rise of fundamentalist Islam, problems in the Middle East and the Caucasus, EU membership, and problems with Greece.⁴⁰⁶

As former Bulgarian Foreign Minister, Stanislav Daskalov, stated, the post-Cold War Bulgarian foreign policy was formulated on the basis of protecting national interests as well as acting in compliance with the internationally accepted standards which would be achieved through integration with European structures and by expanding relations with neighbors.⁴⁰⁷ Within this framework, Bulgarian decision makers tried to become flexible in their relations, to establish equidistant ties with regional states, to conclude confidence building measures with Turkey and Greece, to improve relations with either the U.S.A. or Russia and Ukraine, and to foster relations with Germany which was considered to be the economic motor of

⁴⁰⁴ Şule Kut, “Soğuk Savaş Sonrasında Türkiye’nin Balkan Ülkeleriyle İlişkileri”, *Çağdaş Türk Diplomasisi: 200 Yıllık Süreç*, (Ankara: Turkish History Foundation, 1999), p. 391. This first noncommunist government resigned only a year later, in late October 1992. The primary reason was its failure to match the public’s high expectations and thus it became the focus of every one’s various dissatisfactions, see Kjell Engelbrekt, “The Fall of Bulgaria’s First Noncommunist Government”, *RFE/RL Research Report, Weekly Analyses From The RFE/RL Research Institute*, 1(45), 13 November 1992, pp. 1 – 6.

⁴⁰⁵ Nurcan Özgür, “1989 Sonrası Türkiye – Bulgaristan İlişkileri”, in Faruk Sönmezoğlu ed., *Türk Dış Politikasının Analizi*, (İstanbul: DER, 1998), p. 345.

⁴⁰⁶ *ibid.*, p. 347.

⁴⁰⁷ Stéphane Lefebvre, “Bulgaria’s Foreign Relations in the post-Communist Era: A General Overview and Assessment”, *East European Quarterly*, XXVIII, no. 4, (January 1995), p. 348.

Europe.⁴⁰⁸ Bulgaria concluded many bilateral and multilateral agreements with its neighbors, including Turkey between 1990 and 2007. In this new period, primary issues in Turkish – Bulgarian political relations included the Turkish minority, geopolitical concerns, Bulgaria’s integration into Euro-Atlantic structures, and the PKK problem.

Since Bulgarian nationalism was built on an anti-Turkish basis, Turkish minority in Bulgaria stood as a problem for Bulgarian intellectuals and policymakers. This problem had been exacerbated by the anti-Turkish policies of the Soviet Union during the Cold War and gradually became acute because the Bulgarian official viewpoint labeled the Turkish minority a fifth column. Given that the most important issue in Turkish – Bulgarian bilateral political relations was the Turkish minority, the reasons of the 1989 campaign against the Turkish minority in Bulgaria are in order here. Bulgaria was concerned about the high birth rates among the Turkish community and the possible future penetration of this community in large numbers into the Bulgarian political life at a time when Bulgaria had the lowest birth rate among all communist countries of Eastern Europe. Bulgaria also revisited the Cyprus problem in 1974 and feared that Turkey would use the Turkish minority in Bulgaria as a political tool to demand territorial concessions from Bulgaria and saw the Turkish community as the fifth column of Turkey.⁴⁰⁹ The assimilation campaign

⁴⁰⁸ Nurcan Özgür, “1989 Sonrası Türkiye – Bulgaristan İlişkileri”, p. 348.

⁴⁰⁹ Darina Vasileva, “Bulgarian Turkish Emigration and Return,” *International Migration Review*, 26 (2), pp. 342 - 346. For the minutes of meetings on the minority issue between Foreign Minister İhsan Sabri Çağlayangil and his Bulgarian counterpart Ivan Bashev in 1966, Prime Minister Süleyman Demirel and Bulgarian President Todor Zhivkov (1976), Prime Minister Bülent Ecevit and Todor Zhivkov (1978), and Foreign Minister Gündüz Ökçün and his Bulgarian counterpart Peter Mladenov (1979), see Ercüment Konukman, *Tarihi Belgeler Işığında Büyük Göç ve Anavatan – Nedenleri, Boyutları, Sonuçları*, (Ankara: Grafiker, 1990), pp. 64 – 69; for a compilation of domestic legal arrangements concerning the immigrants, see pp. 100 – 124. For more information on the assimilation campaign towards the Turks in Bulgaria, see also Birgül Demirtaş-Coşkun, “An Exemplary Relationship in the Balkans: Turkish – Bulgarian Relations in the post-Cold War Era”, (A Master’s Thesis Submitted to the Department of International Relations, Bilkent University, August 1999). Regarding the important policy reversal of Turkey to close the border gates to ethnic Turks of Bulgaria, see Clyde Haberman, “Turkey Closing Borders to Refugees From Bulgaria”, 22 August

which started in 1984 ended with the decree issued on 19 December 1989. At the turn of two major developments, i.e. collapse of Communism and the end of the assimilation campaign, Bulgarian officials stated that they were inclined to reverse the strained relations with Turkey but did not have a definitive answer as to how to attain this. Consequently, this transitional period did not prove easy for either state. With the memory of the recent assimilation practices against the Turkish minority as a former Warsaw Pact member, now Bulgaria saw a somewhat different picture when it revisited its relations with Turkey. Bulgarian officials now faced a decadent Warsaw Pact which would no longer fuel anti-Turkish Soviet policies. In the absence of the Cold War and the protection of the Soviet Union, they realized that they had to formulate new policies towards a rapidly developing Turkey under Özal administration with a population of almost 60 million.⁴¹⁰ Although the new Bulgarian government stated that Bulgaria would re-grant the rights of the Turkish minority, this problem persisted in Turkish – Bulgarian relations after the 1990 elections, from which the Bulgarian Socialist Party (BSP) emerged victorious.

The emergence of BSP, which was a reformed version of the Communists, was something particular at the time in the Balkans as it was the only example of its kind, while liberal governments were taking power one by one in other regional states.⁴¹¹ The MRF⁴¹², which consisted mainly of Turks, won 23 seats in the Parliament and ranked third after the reformed BSP and the UDF. Following this,

1989, *The New York Times*; “Ankara se Ferme aux Turc Bulgares”, 22 August 1989, *Libération*; and “Ankara Impose Un Visa aux Réfugiés de Bulgarie”, 22 August 1989, *Le Soir*.

⁴¹⁰ From the 1950s until 2008, Turkey’s population indicated a increasing trend, while Bulgaria’s population remained almost constant. For detailed information, see Yaprak Civelek, “Social and Demographic Determinants of Family Formation in post-Transition Bulgaria”, (A Ph.D. Dissertation Submitted to Hacettepe University Institute of Population Studies, Economic and Social Demography Program, September 2006).

⁴¹¹ see Evgenii Danailov, “Bulgaria: Politics After the October 1991 Elections”, *RFE/RL Research Report, Weekly Analyses From The RFE/RL Research Institute*, 1(2), 10 January 1992, pp. 12 –16.

⁴¹² For a comprehensive account on the MRF, see Nurcan Özgür, *Etnik Sorunların Çözümünde Hak ve Özgürlükler Hareketi*, (İstanbul: Der Publications, 1999).

cases were lodged against the MRF in the Bulgarian Constitutional Court in 1991 on the grounds that it was a political body directed from Turkey. This triggered negative responses in Turkey and Prime Minister Mesut Yılmaz sent a letter to his counterpart Dimitr Popov stating that such an attitude would hinder participation of the Turkish community in Bulgarian politics and lead to their isolation from social life and, in return, impede improving relations.⁴¹³ Yalçın Oral, Turkish Ambassador to Sofia, stated that “the MRF is a Bulgarian political organization and its members are Bulgarian. As known, the majority of its members ... are of Turkish origin. However, this does not change what has taken place. The MRF is a Bulgarian organization. In our opinion, it is a part of Bulgarian political process ... Turkey’s support for MRF is moral ...”⁴¹⁴ This official statement was indicative of Turkey’s conciliatory policy at the time. Mutual visits began after the collapse of communism in Bulgaria. Bulgarian officials also paid visits to Greece in pursuit of conducting a policy of equidistance towards Turkey and Greece. Even before such contacts, Turkey had provided oil and electricity and a \$ 75 million credit as the first country to extend fuel oil and electricity aid to Bulgaria during the 1990 Gulf Crisis, following the crop failure in Bulgaria, when the memory of the assimilation campaign was still fresh.⁴¹⁵ Mutual visits gained acceleration and bilateral contacts became intensified with the East-West Highway Project initiated in 1993.⁴¹⁶

However, although the transitional period in bilateral relations was geared up by political initiatives, it was thanks to Turkey’s gestures in the military field which helped normalize bilateral relations in this period. Turkish officials were cognizant of

⁴¹³ Birgül Demirtaş-Coşkun, *Bulgaristan’la Yeni Dönem – Soğuk Savaş Sonrasında Ankara – Sofya İlişkileri*, (Ankara: ASAM, 2001), p. 66; the author cites Kjell Engelbrekt “Movement for Rights and Freedoms to Compete in Elections,” *Report on Eastern Europe*, 4 October 1991, (1)40, pp. 1-4.

⁴¹⁴ Nurcan Özgür, “1989 Sonrası Türkiye – Bulgaristan İlişkileri” (“Post-1989 Turkish – Bulgarian Relations”), p. 360.

⁴¹⁵ 26 October 1990, *Tercüman*.

⁴¹⁶ *ibid.*, pp. 361-362.

the fact that cooperation in the military sphere would inspire confidence which lacked in bilateral relations at the time. Therefore, in view of the memory of recent assimilation campaign towards the Turks in Bulgaria, Turkey's gestures in the military field were remarkable at the turn of the 1990s.

This coincided a time when Bulgaria was inclined to modify its military policy by advocating all regional states to conclude bilateral military agreements. It was also ready to support confidence-building measures proposed by other regional states. Bulgaria tried to develop good relations with Turkish (and Greek) military establishments, and Turkish Chief of Staff Doğan Güreş's visit to Bulgaria in December 1991 was seen as a major breakthrough by Bulgaria in this respect. Yet, the Bulgarian military and government still had serious concerns about regional security, which partly stemmed from the Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) Treaty inked in November 1990 in Paris. The Bulgarian official view saw the CFE as taking into consideration only the quantitative dimension of the regional military balance. Bulgaria had a considerable amount of military hardware and personnel yet at the same time it was disadvantaged in terms of the quality of its military equipment because Turkey (and Greece) had access to NATO technology. Moreover, as the Western European states transferred weapons systems to the Balkans to strengthen NATO's southern flank against threats in the Mediterranean and the Middle East, the Bulgarians thought that this would destabilize the region, particularly pinpointing Turkish military existence on border areas.⁴¹⁷ Turkey made efforts for the normalization and institutionalization of relations, by for instance

⁴¹⁷ Kjell Engelbrekt, "Bulgaria's Evolving Defense Policy", *RFE/RL Research Report, Weekly Analyses From The RFE/RL Research Institute*, 3(32), 19 August 1994, pp. 47 and 48; see also Antoaneta Dimitrova, "The Plight of the Bulgarian Arms Industry", *RFE/RL Research Report, Weekly Analyses From The RFE/RL Research Institute*, 2(7), 12 February 1993, pp. 46 – 53.

proposing joint exercises on border areas and supported Bulgaria's entrance to NATO right from the beginning in the transitional period.

Bilateral relations went through further stages as events unfolded in the Balkans. The foreign policy of Turkey and Bulgaria in relation to the developments in Yugoslavia was active neutrality. At the outset of the crisis, the two states supported an intact Yugoslavia. When Slovenia and Croatia declared their independence, Özal and Zhelev stated that they did not intend to interfere with the internal affairs of Yugoslavia but were against armed conflict. Soon after, the two states recognized Slovenia, Croatia, Macedonia and Bosnia – Herzegovina. Although Bulgaria's official stance was in conformity with the international community regarding the Bosnian War, some pro-Serbian voices in the leftist wing of the parliament emerged, however they did not escalate.⁴¹⁸

With respect to Bulgaria's integration with Euro-Atlantic structures and Zheliu Zhelev's request for support from Turkey to advocate Bulgaria's membership in NATO, Ankara assured Bulgaria of its full support since the beginning. Bulgaria also received Greek support for NATO membership.⁴¹⁹

The most significant regional cooperation platform in which Turkey and Bulgaria take part is the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC), with a declaration signed by Turkey, Bulgaria, Georgia, Romania, Russia, Ukraine, Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Greece and Moldova in İstanbul on 25 June 1992. Zheliu Zhelev attended the signature of the declaration, emphasizing the importance Bulgaria attached to the agreement. Bulgaria's initial response to the BSEC was not very enthusiastic; for fear that the BSEC would harm its relations with the EC and put its membership prospect at risk. When the EC stated that it would not admit

⁴¹⁸ *ibid.*

⁴¹⁹ *ibid.*, pp. 368-369. Bulgaria became a member of NATO in 2004.

Bulgaria to full membership in the near future, Bulgaria began to look more favorably upon the BSEC. On the other hand, another reason put forward by Bulgaria along with its hesitations was the fear that Turkey would gradually bring the Central Asian states into the BSEC and loosen its attention on the original members of the BSEC. It also insisted that the Black Sea Bank be established in Sofia. In due course, Bulgaria participated actively in the BSEC facilities, but did hesitate to do so in the parliamentary institutions. During the armed conflicts in Karabagh and Chechnya; Ukraine, Georgia and Turkey tried to improve political cooperation among member states, but Bulgaria rejected the idea.⁴²⁰

Regarding the PKK problem, Bulgaria declared its support for Turkey in its struggle with terrorism. However, some maps showing Diyarbakır as the capital city were distributed as maps of the so-called “Kurdistan” in April 1994 in Bulgaria and the Kurdish Cultural Education Association held a conference on “Kurdish problems” in September the same year. The Kurdish University Students Organization assembled in front of the Turkish Embassy in Sofia protesting Turkey’s military operations in Northern Iraq by burning the Turkish flag in May 1995. The position of the BSP and UDF was different on the issue, and the former reportedly hosted a pro-PKK attitude.⁴²¹

The 2005 elections displayed the existence of extreme nationalism in certain political factions in Bulgaria. After the elections held on 25 June 2005, the Coalition for Bulgaria, a coalition of parties dominated by the BSP, (CfB) emerged as the first party with 30.95 % and gained 82 of 240 seats in the parliament. Prime Minister

⁴²⁰ Nurcan Özgür, “1989 Sonrası Türkiye – Bulgaristan İlişkileri” (“Post-1989 Turkish – Bulgarian Relations”), *ibid.*, pp. 372-373.

⁴²¹ Nurcan Özgür, “1989 Sonrası Türkiye – Bulgaristan İlişkileri” (“Post-1989 Turkish – Bulgarian Relations”), *ibid.*, p. 375; and Birgül Demirtaş-Coşkun, *Bulgaristan’la Yeni Dönem – Soğuk Savaş Sonrasında Ankara – Sofya İlişkileri*, p. 101. See Nurcan Özgür *ibid.*, pp. 381-383 for the border issues regarding Mutludere River and Stit village.

Simeon Saxe-Coburg's party, National Movement for Simeon II (NMS2), emerged second with 19.88 % and won 53 seats. The MRF reached the highest level in 15 years with 12.81 % and won 34 seats.⁴²² When the CfB signed a coalition agreement with the MRF led by Ahmed Doğan, the extreme nationalist ATAKA Union's response proved fierce. Volen Siderov, the leader of the ATAKA Union, stated that a meeting would be held before the vote of confidence on 26 July 2005 and called on the public to attend. After the election results were announced, Siderov stated that the Turkish broadcasts on Bulgarian television should not be aired any more and that Turkish names be modified with Bulgarian suffixes, reminding the past practices, and yet, not receiving due support.⁴²³

It is known that Prime Minister Saxe-Coburg had stated that Bulgaria was open to cooperation with Turkey on issues regarding terrorism while he was still in power in 2004, during Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's visit to Sofia. During this visit, Erdoğan touched upon the PKK problem and the transformation of two old Ottoman mosques into restaurants in Plovdiv. Pointing out the "Bulgarian Information Center for Kurdistan", the Prime Minister stated that PKK carried out terrorist acts in Turkey and that this required cooperation to combat with the extensions of this organization. The Bulgarian Prime Minister stated that they had included PKK in the terrorist organizations list. Erdoğan also emphasized that the Bulgarian churches in İstanbul and Edirne had been restored and that Turkey expected due reciprocity regarding the Ottoman architecture in Bulgaria which was

⁴²² "Bulgar Meclisinde HÖH Milletvekili Sayısı 34," 30 June 2005, *Milliyet*; and "Bulgarians Vote, Seen Ending Reign of ex-King PM," 26 June 2005, *Turkish Daily News*.

⁴²³ "Bulgaristan'da İrkçılardan Türklere Karşı Miting," 26 July 2005, *Milliyet*. The party, led by Volen Siderov, was established three months before the June 2005 elections and secured 8.75 % of all votes with 17 seats. However, ATAKA was excluded by all the parties in the parliament which openly announced that they would not engage in a coalition process with the party. After lengthy negotiations, a trilateral coalition was formed by the CfB, the MRF, and the NMS2. The coalition government received the vote of confidence on 16 August 2005 and its official term of office began.

received positively by Sofia.⁴²⁴ It can be argued that the future of Turkish – Bulgarian relations are likely to be shaped by the future relations of Turkey and Bulgaria with European institutions to a great extent.⁴²⁵

4.8. TURKISH FOREIGN POLICY TOWARDS GREECE IN THE BALKAN CONTEXT

With the end of the Cold War and the outbreak of new conflicts in the Balkans, Turkey and Greece embarked into a political and economic competition as the most powerful two regional states in economic and military terms. This competition was conducted overtly by Greece and not too straightforwardly by Turkey.⁴²⁶ In this new unstable environment, the main pillars of Greece’s Balkan policy after mid-1990s were outlined as: seeking ways of economic cooperation via confidence, friendship and equal cooperation package and transforming that duly into an agreement between Balkan states in establishing and maintaining democracy; forming an economic cooperation zone in the region; building goodneighborly relations with Albania and

⁴²⁴ “Bulgaristan’a PKK Uyarısı,” 7 July 2004, *Milliyet*. For the argument that the offices and centers opened by the Kurds which were allowed to operate in Bulgaria were cultural and educational but were regarded by the Turkish government as covers for activities of the PKK, Michael B. Bishku, “Turkish-Bulgarian Relations: From Conflict and Distrust to Cooperation over Minority Issues and International Politics”, *Mediterranean Quarterly*, 14(2), Spring 2003, p. 93.

⁴²⁵ Birgül Demirtaş-Coşkun, *Bulgaristan’la Yeni Dönem – Soğuk Savaş Sonrasında Ankara – Sofya İlişkileri*, *ibid.*, p. 112. Currently, the primary foreign policy objective of Bulgaria is to fulfill the requirements of recent full membership in the EU. The European Commission set Bulgaria several tasks: to carry out necessary amendments in the Constitution to guarantee full judicial independence, to apply the Civil Code Procedure effectively, to enhance the professionalism of the judicial system, to restrain and investigate corruption, to eliminate corruption in local administration levels and at borders, to apply methods to combat organized crime with special emphasis on confiscating the property of bandits and on money laundering, and to establish an integral control system in agriculture. Bulgaria’s accession to the EU is viewed as the most significant and successful political and civilizational project since independent Bulgaria was proclaimed, Pavel Pisarev, “Bulgaria at the Pearly Gates”, *South East Europe Review* 3: (2006), p. 38 and p. 42. See also Nikolai Genov, “Bulgaria’s New Identity”, *South East Europe Review* 3: (2006), pp. 43 – 56.

⁴²⁶ Şaban Çalış and Birol Akgün, “Çatışmadan Uzlaşmaya: 21. Yüzyıla Girerken Balkanlarda Türk – Yunan Rekabeti,” İdris Bal ed., *21. Yüzyılda Türk Dış Politikası*, (Ankara: Nobel , 2004), p. 266.

Macedonia, and ensuring the expansion of NATO's peace umbrella in a way to cover the Balkans.⁴²⁷ Nevertheless, Greece's most valuable asset was its EU card by which it used the political and economic advantages of its EU membership.⁴²⁸

The competition which emerged in the early 1990s brought about a fragmentation in the region. Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Macedonia, partly Bulgaria and Turkey on the one hand, and Greece and Yugoslavia on the other were viewed as pursuing harmonious foreign policies. At the beginning of the 1990s, Greece had strained relations with Albania due to issues concerning the Greek minority in South Albania⁴²⁹ while Turkey established friendly relations with the country. Due to the alleged encirclement by the "Islamic axis" in the Balkans, Turkey and Albania were seen in the same camp from the official Greek viewpoint. That was why Greece reciprocated in a parallel way by trying to encircle Turkey in the Balkans. Former Foreign Minister Karolas Papulias' visit to all Balkan states except for Turkey and Macedonia in November 1993, the friendly relations Greece tried to establish with Bulgaria and Russia, and its insistence on not banning the PKK activities in Greece were seen as indicators of the said policy.⁴³⁰ On the other hand, the Greek policy aimed at encircling Turkey was broad-based as it reflected a global vision which included the Middle-East and the Caucasus at the material time, although the emphasis was put on the Balkans.⁴³¹

⁴²⁷ Kamil Mehmet Büyükçolak, "Soğuk Savaş Sonrası Dönemde Türk – Yunan İlişkilerinde Yeni Bir Boyut: Balkanlar," p. 123. The author cites Costas Simitis, "Greece in the Contemporary World," *Review of International Affairs*, vol. XLVII, 15 July – 15 August 1996, p. 5, and Ino Afendouli, "Simitis' Four Year Plan," *Hermes* (Greece Today) (5) November 1996, p. 4.

⁴²⁸ *ibid.*

⁴²⁹ Birgül Demirtaş-Coşkun, "Değişen Dünya Dengelerinde Türk – Yunan İlişkileri", in İdris Bal ed., *21. Yüzyılda Türk Dış Politikası*, (Ankara: Nobel, 2004), p. 251.

⁴³⁰ Gökalp Kırca, "Arnavutluk ve Yunanistan Arasındaki Sorunlar Karşısında Türkiye'nin Tutumu", *1994–1995 Çalışma Dönemi Raporları*, Balkan Studies Group, Ankara University, 1994, p. 35.

⁴³¹ <http://www.saemk.org/yazdir.asp?id=37&dba=002>, as retrieved on 29 June 2006 02:29:33 GMT; Aykut Ünal, "Türkiye ve Bölgesel İstikrar", 2005, on <http://www.irarec.org/modules.php?op=modload&name=Sections&file=index&req=viewarticle&artid=49&page=1> as retrieved on 18 July 2006 14:45:52 GMT. Greece's interest for the Balkans emanate from geographical proximity and historical reasons which are viewed as more significant than other

Another important issue for Greece was the independence of Macedonia. Greece objected to the name, the constitution and the flag of Macedonia while Turkey, as the country which recognized Macedonia after Bulgaria, had friendly relations with this new state.⁴³² Furthermore, Serbia, supported by Greece, was declared as the aggressor by the international community. Although Greece presented its pro-Serbian approach until 1990s, it had to put aside this policy in face of increasing American and European pressure. The offensive nature of Greece's Balkan policy brought new interpretations that Greece acted as the bully of the Balkans. Yet, Greece began to conduct a more conciliatory foreign policy after 1995 with a view to breaking free from its isolation in the EU and regaining its credibility in the international community; surpassing Turkey's activism in the Balkans; and enabling Greek businessmen to invest in the Balkans which was hampered by the incumbent government policies.⁴³³ The latter proved to be the most decisive factor for Greece. However, more noteworthy was the election of Costas Simitis (1996) government which would seek ways to seize economic opportunities in the Balkan states which had embarked into a transition period.⁴³⁴ Upon seeing that the supposedly Islamic and neo-Ottomanist encirclement by Albania, Bosnia – Herzegovina, Sandjak, Kosovo, Macedonia, and Bulgaria, allegedly directed from Turkey, was an illusion, Greece restored relations with Bulgaria, Macedonia, and

EU members. Greek analysts tend to argue that the country is the most affluent, stable, democratic and well-connected with the West in the region and as such, it is the ideal state to assume the role of interlocutor in the Balkans. See Thanos P. Dokos and Panayotis J. Tsakonas, "Greek – Turkish Relations in the Post-Cold War Era" in Christos Kollias and Gülay Günlük – Şenesen eds., *Greece and Turkey in the 21st Century: Conflict or Cooperation, A Political Economy Perspective* (New York: Nova Science Publishers, Inc., 2003), p. 13.

⁴³² Şaban Çalış and Birol Akgün, "Çatışmadan Uzlaşmaya: 21. Yüzyıla Girenken Balkanlarda Türk – Yunan Rekabeti," p. 277, and see also Dilek Barlas "Turkey and the Balkans: Co-operation in the Interwar and the Post-Cold War Eras," pp. 74-75.

⁴³³ Birgül Demirtaş-Coşkun, "Değişen Dünya Dengelerinde Türk – Yunan İlişkileri," pp. 252-253.

⁴³⁴ Şaban Çalış and Birol Akgün, "Çatışmadan Uzlaşmaya: 21. Yüzyıla Girenken Balkanlarda Türk – Yunan Rekabeti," pp. 278-279.

Albania. It put aside its bankrupt pro-Serbian policy to formulate novel ones.⁴³⁵ These novel policies were to show themselves in the economic field mostly. After Milosevic was ousted, it was expected that a positive era awaited Greece in the Balkans with regard to asserting its influence. In line with such a policy, Georgos Papandreu happened to be the first politician to pay an official visit to Belgrade after Kostunica came to power. The aim was simple and well-worked: to make Thessaloniki the capital of economic and cultural integration in the Balkans.⁴³⁶ The new policies of Greece towards the Balkans yielded positive outcomes to particularly the economic performance of Greece. Turkey has increasing bilateral ties with the Balkan states. However, it ranks after Greece in foreign trade records with exception of Romania and Bosnia – Herzegovina.⁴³⁷

Turkey and Greece began to take part in regional forum meetings together as of 2005. Turkey was invited to the Regional Forum on Cultural Corridors in Southeast Europe organized in Bulgaria. It was announced that triple forum meetings including Turkey, Romania, Bulgaria, and Greece, Romania, Bulgaria were held separately, however a single forum meeting would be held with the four states in the ensuing years.⁴³⁸ Still, the almost inherent and chronic problems between the two states which project themselves on the relations between Greece and Turkey do remain in an array of issues. This includes the Balkans. Greece's giant steps in the Balkans in the economic venue are nothing to be underestimated. The recent purchase of shares of certain Turkish banks by Greece, as well as its overall

⁴³⁵ *ibid.*

⁴³⁶ İter Türkmen, "Balkanlar'da Yeni Bir Çığır", 2 November 2000, *Hürriyet*; and Nur Batur and Uğur Ergun, "Yukarıdan Aşağı Demokrasi Olmaz", 24 February 2001, *Hürriyet*.

⁴³⁷ Kamil Mehmet Büyükçolak, "Soğuk Savaş Sonrası Dönemde Türk – Yunan İlişkilerinde Yeni Bir Boyut: Balkanlar," p. 157. For a comprehensive account on Greece's relations with Turkey and the Balkans, see Ertan Köse, *Yunanistan'ın Türkiye ve Balkanlar Üzerindeki Stratejik Hedefleri*, A Master's Thesis Submitted to Gebze High Technology Institute, Social Sciences Institute, Gebze, 2005.

⁴³⁸ Süleyman Kurt, "Yunanistan ile Balkan Forumu Ayrılığına Son", 4 May 2005, *Zaman*.

economic activity in the Balkans render imperative the need for Turkey to define a strategy endowed with expedient investment-based policies.

4.9. TURKISH FOREIGN POLICY TOWARDS ROMANIA

Among formerly communist Balkan states, Romania is remarkable for being the state with which Turkey improved its relations on a stable basis and had almost no problems. Turkey and Romania improved their ties mostly through economic activities.⁴³⁹ The main foreign policy guidelines promoted by Romania in view of ensuring national security and regional stability have been described as linked to the promotion of partnership relations for entering NATO and European institutions; participating in regional and subregional projects; establishing bilateral relations; and avoiding military adventures.⁴⁴⁰ Within this framework, Turkish – Romanian relations continued to improve although the two states had been on different sides during the Bosnian War. The “Ottoman heritage” in Romania had less impact compared to other Balkan states and the Turkish minority in Romania is one of the most integrated and well-treated minorities in the Balkans.⁴⁴¹ Bilateral relations were stepped up with the Good Neighborliness, Friendship, and Cooperation Agreement in September 1991. High level visits were paid with annually regular meetings. During these visits, the most important agreements concluded were Agreement on Social Security (1999), Protocol on Joint Cooperation on Social Security (1999), Agreement on Consulates (1999), Agreement on Cooperation Science and Technology (1999),

⁴³⁹ Şule Kut, “Türkiye’nin Balkanlar Politikası”, p. 108.

⁴⁴⁰ Valeriu Todor, “Romania and Security Problems in the Balkans” in *Balkans – A Mirror of the New International Order*, pp. 218-219.

⁴⁴¹ Şule Kut, “Türkiye’nin Balkanlar Politikası”, p. 108.

and Protocol on Cooperation in Justice. Turkey and Bulgaria signed a trilateral agreement on a joint fight against illegal operations in respect of which Romania gave full support to put an end to the presence of the PKK in Romania. In this connection, Romania stepped up its efforts to track PKK activities and its members in the context of which it also extradited a number of PKK members to Turkey.⁴⁴²

The improving relations were noted by Mircea Neata, the Romanian Consul General in İstanbul when he said that there were many things that favor the strengthening of these relations for the benefit of both states. One of them was geographical proximity that both countries engaged at the crossroads of Europe and Asia. Romania opened a new consulate general in İzmir in the Aegean region in January 2005 while some countries chose to reduce or even close their missions. Romania's bid for NATO and the EU fostered bilateral relations.⁴⁴³ Turkey from the beginning has supported Romania's entry into NATO and welcomes the full membership of Romania in 2007.⁴⁴⁴

However, Turkey has certain expectations from Romania, which remain to be fulfilled in the ensuing years. First and foremost, Article 120 of the law regarding the regime to be applied to foreigners in Romania which facilitates conditions for EU citizens and other citizens in the EU zone should be enlarged to include Turkish businessmen and investors in Romania. Second, Turkey expects Romania to declare the PKK as a terrorist organization although Romanian authorities treat the said organization as one in practice. As is the case in other countries of Europe, the extensions of the PKK continue their activities under the guise of "cultural

⁴⁴² Hasret Atalay, *Romania in Transition: 1989 – 2001*, Unpublished Master's Thesis Submitted to the Department of International Relations, Bilkent University, 2001, p. 54; and 29 April 1992, *Milliyet*.

⁴⁴³ "Romania Turns Its face to the Aegean", 10 January 2005, *Turkish Daily News*.

⁴⁴⁴ Speech by President Ahmet Necdet Sezer on the occasion of Romanian President Traian Basescu's visit, on http://www.cankaya.gov.tr/tr_flash/KONUSMALAR/28.09.2005-437.html, retrieved on 26 July 2006 06:00:03 GMT.

association” in Romania. The activities of the PKK in Romania are reported to include meetings and demonstrations to manufacture public opinion and also to extract money from businessmen who are inclined to do so. In 2004, Romanian authorities deported some militants reported to have worked for the PKK. The legal ground at the outset was the lack of residence permit. However, Romanian authorities lately argue that such persons constitute a threat to domestic security and issue due decisions that prohibit re-entry by those persons into Romania for such periods as 15 years.⁴⁴⁵ Further, it was observed that the Armenian diaspora in Romania stepped up lobby activities for the recognition by the Romanian parliament of the so-called Armenian genocide on the occasion of its alleged 90th anniversary. In January 2005, it was learnt that Senator Varujan Vaganian, president of the budget commission, prepared a draft resolution addressing genocide claims. However, the attempt proved futile by the diplomatic efforts of Turkish officials and also that of Romanian Prime Minister and Foreign Minister. The issue was voiced also by Varujan Pamukciyan, the representative of the Armenian minority in Romania, in the session at the parliament on 26 April 2005. The members of parliament representing the Turkish minority also addressed the parliament regarding the Armenian allegations.⁴⁴⁶

As an EU member, Romania is known to back Turkey’s efforts to join the EU. Romanian Prime Minister Popescu Tariceanu stated during his visit in February

⁴⁴⁵ *Turkish – Romanian Bilateral Political Relations*, Balkan Affairs Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

⁴⁴⁶ *ibid.* The press statement released on 11 April 2005 by the Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs regarding the commemoration ceremony planned to take place in Yerevan on 20 – 24 April included expressions of genocide. Later on, State Secretary Lucian Leustean sent a letter of apology to the Turkish Embassy in Bucharest stating that the said expressions were written by mistake by the staff. Also, regular memorial services were conducted on 24 April 2005 at Bucharest Armenian Church. The Romanian press addressed readers with relevant articles and news and an NGO opened a photograph exhibition on 22- 29 April 2005 at the National Theater in Bucharest.

2006 that Romania could offer guidance concerning preparations.⁴⁴⁷ Soon after Brussels put off by 5 months a recommendation on whether to let Romania and Bulgaria join in 2007 or 2008, the EU Enlargement Commissioner Olli Rehn visited Bucharest and Sofia. Linking Turkey's accession with the enlargement process in general, Rehn stated that the EU's decision could also be perceived as a signal for Ankara to redouble its efforts. Regarding the issue, Romanian press commented that since Romania thought it was close to having a clear answer from the EU regarding its own bid and that it did not get any positive answer, this showed that the EU stance towards enlargement was not clear, and that included Turkey as well.⁴⁴⁸ While one may argue that Romania sees Turkey's membership in the EU as prospective, one may also maintain that Romania's support for Turkey's bid is yet to be convincing. Although the official statements by the Romanian Prime Minister in June 2006 reflected optimism and support when the Prime Minister said Turkey and the bloc have had a common future during an official visit to Spain, over the opening of Turkey's entry negotiations with the EU,⁴⁴⁹ President Basescu's interview of July 2005 in a German newspaper did say otherwise. Basescu stated he believed that the recommendation of privileged partnership put forward by CDU/CSU was a good compromise for both Turkey and the Ukraine at the material time; that it could be accepted that the EU should have a pause after the accession of Romania and Bulgaria due to its enlargement that included 10 states; and that priority in enlargement should be given to western Balkans to keep peace in Europe. These statements prompted Turkey to convey its regrets of Turkey to President Basescu

⁴⁴⁷ "Romania Offers EU Guidance to Turkey", 2 February 2006, *Turkish Daily News*.

⁴⁴⁸ "Turkey Has Something to Learn From Romania's Case", 28 May 2006, *Turkish Daily News*.

⁴⁴⁹ "Tariceanu: Turkey, EU Have Common Future", 10 June 2006, *Turkish Daily News*.

during the UN World Summit 2005 in New York.⁴⁵⁰ One may argue that Turkey should acknowledge that there can be fluctuations in the support given by Romania to Turkey with the change of governments and the conjuncture. Yet, given that the accession reforms in Romania are likely to translate themselves rather negatively onto the relations of Romania and Turkey after the accession of the former into the EU, Turkey should be wary of possible consequences. To illustrate with one recent example, this was seen most clearly when Romania introduced the visa requirement concerning Turkish citizens in the framework of internalizing the EU *acquis*. In this respect, Turkey expects Romania to implement the April 2004 visa agreement in a way that would not prejudice Turkey's economic and humanitarian contacts in the country. To conclude, Turkey would also welcome a stance with respect to the Cyprus issue which would reflect a supportive attitude regarding the isolation of the TRNC.

4.10. AN EVALUATION OF TURKEY'S POLICIES TOWARDS THE BALKANS

It can be argued that a number of factors have played important roles in the formulation and implementation of Turkey's Balkan policies, which can be summarized as follows: (i) minority issues and Turkey's Balkan legacy, (ii) instability and conflicts in the region, (iii) the geostrategic importance of the Balkans for Turkey, (iv) the commonly observed misinterpretations of Western politicians of the realities of the region, especially in crises, and (v) the need to incorporate the Balkan

⁴⁵⁰ *Turkish – Romanian Bilateral Political Relations*, Balkan Affairs Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

states into Euro – Atlantic structures. In general, Cognizant of the possibility of population influx to Turkey particularly at times of crises, Ankara's Balkan policy in respect of the minority question is based on preserving the acquired rights and status of Turkish minorities in the region as well as promoting their integration into political and economic life in the countries they live in, and hence the importance of averting instability and conflicts in the region arises. Furthermore, the region is of geostrategic importance for Ankara due to the increased importance to handle relations with abundant number of states after the regime changes in the region and the wars in former Yugoslavia. With a view to establishing and bolstering ties, Ankara, in the first place, tried to put the relations on track with the dissolution of Yugoslavia and to normalize its relations with the newly emerged states. In this regard, it also paid due attention by opting for multilateral initiatives, bilateral contacts, as well as regional cooperation platforms. On the other hand, Ankara's policies towards the region also have to do with its cognizance of the region. Due to its historical legacy and geographical and cultural proximity to the Balkans, Turkey has always had pre-cognizance of the region which the Western states lacked. His very cognizance has in due course enabled Turkey formulate policies which were more well-worked than those of its Western counterparts, one example of which was the Ankara's proposed Action Plan as early as in August 1992 submitted to the UN Security Council. The final NATO policy through the end of the war in 1995 was this Turkish Action Plan in essence. Finally, Ankara also acknowledges the importance of assisting the regional states in their efforts of integration into Euro – Atlantic structures. It self being a NATO member, Turkey can make significant contributions in this regard. In such a framework, Ankara has been influential in establishment of security and stability which came forth as a vital issue after the war

in Bosnia. Its policies were also based preventing any regional state to become a hegemonic power in the Balkans. Moreover, it refused any rhetoric that suggested Ankara was a part of the Muslim – Christian polarization by trying to play a constructive role between the West and Islamic countries. As such, Ankara was influential in the efforts of providing security and stability in the region in the political venue after the Cold War.⁴⁵¹

⁴⁵¹ For more information, see Mustafa Türkeş, “Turkish Foreign Policy towards the Balkans: Quest for Enduring Stability and Security in the Balkans”, in İdris Bal (ed.), *Turkish Foreign Policy in Post Cold Era*, (Florida: Ashgate, 2004), pp. 197 – 209.

CHAPTER V

TURKEY’S ECONOMIC RELATIONS WITH THE BALKAN STATES IN THE POST-COLD WAR ERA

Stability in the Balkans poses utmost importance for Turkey as any possible conflict in the region has high potential to constitute direct threats for Turkey’s overall economic relations with the region. Therefore, the need to bring regional economic ties to desired levels arises. The activities in the economic venue are one of the tools that could serve to bolster political, cultural, and social relations. However, relevant data is indicative of the observation that in spite of Turkey’s continuous efforts, bilateral economic relations with the region still remain below desired levels.¹ Nevertheless, on the whole, Turkish private sector invested and participated in privatization projects in the region since 1990s. Further, Turkey provided credit to Balkan states in pursuit of contributing to the establishment of stability after handicapped relations with the region during the Cold War period. However, Turkey provided aid as much as its own economic standing allowed. The region ranked after

¹ See Kamil Mehmet Büyükçolak, “Soğuk Savaş Döneminde Türk – Yunan İlişkilerinde Yeni Bir Boyut: Balkanlar”, in Birgül Demirtaş-Coşkun (ed) *Türkiye – Yunanistan – Eski Sorunlar, Yeni Arayışlar*, (Ankara: ASAM, 2002), pp. 147–149.

other regions such as Central Asia with respect to the aid provided.² In this framework, this chapter shall argue that treating economic relations hierarchically, below political and military relations, is not likely to yield bolstered economic outcomes for Turkey's part since it should be acknowledged that increased economic activities with the region are nascent but they are likely to function as facilitators of increased political and military relations.

5.1. ECONOMIC RELATIONS BETWEEN TURKEY AND BOSNIA - HERZEGOVINA

Turkey's trade and economic relations with Bosnia – Herzegovina was put into a legal framework with the 1995 Agreement on Trade and Economic Cooperation, the 1998 Agreement on Mutual Promotion and Protection of Investment and the 2003 Agreement on the Prevention of Double Taxation. The two states signed a Free Trade Agreement in 2002 which was put into effect in 2003.³ There are around 250 Turkish companies in Bosnia – Herzegovina, fifty of which are active. The overall investment of these Turkish companies, which include Altın Company, Kent Elit, Efes Pilsen, Zorlu Holding and Nobel, is 40 million Euros. Ziraat Bank opened a branch in Sarajevo in 1997 and two branches in Tuzla and Zenica in 2004. Other

² *ibid.* The rate of aid distribution to the Turkic republics was 87.5 % while it was 3.7 % to the Balkans for the 1992 – 1997 period.

³ “Türkiye – Bosna – Hersek Ticari ve Ekonomik İlişkileri” on www.deik.org.tr/bultenler/2005627172157BosnaHersek-Subat2005.pdf. The Free Trade Agreement between Turkey and Bosnia – Herzegovina is available on “Türkiye – Bosna – Hersek Serbest Ticaret Anlaşması” on www.dtm.gov.tr. Bosnia – Herzegovina is a small economy in Central Eastern Europe. In 2003, its GDP reached EUR 6 billion. The services sector accounts for a large part of the economy, 62 % of GDP. Industry accounts for 21 % and agriculture 12 % of GDP. The ratio of exports and imports of goods and services to GDP in 2003 was 85 %. The EU is the main trading partner of Bosnia – Herzegovina. See “Relations with Bosnia – Herzegovina” on http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/bosnia_and_herzegovina/economicalprofile.en.htm as retrieved on 15 September 2006, 16:42:14 GMT.

branches include Mostar, Bihaç, Ilıca, Strossmayerova, Ferhadıja, Pehlivanusa and Butmir.⁴ Turkish construction companies doing business in Bosnia – Herzegovina are ENKA, NUROL Holding, Tefken, Borova, ER-BU (which completed the reconstruction of the Mostar Bridge) and Şa-Ra Energy. There are eight Bosnian companies in Turkey with a total capital of 6.2 thousand YTL.

Turkish – Bosnian Business Council was established during former Prime Minister Tansu Çiller’s visit to Bosnia – Herzegovina in 1995. The Council has been instrumental in the development and enhancement of bilateral economic relations. Viewed in general terms, Turkey’s trade with Bosnia – Herzegovina is yet to reach satisfactory levels and present remarkable figures. The Turkish companies do not take place in privatization and large-scale projects, which paves the way for Slovenian and Croatian companies to move ahead although there are facilities that might draw the attention of Turkish companies concerning energy, transportation, and forestry.⁵ When the general framework in which trade between Bosnia – Herzegovina and Turkey takes place is taken into consideration, it is observed that Turkey had been applying a unilateral adjustment trade regime *vis-a-vis* Bosnia – Herzegovina since 30 June 1999 with a view to preventing trade movements which may stem from preferred trade regimes applied to Bosnia – Herzegovina by third parties. In this connection, industrial items from Bosnia – Herzegovina were imported to Turkey exempt from customs duty and quota. Other products were subject to tariffs. With the Free Trade Agreement which was put into effect in 2003, Turkey will lift all customs duties on all types of industrial and agricultural products *vis-a-vis* Bosnia – Herzegovina. The Free Trade Agreement also envisages Bosnia –

⁴ http://www.ziraat.com.tr/eng/our_bank/about/participations.aspx, as retrieved on 14 September 2006, 10:04:45 GMT.

⁵ Kadir Dikbaş, “Bosna’nın Ekonomik Dramı”, 7 August 2006, on <http://www.aksiyon.com.tr/yazdir.php?id=24977>, as retrieved on 23 September 2006, 17:26:28 GMT.

Herzegovina to gradually lift all customs duties and other duties of equal effect with respect to all products by 2007. In the recent years, Turkey's trade with Bosnia – Herzegovina indicated an increase.⁶ However, there are a number of deficiencies in bilateral economic relations. First and foremost, in the immediate aftermath of the war, due partly to the low purchasing power of the population, mostly low quality and cheap products entered Bosnia – Herzegovina market, which created a negative image of Turkish products. Furthermore, the fact that there is no singlehandedly governed customs and no single trade area causes reluctance on the part of Turkish businessmen to do business. This is only exacerbated by complicated bureaucracy which is open to abuse. The second notable deficiency is associated with the fact that Bosnian banks do not have credibility in Turkey creating a weak banking system image; a handicap for all economic activities in the country. Therefore, Turkish businessmen prefer to do business with the countries offering more elastic and appealing opportunities. Third, speaking the same language and having shared a common history, the neighboring countries, Croatia, Slovenia, and Serbia are more advantageous compared to Turkey. Moreover, the Croats in Bosnia – Herzegovina prefer to do business with Croatia and the Serbs in Bosnia – Herzegovina, with Serbia. Given the fact that the customs system is open to abuse and that native importers tend to do off-the-record trade, it would be acknowledged that small-scale Turkish companies, which do not recognize the market well, should cooperate with accredited companies which have distribution opportunities in Bosnia – Herzegovina.

It can be argued that Turkey can increase its export capacity through trade in food industry, automotive industry, wood processing and construction. Turkish fresh

⁶ “Bosna – Hersek Ekonomisi” <http://www.bihiturbiz.ba/tur/index.php?action=4a1> as retrieved on 10 July 2006, 19:48:50 GMT.

fruit and vegetables can compete in quality and are advantageous due to similar food and taste culture. In addition, it is known that since Bosnia – Herzegovina is not a producer in automotive industry, import of automobiles of at most seven-years-old is allowed. Therefore, most of the automobiles are second hand and pose a need for spare parts in remarkable quantities. Seventy five % of the passenger cars are Volkswagen and the rest is made up of mostly Opel and Skoda. Turkey has the opportunities to compete in this field however the spare part business is under the control of Croatian businessmen. The related items enter the country mostly through illegal ways. Turkey can establish large-scale depots and offer payment in installments by way of which the products can reach large number of consumers. Moreover, Bosnian businessmen are willing to establish their own business facilities which were destroyed during the war. They also demand investment items such as machinery for wood processing and construction sectors. It is possible for Turkish companies to take part in the renovation of these machineries.⁷

Turkish business circles have entered a new entrepreneurial process in 2006 with the signing of the Joint Action Plan by the Turkish Union of Chambers and Stock Exchanges and Bosnian Foreign Trade Chamber in April 2006. The plan envisages training Bosnian personnel within the framework of Chamber Development Program. Another project of note concerns entrepreneurship training to be given to Bosnian businessmen in collaboration with Turkish Business World Development Agency. The third project which is also under way concerns introduction of Turkish economy, business and investment to the members of the Bosnian financial press.

⁷ For more information, see “Türkiye – Bosna – Hersek Dış Ticareti” available on http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/ul_kom/bosna-hersek/bh_disticaret.htm as retrieved on 14 September 2006, 10:44:09 GMT.

Despite Turkey's overall entrepreneurship activities abroad, those in Bosnia – Herzegovina are at low levels, an example of which is the \$ 143 million bilateral trade volume in 2005. Given the strategic central position of Bosnia – Herzegovina in the heart of Europe, Turkish business circles have recently acknowledged that Bosnia – Herzegovina can offer Turkey advantages and in return receive more Turkish investment. The \$ 20 million worth renovation work regarding hospitals, buildings and bridges can be enhanced. Finally, Turkey has a firm stance to support the observer membership of Bosnia – Herzegovina in the World Trade Organization (WTO) to become permanent as well as the country's EU bid.⁸ Following this visit by the Turkish Union of Chambers and Stock Exchanges and the signing of the Joint Action Plan, the Serbian government announced that a group of 300 businessmen under the leadership of the Minister of Economy would visit Republika Srpska. Dragan Cavic, president of Republika Srpska, stated that a parallel agreement would be concluded between Serbia and Republika Srpska.⁹ It is necessary for Turkey to acknowledge the fact that just as Republika Srpska turns its face to Serbia and just as the Croats living in Bosnian - Croat Federation look to Croatia on economic as well as political matters, Bosnia – Herzegovina sees Turkey in a similar way. While the Croats and the Serbs in Bosnian – Croat Federation and Republika Srpska have close relations with their kin countries, Turkey's economic relations with Bosnia – Herzegovina present a weak picture. It would be erroneous to assert that the weak ties could be strengthened by the Bosnians alone. On the part of the Bosnians, the

⁸ See Rifat Hisarcıklıođlu's comments in "Bosna – Hersek Dış Ticaret Odası ile 'Ortak Eylem Planı' İmzalandı", <http://www.tobb.org.tr/ekonomikforum/2006/04/nisan2006.php> as retrieved on 17 September 2006, 05:33:21 GMT.

⁹ Mirzet Mujezinovic, "1 Ekim Öncesi Bosna – Hersek'teki Gelişmeler" *Turkish Weekly*, <http://www.turkishweekly.net/turkce/yazarlar.php?type=12&id=171> as retrieved on 2 October 2006, 09:38:05 GMT.

primary objective is to preserve the territorial integrity of Bosnia – Herzegovina.¹⁰ It is high time for Turkey to put aside the the view that has come to label Bosnia – Herzegovina as a war-torn country in official statements and do more, especially in the economic venue. It has taken a step toward that direction by the April 2006 visit. The rest will depend on to what extent Bosnia – Herzegovina and, more importantly, Turkey will be successful at operationalizing their economic forces.

5.2 .ECONOMIC RELATIONS BETWEEN TURKEY AND SERBIA¹¹

Turkey had sound economic relations with Yugoslavia even on the eve of the Bosnian war. Indeed, the criticism that Turkey did not take active stance in the initial phases of the Bosnian war harbored this economic fact in it. Turkey had good economic relations with Yugoslavia as the country was situated on Turkey’s trade routes to the West. Economic cooperation between the two states was still on track shortly before the war in 1990 when State Minister Cemil Çiçek went to Belgrade to attend a relevant meeting.¹² The bilateral economic cooperation at the time was advanced so much so that it included possibilities concerning joint investment to sell products to third parties.¹³ However, economic relations were heralded with the coming of the war. Some of the agreements signed between the two states were Agreement on the Prevention of Double Taxation (2003), Agreement on Mutual

¹⁰ idem, “Bosna – Hersek – Sırbistan – Türkiye” *Turkish Weekly*, <http://www.turkishweekly.net/turkce/yazarlar.php?type=12&id=131> as retrieved on 24 September 2006 05:54:44 GMT.

¹¹ Given the recent separation of the country, the term “Serbia” shall be used however it shall refer to both Serbia and Montenegro.

¹² 8 May 1990, *Türkiye*.

¹³ 14 October 1990, *Milliyet*.

Assistance between Customs Administrations (2003), Agreement on Scientific and Technical Cooperation (2003) and Agreement on Cooperation in Tourism (2004).¹⁴

Following the resumption of trade activities in 1996 with the lifting of the U.N. embargo on Yugoslavia, the Kosovo crisis came to fore as a second episode in the recession of trade relations. Although there is no such crisis or violence to cause an impediment, current bilateral economic relations still do not reflect satisfactory levels. For instance, Turkish exports to Serbia were \$ 256 million while Serbian imports were \$ 96 million in 2005. The main trade items between Turkey and Serbia are iron-steel products, machinery, rubber and products, copper, automotive and components, cotton, fresh fruit and vegetables, and carpets. Upon growing demand by Turkish companies doing business with Serbia, Serbia was included in the Eximbank Short-Term Import Credit Insurance Program. Moreover, Turkish companies have participated in the Belgrade International Construction Fair from 2002 onwards. The number of companies of Serbian origin is 22, which makes up one per thousand in the overall foreign capital in Turkey. To give few examples of Turkish investment, Efes Pilsen bought Pancevo brewery for 6 million Euros in 2003 and Zajecar brewery for 12 million Euros in 2004. Uzel Makine opened a liaison office to coordinate the disposal of tractors and agricultural equipments. Gintaş concluded an agreement with the Montenegrin government to build a trade center in Podgorica worth \$ 30 million.¹⁵

The representatives of the economic venue, both from the business world and state institutions, have come to acknowledge that they are important and sound economic partners and that the two states should speed up the promotion of

¹⁴ "Sırbistan - Karadağ Ülke Bülteni" May 2006, <http://www.deik.org.tr/bultenler/200662810157Bul06may.pdf> as retrieved on 9 October 2006, 01:55:24 GMT.

¹⁵ *ibid.*

economic cooperation in various bilateral meetings, particularly between 2000 – 2005. The unsatisfactory range of bilateral trade volume was spelled out by Serbia – Montenegro International Economic Relations Minister Branko Lukovac during the meeting held in the Serbian Chamber of Commerce in Belgrade. Faruk Cengiç, the representative of the Turkish part of the Business Council of Serbia (and Montenegro) and Turkey, conveyed the same message by stating that the existing trade volume did not reflect real possibilities of economic cooperation.¹⁶ Despite the improving trend in economic relations, the firms labelled as phantom seem to constitute a substantial problem by way of dodging taxes and trading outside the legal financial flow framework. Serbia has 157 such firms with non-existent addresses and unknown owners according to the Serbian tax administration and customs administration, 50 % of which are registered in Belgrade. The reason why this comes to fore as a concern for Turkey is because they allegedly import goods mostly from Turkey as well as from China. Therefore, it would not be wrong to argue that the significant problem of off-the-record trade still awaits solution.¹⁷ Another problem is the means considered by the Serbian authorities as part of the measures to reduce the deficit in foreign trade. In order to reduce the deficit in foreign trade, the export incentives and the measures that the government had taken to legalize a portion of hard currency revenue of Serbian construction firms, led to a narrowing tendency in the trade deficit through the end of 2005. However, the measure that is of concern for Turkey are the restrictions regarding non-tariff

¹⁶ “Turkey, Important and Prospective Partner of Serbia – Montenegro”, *Tanjug*, http://www.mfa.gov.yu/Policy/Bilateral/Turkey/activities_e/290503_1/_e.html as retrieved on 27 September 2006, 06:43:06 GMT.

¹⁷ “Tax Administration Seizes 40 Million Dinars in Equipment From ‘Phantom Firms’”, *Government of the Republic of Serbia*, <http://www.srbija.sr.gov.yu/vesti/vest.php?id=4577&g=serbia+turkey>

protection measures applied on textiles from Turkey, which may create problems for Turkey in the upcoming years.¹⁸

By and large, Serbia's credit rating floated around the ratings of Turkey, Brazil, Ukraine, and Indonesia until 2006. The Fitch international ratings agency assigned the (BB-) credit rating to Serbia, which is one degree better than the one assigned by the Standard and Poor's in 2004.¹⁹ It is known that Turkey is interested in taking part in the building of infrastructure in Serbia in this improvement period which was most recently been demonstrated by one of the eminent Turkish businessmen, Şarık Tara.²⁰ Turkish companies have shown interest in the privatization of large-scale textile companies in Serbia. Serbia's state-owned capital in the entire textile sector was planned to be sold by the end of 2006. The attendance by Turkish companies in the Textiles Fair and Leather and Footwear Fair in Belgrade in October 2006 made up half of the participating 45 states.²¹ However, fields of cooperation are to be developed given the fact that export possibilities of Serbia are appealing for Turkey's import possibilities. In addition to textiles, they include white goods, automotive and components, electronical items, and chemical products. Regarding the latter, it is known that there are large medicine factories in Serbia. Future projects can be launched for medicine production for Turkey in Serbia, which

¹⁸ "Growing Demand For Domestic Goods", <http://www.srbija.sr.gov.yu/vesti/vest.php?id=8741&g=serbia+turkey>

¹⁹ "Serbia Receives Another Improved International Credit Rating", <http://www.srbija.sr.gov.yu/vesti/vest.php?id=12259&q=serbia+turkey>; and "Foreign Investors Recognize Advantages of Investing in Serbia", <http://www.srbija.sr.gov.yu/vesti/vest.php?pf=1&id=12513&q=serbia+turkey>

²⁰ "Improving Economic Cooperation of Serbia – Montenegro and Turkey" <http://www.srbija.sr.gov.yu/vesti.php?id=9122&q=serbia+turkey>

²¹ "Textile Companies to be Privatized", *Beta News (BE92)*, 13 October 2006, <http://www.b92.net/eng.news/economy-article.php?nav-id=37308&fs=version=print>

would decrease costs. Finally, the hotels privatized in Montenegro may offer significant opportunities for Turkish tourism companies, if they are explored duly.²²

5.3. ECONOMIC RELATIONS BETWEEN TURKEY AND CROATIA

As the other countries originating from former Yugoslavia such as Bosnia – Herzegovina and Serbia went through a period of delay in their economic transition due to the experience of war, Croatia also had to overcome a hard economic transition. Although Slovenia and Croatia were better-off among the other former Yugoslav Federal republics in economic terms, Croatia’s transition proved to be more painstaking as it had to fight a three-year war unlike Slovenia which fought a brief 10-day war of independence that did not bring any major destruction. As a country that posed somewhat a stronger economic portrait along with Slovenia when compared to Bosnia – Herzegovina and Serbia, Croatia’s economic transition can be seen through four different stages from the political perspective. The first stage began with the war of independence. This stage started with the split of the Yugoslav Communist Party in early 1990. Following the unilateral isolation of Croatian economy from the larger Yugoslav economy, the ethnic tension augmented until the summer of 1991 when armed conflict began. In this period, Serbia and Montenegro imposed unilateral sanctions on trade with Croatia and Slovenia. The second stage began after the UN supported armistice in 1992. This stage is characterized by the occupation of one third of the country, which would last until 1995 when most of the occupied regions were liberated. In the course of the second stage, the stabilization

²² “Sırbistan – Karadağ Ülke Bülteni”, May 2006, <http://www.deik.org.tr/bultenler/200662810157Bul06may.pdf>

program which set the foundations for economic transition took place in 1993. Through this program, inflation was curbed from 1250 % in 1993 to 3 % deflation in 1994. The third stage reflected an unofficial political as well as economic isolation of Croatia due to the tension between the international community and Croatian nationalist-oriented government. During the third stage, a banking crisis took place in 1998 and was followed by a recession in 1999. In the last phase of the transition, a new central-left coalition government led by reformed communists came to power in 2000, after which the international isolation would come to an end. During this stage, Croatia became a member of the WTO in 2000 and signed the Stabilization and Association Agreement (SAA) with the EU in late 2001. The substantial economic challenges in the last stage were traced in the area of fiscal policy as public expenditures were unsustainable. Furthermore, as there are strong interest groups who would be worse-off if reforms take place, necessary expenditure cuts are not favored.²³

Turkey's economic relations with Croatia in the post-Cold War era are based on a number of agreements all of which were signed after 1993: Agreement on Maritime Transport (1994), Agreement on Trade and Economic Cooperation (1996), Agreement on Mutual Promotion and Protection of Investments (1996), Agreement on Military Training, Technical and Scientific Cooperation (1996), Agreement on Cooperation in Tourism (1996), TİKA Cooperation Protocol (1996), Agreement on Education and Culture (1996), Agreement on Prevention of Double taxation (1997), Agreement on International Land Transportation (1994), Agreement on

²³ These groups include pensioners and well-organized war veterans. For a comprehensive account of Croatia's post-1990 economic transition, see Boris Vujcic and Maroje Lang "GDN Project Country Study – Croatia", *Riga Workshop*, 19 June 2002. The total damage in Croatia amounted to \$ 25 billion along with the plummeting off-industrial output and earnings from tourism. With the introduction of a comprehensive economic stabilization program in 1993, Croatia received positive evaluation by the world's financial institutions as IMF, World Bank, EBRD, Union Bank of Switzerland, Dresdner Bank, and Standard and Poor's.

Standardization (1998), Agreement on Customs (1999) and Free Trade Agreement (2002). Turkey and Croatia founded a Joint Commission for Economic Cooperation, the First Session of which was scheduled for 1997. Croatia's offering plans included energy equipment and civil engineering services in joint ventures in Turkey, Croatia and third countries, cooperation of oil companies in joint research for crude oil in Turkey and Central Asia, cooperation in building oil pipelines, gas pipelines, underground gas storage, and tankers for oil and gas delivery and also cooperation in agriculture and health services.²⁴ In 2005, the trade volume between Croatia and Turkey amounted to \$ 251 million with a \$ 167 million export and \$ 84 million import. Major items in bilateral trade include mineral fuels, iron-steel products, machinery, apparel and clothing accessories, edible fruits, etc. Furthermore, the two states signed a memorandum of understanding regarding the provision of a \$ 100 million credit. However, the credit has not been rendered operational yet. Investment and cooperation areas include mainly civil engineering. The Croatian companies are known to have the capacity to undertake highway construction projects. However, they do not have adequate financial resources. In this respect, it could be important to take into consideration the framework agreement concluded in 2005 by Turkish Eximbank and Croatian Reconstruction and Development Bank. It is considered that Turkish companies could be interested in the construction of hotels along the Adriatic shores. With respect to naval construction, in the Joint Commission's First Period Protocol, it was decided that the two states would exchange information concerning shipyards, relevant organizations and companies with a view to exploring opportunities regarding ship building, maintenance and repair. However, this sector still awaits to see cooperation activities. Moreover, there is no regular cruising

²⁴ Ivica Tomic, Former Ambassador of Croatia to Turkey, "Exemplary Relations between Croatia and Turkey", 30 May 1997, *Turkish Daily News*; and idem, "Continued Development of Excellent Relations between Croatia and Turkey" 27 May 1998, *Turkish Daily News*.

between Turkey and Croatia, except for rare transport by Turkish ships. The Rijeka Port is considered as a new route for transport to Europe as an alternative for Trieste Port recently.

As regards the activities of Turkish companies in Croatia, ENKA Holding, together with Bechtel, completed the Zagreb – Belgrad highway construction worth \$ 1 billion. Uzel Tourism opened the boutique hotel, “The Pucic Palace”, in Dubrovnik in 2002. Rixos Hotels made an investment in Libertas Hotel in the same city. The construction of the hotel is proceeding rapidly. The Croatian companies have attended İzmir International Fair since 1996. Turkey attended the Zagreb Fair for the first time in 1999 with 22 companies. Turkish companies also participated in the International Fashion Fair in Zagreb in 2003. As in other former Yugoslav republics, the problems in bilateral economic relations include financing problems, inadequate transportation facilities and bureaucratic problems. Turkish companies mostly complain about the difficulties encountered whilst receiving required national certificates in the provision of infrastructure and construction project equipments.²⁵ Perhaps more significant is the transportation problem which may be eliminated by the introduction of the Balkans Cargo Super Corridor. The new Transportation Project named as such by Damir Perincic, the Consul General of Croatia to İstanbul, is likely to allow both states to use their geopolitical positions to the highest extent possible.

As Turkey is inclined to facilitate its exportation to the EU member states, transportation companies from Turkey could go directly to Croatia and then to the EU members. Conversely, as for the exportation from the EU to Turkey, this could

²⁵ For more information, see “Türkiye – Hırvatistan Ticari ve Ekonomik İlişkileri”, on <http://www.deik.org.tr/ikili/200412212234Hırvatistan-ikili-kasim2004.pdf>

become much easier via Croatia. If carried out with fair prices and duly, a nonnegligible business flow can be created.²⁶

5.4. ECONOMIC RELATIONS BETWEEN TURKEY AND MACEDONIA

As a state that had just declared its independence in September 1991, Macedonia had to face an amalgam of economic deficiencies which were coupled with political and military weakness. It could not receive aid and credit as it was not officially recognized. Its trade with Bosnia – Herzegovina was cut off while Greece added to the picture by occasionally closing the Thessaloniki Port to Macedonia, thus blocking oil transfer to the country. Therefore, Turkey’s provision of oil and humanitarian aid in this period proved vital for Macedonia.²⁷ Former Foreign Minister Hikmet Çetin’s visit to Macedonia in late 1993 was substantial in bringing into life certain projects such as the East-West Motorway passing through Albania, Macedonia, Bulgaria, and Turkey.²⁸ Following this visit, a number of agreements were signed between the two states: Agreement on Trade and Economic Cooperation (1995), Agreement on the Prevention of Double Taxation (1995), Agreement on Mutual Promotion and Protection of Investments (1995), Agreement on Mutual Promotion and Protection of Investments (1995), Free Trade Agreement (1999) and Memorandum of Understanding (2003).

²⁶ Can Karpat, “Croatia Still Aspires To Join The EU”, 29 September 2005, <http://www.axisglobe.com/print-article.asp?article=398> as retrieved on 28 October 2006, 02:47:47 GMT.

²⁷ Şule Kut, “Yugoslav Bunalımı ve Türkiye’nin Bosna – Hersek ve Makedonya Politikası: 1990-1993”, in Faruk Sönmezoğlu (ed.) *Türk Dış Politikasının Analizi* (İstanbul: DER, 1998), p. 337; and Mehmet Turna, “Makedonya – Türk İlişkileri ve Makedonya’nın Geleceğine Bakış”, *Avrasya Dosyası*, 1996, 3(3), pp. 75–76.

²⁸ Şule Kut, “Yugoslav Bunalımı ve Türkiye’nin Bosna – Hersek ve Makedonya Politikası: 1990–1993”, p. 338.

In 1998, President Demirel signed an agreement on agriculture to ensure the inclusion of Turkey in the Vardar Valley Project which is perceived as the equivalent of GAP (*Güneydoğu Anadolu Projesi/Southeast Anatolian Project*) in Macedonia. This project envisages development and reconstruction along the 200 km long Vardar River line including Kumanova, Skopje, Titov, Veles, and Georgia as well as building dams, power plants, and railways. The Macedonian officials asked the GAP administrators in Turkey to carry out the feasibility works of the project.²⁹ With the dams and irrigation facilities, the country is likely to become an important exporter of food, textiles and energy. Turkish companies are interested in the project which is supposed to include 16 hydroelectric power plants and investments for irrigation, motorway, railway and tourism, worth \$ 3 million.³⁰

Although Turkish Eximbank is ready to assess credit proposals based on state guarantee or a respectable bank, it has not offered Macedonia any credit to date. Any possible credit would be important for the reconstruction of the airport, mass housing, energy construction and motorways. Bilateral trade volume between the two states reached \$ 213 million with an export of \$ 162 million and an import of \$ 51 million in 2004. Main export items include cotton, fresh fruits, machinery, rubber, carpets, iron-steel products, furniture, and wood products. Import items include iron-steel, food, cotton, electrical equipment, railway components, zinc and related products, salt, cement, sulfur, glassware, and woven items. As regards direct investment in Macedonia, the number of Turkish businessmen in Macedonia outweighs their Macedonian counterparts in Turkey. There are 200 companies registered in Macedonia while the official figure provided by the Turkish Embassy in

²⁹ “Türkiye – Makedonya İşbirliği İle Vardar Vadisi Projesi”, on <http://www.gap.gov.tr/Turkish/Dergi/D7121999/vardar.html>; and Makedonya Dışişleri Bakanı Mitreva TOBB’u Ziyaret Etti”, 21 July 2005, on <http://www.tobb.org.tr/haberler/MAKEDONYA%20ZİYARETİ.pdf>

³⁰ Taha Akyol, “Makedonya Notları”, 30 October 1998, *Milliyet*.

Skopje is approximately 40. A branch of Ziraat Bank opened in Skopje in 1998 with an investment of approximately \$ 10.4 million. Netaş established 10 rural telephone switchboards and sold a thousand pay phones. Turkish companies are also interested in the privatization process. Brick producer Dolomite Vardar was bought by Haznedar Refrakter. Other Turkish investments include accumulator factory in Probistip, sunflower oil production in Ustunca, brewery in Manastir and agricultural complex in Dubrova. Koç Holding opened Ramstore in Skopje in June 2005 with an investment of \$ 30 million. Total Turkish investment reached \$ 50 million with the investments of Ramstore, Haznedar Tuğla and Universal Hospital Group in 2004 and is estimated to reach \$ 100 million with the completion of ongoing investments.³¹

Although there are no political problems between Turkey and Macedonia, there are problems awaiting solution in the economic venue. The Turkish companies often face difficulties stemming from inadequate highway infrastructure. The bureaucratic problems encountered at the Bulgarian and Macedonian border gates are no less substantial. In this respect, the construction of the highway corridor to pass through Albania, Macedonia, Bulgaria, and Turkey is of utmost importance for the activities of the Turkish companies to gain momentum. Furthermore, inadequate links between the banks of the two countries lead to inefficiency in transactions. The main problem in the banking sector originates from the fact that in accordance with the banking legislation in Macedonia, letters of credit of the exported goods from Turkey are discharged only after the customs procedures at the Macedonian border concerning a certain commodity are completed. The release of the letters of credit is delayed due to the delay in customs procedures, causing a slowdown in overall trade activities. Owing to the moderate market size of Macedonia, mostly small- and

³¹ <http://www.deik.org/bultenler/2006628101840MakedonyaHaziran2006.pdf>; and “New Ramstore Opens In Macedonia” 13 June 2005, *Turkish Daily News*.

medium-size Turkish companies have shown interest to do business in Macedonia.³² Indeed, this was voiced as a concern by Turkey on the eve of Macedonian Prime Minister Vlado Bukovski's visit to Ankara in March 2005, which was aimed at building stronger commercial ties after the opening of Ramstore in Skopje by Koç Holding. The Macedonians await for Turkish investment, yet large Turkish companies complain about the lack of confidence to help these companies believe there is safe background to do business in Macedonia and look to Macedonian officials to offer a political framework and to eliminate concerns regarding bribery.³³ In this connection, the two states signed an economic cooperation agreement concerning banking, standardization, energy, tourism, health, and environmental protection in April 2005.³⁴

The new government established in 2004 in Macedonia is said to take efforts to create a secure business environment, including efforts to combat bribery. The country also has programs to establish free trade and industry zones. Given that Greece is the country that leads the head in terms of foreign investment in Macedonia, it would be Turkey's advantage to seek to enhance economic ties with Macedonia, not only with small- and medium-scale companies but also the large ones which would make a substantial difference in improving bilateral relations. The opening of Ramstore by Koç sets a telling example in that respect and there are enough resources on the part of Turkish business world to follow suit.

³² <http://www.deik.org/bultenler/2006628101840MakedonyaHaziran2006.pdf>

³³ Ferai Tınç and Tufan Türeç, "Size Minnettarız", 15 March 2005, *Hürriyet*.

³⁴ "Makedonya ile Türkiye Ekonomik İşbirliği Anlaşması İmzalandı", <http://www.setimes.com/cocoon/setimes/xhtml/tr/features/setimes/newsbriefs/2005/04/28/nb-04> as retrieved on 28 October 2006, 02:49:26 GMT; "Devlet Bakanı Güldal Akşit Makedonya Temaslarını Tamamladı", 28 April 2005, <http://www.makturk.com/modules.php?name=News&file=print&sid=110> as retrieved on 30 October 2006, 17:19:37 GMT; "Makedonya Dışişleri Bakanı Mitreva TOBB'u Ziyaret Etti", 21 July 2005, http://www.tobb.org.tr/haber_arsiv2php?haberid_365, as retrieved on 1 November 2006, 13:40:55 GMT; and "Macedonia Seeks Enhanced Turkey Ties", 22 July 2005, *Turkish Daily News*.

5.5. ECONOMIC RELATIONS BETWEEN TURKEY AND ALBANIA

Turkey's bilateral economic relations with Albania began with the Agreement on Trade and the Agreement on Economic, Commercial, Industrial and Technical Cooperation through the end of the Cold War, as late as 1988, since the country was isolated politically and economically for a long time during the years of Cold War under Enver Hoxha's regime. The legal framework of economic relations between Albania and Turkey in the post-Cold War era was based on the Agreement on Mutual Promotion and Protection of Investments (1996) and the Agreement for the Prevention of Double Taxation (1998). The first round of talks concerning Free Trade Agreement was held in 2003. The continuation of talks is scheduled to take place after the finalization of Stability and Partnership Agreement going on between the EU and Albania. Turkey's exports to Albania were \$ 160 million in 2004 while its imports were \$ 15.528 million. Main items in Turkish exports include iron – steel, aluminum, cereal, flour, electrical items, salt, sulfur, cement, rubber, cacao, and iron – steel products while its imports include the same items.³⁵

³⁵ “Türkiye – Arnavutluk Ticari ve Ekonomik İlişkileri” http://www.deik.org.tr/bultenler/2005627175124Arnavutluk_Subat2005.pdf. Albania went through a 50-year period of isolation and political pressure which created a closed economy. Following this period, Albania embarked into a new era in which it would try to align its policies with the EU and the U.S.A. in every venue. While the new policies of Albania aimed at building multilateral relations in foreign policy, they were also intended to protect and develop the political and national rights of the Albanians spread across the region. Economy also had its share from the said transformation. Serious reforms were introduced, privatization programs were launched, and the overall single-handedly run economy was replaced with free trade. Throughout 1990s, the economic reforms in Albania were viewed as a model by the Balkan states. With the support of the IMF and the World Bank, the Berisha government took giant steps in privatization and banking which brought about considerable growth. Nevertheless, except for the increase in agricultural productivity after privatization, the remaining reforms proved superficial. The finance sector could not develop as desired. The increase in the cost of daily needs, the resources obtained through workers abroad, smuggling, money laundering, and benefits derived from moneylenders only added to the unpleasant picture, which was to be followed by the crisis in 1997. After this crisis, the new government introduced a new stability and reform package with international support in the framework of which it was granted credits in 1998 and 1999. However, macroeconomic stability cannot be achieved due to extreme poverty in the country. It is also worth noting that many people sold their houses to benefit from high interest rates, creating a problem of housing. A new project was also implemented to combat unemployment. In 2000, the EU signed a Preferential Trade Agreement with the western Balkan states which included Albania. The

In accordance with Law no. 7638 adopted in 1992, foreign companies in Albania were granted the rights given to Albanian companies, in the scope of which they can rent facilities and properties for 99 years. Yet, Turkey's bilateral economic relations with Albania remain limited on trade mainly. Trade with Albania is mainly composed of Turkish exports. In the end of 2005, Turkish firms in Albania have made \$ 35 million investment. Among the investments of Turkish businessmen are shoe factory, many shops, restaurants, and dental clinics. Kürüm Iron – Steel Joint Stock Company rent the iron – steel enterprises in Elbasan Valley for a 20-year period and started production. The company also explores possibilities to build a shipyard in Durres Port. In the mining sector, Ber-Öner has received the right to explore and operate mine reserves in copper-dense regions in Albania. Everest has made an investment of \$ 2 million for polyethylene packing production. Apart from these investments, there are two main sectors of Turkish investment; construction and banking. The companies operating in the construction sector are Tepe Construction Joint Stock Company, Be-Ha-Şe, Enka, Tümaş Joint Stock Company, GİNTAŞ, Mak-Yol, MNG, which have undertaken projects on highway construction, building restoration, military facility construction, and mass housing. As for banking, a Ziraat Bank branch was planned to open in Tirana with an investment of \$ 3 million. However, the project had to be suspended due to the crisis in 1997 and the political instability it brought. Kentbank bought shares of the privatized Albanian National Commercial Bank in 2000. The Albanian Central Bank and *BDDK* concluded the Bilateral Cooperation Agreement with a view to reaching accurate information regarding the transaction of the banks and finance institutions in their country, to build an institutional framework which would facilitate cooperation in

country became a member of the WTO in the same year. See “Arnavutluk’ta Ekonomik Gelişmeler” <http://www.gebzegazetesi.com/iskahraman/?i=detay&id32> as retrieved on 24 November 2006, 06:32:08 GMT.

cross-border supervision, and to share institutional experience and technological training. Other possibilities of investment include telecommunication, medicine, energy, oil, natural gas, tobacco, tourism, mining, chemical industry, food processing, packaging, cement industry, insurance, and transportation.³⁶

Nevertheless, continuation and improvement of such bilateral trade necessitate certain activities which need to be done more frequently. Both sides should acknowledge the importance of regular mutual visits by public and private sector representatives to be informed duly regarding the existing market potentials, standing laws, and regulations. The two states concur on the fact that relevant trade and industry chambers must be encouraged in order to be able to proceed with improved contacts. Equally importantly, the two sides endorse the importance of attending fairs and exhibitions more efficiently.

Turkey and Albania cooperate also in the fields of standardization, customs, credits, and free trade. The sectors that the two states explore more possibilities are energy, industry, transportation, tourism, agriculture and communication, and postal services. Concerning energy, Turkey and Albania confirmed their consensus regarding the return of 83.9 kWh worth electrical energy, exported from Turkey to Albania for \$ 3.2 million in 1990 via Greece and Bulgaria. The two states are also supportive of possible power plant constructions. The Albanians welcome the participation of Turkish companies in the reconstruction, rehabilitation and construction of small- and medium-size hydroelectric power plants. Second, the two states acknowledge the significance of increased cooperation in industry sector, particularly, copper, chromium, iron – steel, leather, textiles, and paper. The two states

³⁶ “Türkiye – Arnavutluk Ticari ve Ekonomik İlişkileri” http://www.deik.org.tr/bultenler/2005627175124Arnavutluk_Subat2005.pdf; and “Türkiye – Arnavutluk Ekonomik, Ticari, Sanayi ve Teknik İşbirliği Karma Komisyonu Altıncı Dönem Toplantısı Protokolü” <http://www.foreigntrade.gov.tr/pazaragiris/kek/arnavutluk.htm> as retrieved on 28 October 2006, 09:02:00 GMT.

have signed an Agreement on International Transportation in 2000. The Albanian officials have also submitted a draft agreement on air services to their Turkish counterparts. In order to improve transportation, they have reached a consensus to explore facilities concerning containers and ferries in the context of which mutual port authorities are planned to have contacts. Furthermore, the two states are willing to cooperate in agriculture and have determined the following areas as appropriate for cooperation in this field: technology transfer to Albania with a view to supporting Turkish investments and processing agricultural products; information exchange regarding laws on agriculture and food; and promotion of cooperation between scientific research institutes. As for communication and postal services, Turkey and Albania cooperate in the provision of telephone services in rural areas and to enhance cooperation to research the efficiency of Trans Balkan Line.³⁷

By and large, economic relations with Albania displayed an improving trend until 1997. After 1997, however, Albania turned its face more to Greece when the Socialist Party intensified relations with the country.³⁸ Most recently, Albanian authorities decided to sell 76 % of Albanian state phone company Altelecom Sh.A to the Turkish consortium made up of Türk Telekom and Çalık Enerji Telekomünikasyon A.Ş.³⁹ As is the case with other Balkan states, there are certain problems in bilateral economic relations with Albania. To start with, letter of credit procedures are delayed due to lack of cash in local banks, problems in money transfer between cities, and the complications in the state-owned bank procedures. Second, Turkish companies expect the existing customs legislation to be amended as soon as possible. Third, Turkish companies which export goods by land

³⁷ “Türkiye – Arnavutluk Ekonomik, Ticari, Sanayi ve Teknik İşbirliği Karma Komisyonu Altıncı Dönem Toplantısı Protokolü” <http://www.foreigntrade.gov.tr/pazaragiris/kek/arnavutluk.htm>

³⁸ Hasan Ünal, “Arnavutluk İyice Yunanistan’a Kayıyor” 9 January 1998, *Zaman*.

³⁹ “Turkish Consortium Acquires Albanian Altelecom” 28 May 2005, *Turkish Daily News*.

transportation reach Albania only after four to ten days and thus lose price advantages, due to lack of infrastructure in Bulgaria, Macedonia, and Albania. Fourth, lack of electricity has negative impact upon foreign investors. Fifth, as a result of domestic turmoil after 1997, off-the-record import increased due to weak border controls. However, foreign companies are obliged to pay customs duties. This creates unjust competition and makes the marketing of Turkish products more difficult. Finally, the lack of any efforts to compensate for the loss of Turkish companies resulting from the domestic turmoil in 1997 is yet another factor that hinders improvement in economic cooperation.⁴⁰

5.6. ECONOMIC RELATIONS BETWEEN TURKEY AND KOSOVO

As the poorest region due to past turmoils and ongoing uncertainty concerning status, Kosovo presents a slow-pace economy. Security concerns and unclear status until February 2008 heralded investment in the province. Inflation is low and the budget displayed a deficit for the first time in 2004. Kosovo also has external deficits. Unemployment, which fluctuates around 50%, is another major problem. Most economic development after 1999 was observed in trade, retail, and construction sectors. The private sector which emerged since 1999 is small-scale. Since there are small farms, limited capital stock and lack of technical expertise, agricultural productivity is low. Under the auspices of the Stability Pact, UNMIK signed a bilateral free trade agreement on behalf of Kosovo with Albania in 2003. In 2005, UNMIK Kosovo and Macedonia concluded a free trade agreement. UNMIK and

⁴⁰ “Türkiye – Arnavutluk Ticari ve Ekonomik İlişkileri”
http://www.deik.org.tr/bultenler/2005627175124Arnavutluk_Subat2005.pdf

Bosnia – Herzegovina signed a free trade agreement in early 2006. In the same year, Kosovo joined enlarged Central European Free Trade Agreement. In the new enlarged Central European Free Trade Agreement (CEFTA) signed in December 2006 at the Southeast European Summit of Prime Ministers in Bucharest, UNMIK and Kosovar officials participated in the signing on behalf of Kosovo. The parties who signed CEFTA are Albania, Bosnian – Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Romania and Serbia.⁴¹

As regards Turkey’s economic relations with Kosovo, it is known that Turkey signed the Agreement on Mutual Promotion and Protection of Investments in April 2006. With the signing of a free trade agreement, the trade volume which was \$ 73 million in 2006 is expected to increase. This trade volume includes individual efforts of businessmen as well as shuttle trade. Kosovo meets 90% of its foodstuffs need from Turkey. In this respect, Turkey ranks third after Serbia and Macedonia in food import. Two large-scale investment companies in Kosovo are Kürüm Iron and Steel Company with an investment of 10 million Euros and Tepe Defense and Security Systems Inc. In addition, Özer Konveyör Bant opened the largest scotch tape factory in Kosovo in 2006. Frequent flights of Turkish Airlines, which are three or four times a week, facilitate trade activities which could be further improved if a Turkish bank is opened in Kosovo. There are also possibilities of cooperation in construction (particularly in highway construction and enlargement) infrastructure, mining, energy, and tourism. This cooperation can increase if Turkish companies make use of credits to be provided in the framework of European Bank for Reconstruction and

⁴¹ “Kosovo – Economic Profile”, on http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/serbia/kosovo/economic_profile_en.htm as retrieved on 22 March 2007, 06:47:27 GMT; “UNMIK and Bosnia and Herzegovina Initial Free Trade Agreement”, 17 February 2006, <http://www.euinkosovo.org/upload-press/4.06%20-%20UNMIK%20andBosnia%20and%20Herzegovina%20Agreement%2017.2.06.pdf>; and “Kosovo Joins Enlarged Central European Free Trade Agreement”, 19 December 2006, <http://www.euinkosovo.org/upload-press/kosovo%20joins%20Enlarged%20CEFTA.pdf> .

Development and European Investment Bank, and if they participate more in primarily mining and energy privatization bids. In general, cooperation between Kosovo Chamber of Commerce and Turkish Union of Chambers and Stock Exchanges continue, yet in limited circumstances.⁴²

It would be acknowledged that if Kosovo's status is not altered to the satisfaction of the groups living in the province, the existing and rather gloomy picture in economy is likely to prevail in the upcoming years. The experience gained in the economic venue in other regional states point out the importance of regional integration. Moreover, as Kosovo's market is quite small, the investors tend to view it as an integral part of a larger trade area. This picture may be perceived more unfavorable taking into account the low higher education rates and Kosovo's bad reputation regarding bribery. This means that even if the entrepreneurs achieve the possibility of financial markets in Kosovo, they will still need to be persuaded taking into account security concerns and the limited size of Kosovo's market. Thinking positively, successful entrepreneurship stories will have to be publicized in order to attract more investment.⁴³

Most recently, Bulgaria's entrance in the EU heralded traffic between Turkey and Kosovo in January 2007. Kosovar economist Saffet Girçaliu stated that Kosovo's raw material and goods import were primarily from Turkey via Bulgaria, which was negatively effected when Bulgaria started implementing EU's visa regimes.⁴⁴ Another development concerning trade came to fore when it was declared that

⁴² "Kosova Geçici Özyönetimi Başbakanı Agim Çeku TOBB'u Ziyaret Etti", 3 March 2007, http://www.tobb.org.tr/haber_arsiv2php?haberid=1248, as retrieved on 30 March 2007, 07:17:22 GMT; and "Kosova Sanayi ve Ticaret Bakanı Bujar Düolli TOBB'u Ziyaret Etti" 6 April 2006, http://www.tobb.org.tr/haber_arsiv2php?haberid=634, as retrieved on 22 March 2007, 15:54:17.

⁴³ "Kosova'da Her Şey Ekonomiye Bağlı", 19 December 2006, http://www.prizrenliler.org/index2.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=126

⁴⁴ "Bulgaristan'ın Üyeliği Türkiye – Kosova Seferlerini Durdurdu" 5 January 2007, http://www.prizrenliler.org/index2.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=158 ; and "Vize Sorunu Kosova ile Türkiye Arasındaki Ticareti Vurdu", 6 January 2007, http://www.prizrenliler.org/index2php?option=com_content&task=view&id=159.

Turkey would initiate free trade accords with Kosovo in January 2007. Undersecretariat of Foreign Trade plans to initiate free trade agreement talks with Kosovo in the first half of 2007. The free trade agreement is expected to enable the countries to export or import goods without customs taxes.⁴⁵

5.7. ECONOMIC RELATIONS BETWEEN TURKEY AND BULGARIA

Taking into account the decade of transition (1990 – 2000) in Bulgaria, it can be said that this period was a critical one in the development of foreign economic relations of the country. Viewed through the economic lens, the chronological account of foreign economic relations of Bulgaria, particularly with respect to trade balance, falls into four major periods:

- 1) 1990 – 1991: a continuation of 1980s, decreasing surpluses,
- 2) 1992 – 1994: moderate deficits,
- 3) 1995 – 1997: moderate surpluses,
- 4) 1998 – 2000: substantial and growing deficits.⁴⁶

The seeds of economic relations with Bulgaria after 1990 were sown when Turkish aid, products, and capital entered Bulgaria in 1990 and 1991. Subsequently, Bulgarian entrepreneurs learned economic entrepreneurship experiences from their

⁴⁵ “Turkey to Initiate Free Trade Accord With Serbia, Kosovo, Montenegro”, 12 January 2007, http://www.bilaterals.org/article.php3?id_article=6931 retrieved on 31 May 2007, 18:20:22 GMT. Turkey’s free trade agreements with Macedonia, Croatia and Bosnia – Herzegovina are in force. Turkey and Albania signed free trade agreement in December 2006. Free trade agreements with Romania and Bulgaria ended after those countries became full members of the EU on 1 January 2007. Trade relations with Romania and Bulgaria will be carried out under the Customs Unions.

⁴⁶ Vladimir Tzarevski, “Foreign Economic Relations During The Transition Period In Bulgaria (1990 – 2000), February 2001, *Southeast Europe Review*, p. 143.

small-scaled Turkish counterparts, which increased economic contacts between 1992 and 1993. In these years, Turkish – Bulgarian economic relations were weak due to off-the-record trade; the fact that Turkish products could not compete with those of the EU; and the Balkans were more important for Turkey in strategic terms than in the economic sense.⁴⁷

The legal framework of bilateral economic relations between Turkey and Bulgaria includes the following agreements: Agreement on Trade, Economic Industrial and Technical Cooperation (1994), Mutual Promotion and Protection of Investments (1994), Prevention of Double Taxation (1994), Agreement on Tourism Cooperation (1997), Free Trade Agreement (1998), Agreement on Cooperation in Energy and Infrastructure (1998), Bilateral Air Transportation Agreement (2004) and Sea Trade Transportation Agreement (2004). Turkish exports to Bulgaria were \$1,176.7 million while its imports from Bulgaria were \$1,186.2 million in 2005. Main export items include machinery, iron and steel, electrical machines, automotive and related industry, rubber, cotton, and woven items. Main import items include iron and steel, copper and copper products, fruits, zinc and zinc products, rubber, inorganic and organic chemicals, wood, lead and lead products, and machinery. According to the Foreign Investment Agency of Bulgaria, Turkey is the 17th country in the list of foreign investors with a total investment of \$110 million in Bulgaria. This figure reaches \$250 million when Turkey's joint investments with foreign investors are included. 95 Bulgarian companies have been registered in Turkey by June 2005, 67 of which were established after 2003. The investment of Pristo Oil is significant as it is among the largest Bulgarian private enterprises abroad. Turkish companies in Bulgaria are interested in the privatization of paper mills, military

⁴⁷ Nurcan Özgür, "1989 Sonrası Türkiye – Bulgaristan İlişkileri", p. 383.

industrial facilities, machine production facilities, and hotels. In this framework, Şişecam and Işıklar Holding bought two large facilities in Bulgaria. Trakya Cam, the shareholder of Şişecam, announced that it would establish a glasshouse in Turgovishte. At the outset, the investment was planned to be \$160 million. In 2005, it was increased to \$220 million. Another large scale Turkish investment is the SUN Hotel in Sofia. Özkan Group has bought Novotel – Evropa Hotel in the same city. The Princess Hotels which belong to this group opened in Filibe as well. Süzer Holding is the shareholder of 87.5 % of the cardboard factory ZMK Nikopol. In 1998, a parquet factory opened in Kızanlık with a production capacity of 15.000 tons per month. Turkish companies are particularly assertive in the textile sector in Bulgaria. These include Maser Holding, Zorlu and Şahinler.⁴⁸ There is an electricity transfer line of 500 mW capacity ready to operate between Turkey and Bulgaria. The seeds of this project were sown during İsmail Cem’s visit to Bulgaria in May 1998. Cem conveyed the message of Turkish businessmen that Turkish companies can construct and renovate highways and get electricity in return instead of money.⁴⁹ The project took shape in October 1999 with an estimate that Turkey would receive 234 billion kWh worth electricity from Bulgaria until 2008. The first concrete step of cooperation in the project was taken by National Electricity Company of Bulgaria (NEC) and Ceylan Holding on River Arda.⁵⁰ However, following the 2001 economic crisis and the bankruptcy of Bank Kapital of Ceylan Holding, Bulgarian Prime Minister Ivan Kostov wrote a letter to his Turkish counterpart Bülent Ecevit asking for another Turkish company to undertake the projects of Ceylan Holding which are

⁴⁸ “Türkiye – Bulgaristan Ticari ve Ekonomik İlişkileri”, <http://www.deik.org.tr/bultenler/200662817412Bulgaristan-bultenmayis2006.pdf> , and *Hedef Pazar Araştırması – Bulgaristan*, Export Promotion Center of Turkey, December 2004.

⁴⁹ “Yol Yap, Elektrik Al”, 14 May 1998, *Sabah*; “Bulgaristan Elektriği İletiminde İlk Adım”, 17 August 1999, *Cumhuriyet*.

⁵⁰ “Elektrikte Türk Bulgar Evliliği”, 27 October 1999, *Hürriyet*; and “Bulgaristan Türkiye’ye Santral Tahsis Ediyor”, 11 October 2000, *Milliyet*.

worth \$600 million.⁵¹ Owing to the fact that the project could not be materialized after three years had passed since its signing, the Bulgarian periodical *Capital* wrote that Bulgarian officials picked Ceylan Holding's failure to implement the project as the most important problem in bilateral economic relations. It was also stated that the Bulgarian government applied to international construction companies since the Turkish government did not propose another Turkish company. The interpretation of the issue by Bulgarian press was that Deputy Prime Minister Mesut Yılmaz conveyed the message that bilateral economic relations would not develop if the project were to be given to foreign companies.⁵² In 2002, although Bulgarian officials stated that it was decided that the construction of Gorna – Arda Hydroelectric Power Plant would be undertaken by an Italian company, they did not expressly say so due to the contract signed between the two states which stipulated that Turkey would buy electricity and construct dams and highways in return. This meant that the Bulgarians' direct respondent would be the Turkish state in accordance with the terms of contract. Turkish diplomatic sources stated that Bulgarians and Ceylan Holding had agreed to the provisions of the contract in the framework of private law and that any problems to arise would be settled between these two parties.⁵³ However, Gorna – Arda project and the 150 km long Plovdiv – Kapıkule Highway project have been on a standstill for seven years. The difficulties faced by Ceylan Holding in the 2001 crisis and Bulgaria's rejection to grant state guarantee have made the \$400 million project idle since 1998.⁵⁴

⁵¹ "Ceylan'a Bulgar Darbesi", 9 November 2000, *Hürriyet*; "Bulgaristan'dan Ceylanlara Veto", 9 November 2000, *Milliyet*; "Mesut Yılmaz'ın Ceylan Pazarlığı", 2 October 2001, *Radikal*; "Bulgarlara Hak Verir Miydiniz?", 16 March 2002, *Radikal*.

⁵² "Mesut Yılmaz'ın Ceylan Pazarlığı", 2 October 2001, *Radikal*; "Yeni Yatırım Alanı Bulgaristan", 30 January 2002, *Star*.

⁵³ "Bulgarlara Hak Verir Miydiniz?", 16 March 2002, *Radikal*.

⁵⁴ Yalçın Bayer, "AB'ye Son Tren Bulgaristan'dan Kalkıyor", 26 June 2005, *Hürriyet*.

Through mid-2003, another crisis unfolded in the economic relations between Turkey and Bulgaria regarding electricity purchase. Stemming from the energy agreements concluded between Turkey and its neighbors such as Iran and Russia, Turkey's commitment to buy electricity also from Bulgaria turned into an issue during the Justice and Development Party (AKP) government after 2002. It appeared that while putting its signature in related agreements, BOTAŞ seemed to miss one point: the shrinking economy in Turkey. As production levels fell down, Turkey's need for energy diminished accordingly. It followed that Bulgarian electricity suddenly became unnecessary and expensive in face of the 2001 crisis in Turkey. Having committed to buy one kilowatt/hour of electricity for 3 cents from Bulgaria, Turkey was bound by the agreement until 2008. The agreement provided that Turkey pay for the electricity, whether or not it bought it from Bulgaria.⁵⁵ When Turkey stopped electricity import from Bulgaria, eminent Bulgarian dailies such as *Standard* and *Trud* wrote that in face of such a decision by Turkey, Bulgarian officials were left puzzled and could not take immediate action; there were also news that argued Turkish officials had done what was right for Turkey. The anti-Turkish daily *Monitor* wrote that Turkey stopped electricity import in order to put pressure on Bulgarian Telecom (BTC) to pave the way for Koç Holding and make it possible for it to buy the former.⁵⁶

⁵⁵ Zeynep Güranlı, "Bulgaristan'da Enerji Pazarlığı", 12 May 2003, *Star*.

⁵⁶ "Bulgar Basınının Şalteri Attı", 24 April 2003, *Tercüman*; "Komşuyla Enerji Krizi", 24 April 2003, *Cumhuriyet*; "Bulgar Elektriği Çarpacak", 7 May 2005; *Radikal*. On the eve of the sale of BTC, estimates showed Koç Holding and Türk Telekom Consortium as the second strongest prospective buyers. U.S. officials tried to persuade their counterparts in Sofia to make a deal with American Advent. James Perdew, the Ambassador of the U.S.A. to Sofia, stated that the sale of BTC would be a good test case for American investors and the Bulgarians. The Turkish consortium had already contacted the Bulgarian government and told that they were prepared to offer better terms and conditions than those offered by Advent in 2002. "Bulgar Telekomu'nu Türklere Vermeyin", 24 April 2003, *Sabah*; "BTC İhalesi ve Balkanlar", 15 May 2003, *Zaman*. However, eventually, the Austrian VIVA Ventures won the bid. It was argued that although VIVA Ventures had the support of some ministers behind it, Turkey was also criticized for not acting assertive enough. Yalçın Bayer, "AB'ye Son Tren Bulgaristan'dan Kalkıyor", 26 June 2005, *Hürriyet*.

The first Turkish bank in Bulgaria is Ziraat Bank Sofia which opened in July 1998. Demirbank Bulgaria opened in 1999. After the proposal given by HSBC for Demirbank Turkey was accepted, *BDDK* accepted the proposal given by Doğan – Cingilloğlu in 2002 for Demir – Halkbank (Holland) which held 70% of Demirbank Bulgaria's shares. The bank has branches in Varna, Burgaz, Filibe, and Sofia, and is expected to open new branches.⁵⁷ However, in general terms, Germany has a say over the banking sector and economy and Greece has four banks in the country.⁵⁸

The problems awaiting solution in bilateral economic relations include residence permit and work permit procedures as well as transport problems and customs procedures. The visa fees for short business trips are higher than those required by other regional states and the issuance of visas takes long. The Bulgarian officials have accepted the proposal that the visa procedures of Turkish businessmen holding Schengen visa be finalized promptly and that they are not required to submit letters of invitation in their applications. Moreover, the new procedures which oblige businessmen to spend six months of the year in Bulgaria have negative consequences in view of the intensive programs of businessmen. Likewise, the work permit cost per person is around \$550 which must be renewed each year. Finally, several counters on the Bulgarian side at Kapıkule customs are kept closed at the same time and the autoroute entrance fees are high.⁵⁹

By and large, it can be argued that improving relations with the country are on track despite problems. The problems between Turkey and Bulgaria are no longer observed in the political realm but in the economic venue, although bilateral economic relations have developed remarkably since 1990. It is known that

⁵⁷ “Türkiye – Bulgaristan Ticari ve Ekonomik İlişkileri”, <http://www.deik.org.tr/bultenler/200662817412Bulgaristan-bultenmayis2006.pdf>

⁵⁸ Metin Işık, “Bulgaristan’da Neler Oluyor”, 7 December 2004, *Tercüman*.

⁵⁹ “Türkiye – Bulgaristan Ticari ve Ekonomik İlişkileri”, <http://www.deik.org.tr/bultenler/200662817412Bulgaristan-bultenmayis2006.pdf>

geographical proximity can facilitate transport and keep costs at low levels and that the legal framework of relations has been provided throughout 1990s. As in the case of other regional states, except for Romania, it can be said that Turkey's bilateral relations with Bulgaria are on track yet require further attention from both sides.

5.8. ECONOMIC RELATIONS BETWEEN TURKEY AND GREECE

The recent history of Turkish – Greek economic relations shows that the two states have not been able to overcome strained relations and develop economic cooperation in the past despite attempts to that end. The first cogent platform for Turkish – Greek cooperation was seen when Turkish – Greek Business Council was established as a by-product of the Davos process of 1988. After the Customs Union Agreement was signed with the EU in 1995, Turkey's foreign trade with Greece indicated a continuous increase. However, the desired trade potential between the two states has not been seized.⁶⁰ Notwithstanding, Greek exports to Turkey increased by \$ 200 million in the 1995 – 1997 period and bilateral trade volume reached \$ 585 million in total in 1996. This cooperative process, which is quite uncommon when bilateral relations between the two states are taken into account, was hampered seriously when the Öcalan crisis unfolded in February 1999. Shortly afterwards, Rahmi Koç, Chairman of the Turkish – Greek Business Council, did not balk at announcing that the activities of the Council would not be continued. To make the situation worse, this was to be coupled with a boycott against the Greek products in Turkey.⁶¹ Later,

⁶⁰ Ömer Faruk Doğan, “Turkey's Economic Relations With The Balkan Countries With Emphasis to Balkan Regional Center for Trade Promotion”, in *Balkan Trade Bulletin*, 10, 2004, p. 6

⁶¹ Maria Ververidou, *Trends In Greek – Turkish Relations at the Turn of the 20th Century: Prospects for Economic Cooperation*, Unpublished Master's Thesis Submitted to the Department of

upon the dialogue process launched by former Foreign Minister İsmail Cem and his counterpart George Papandreu, and the background this process introduced, the Council resumed activities in September 1999 with new acceleration. This included a visit by TÜSİAD in Athens in the same year. Further, Turkish – Greek Business Council Meeting in İstanbul brought together almost 200 businessmen from both states in respect of which working groups on banking, stock exchange, tourism, and insurance were founded. Another cooperative step was taken with the Turco-Greek Friendship and Cooperation Fair in Athens in April 2000 and with increased growing ties between local chambers of commerce.⁶²

The first Turkish – Greek joint enterprise materialized by the Greek Marinopoulos Company and Turkish Fiba Holding in Romania's Marks and Spencer Shopping Center in 2000 with an investment of \$ 500 thousand. In the same year, the

International Relations, Bilkent University, 2000, pp. 63–67. The Kardak crisis between the two states was also a serious political crisis, however it did not seem to jeopardize trade relations. The trade volume between Turkey and Greece in 1996 was \$ 521 million and this reached \$ 729 million in 1997. Although there were arguments that it was hard to trace a relevance between the level of foreign trade and political disputes taking Kardak crisis as an example, the year 1999 said otherwise, when Öcalan crisis unfolded to severe overall bilateral relations and to create a hostile public opinion against Greece. This was how Turkish business world ended up reviewing their business ties with their Greek partners. Newspapers were filled with news about Rahmi Koç's resignation from the presidency of Turkish – Greek Business Council after Öcalan was arrested. Koç's reaction was marked by his following statement: "We really worked hard for the improvement of business relations, cultural relations, and from time to time, even political relations with our neighbor Greece. However, we did not receive the same attitude from our Greek partners. We were the party who always took the initiative. These attempts did not go beyond personal friendship. We were determined to go on and were of the opinion that we should not give up. I personally had to face a lot of criticism from inside and outside. However, the developments showed that our efforts were in vain. It appears that the agenda of our Greek friends was totally different. Under such circumstances, I have to conclude that the mission of the Turkish – Greek Business Council has lost its meaning. That is why I would like to be excused from my position in the Council. ..." Erkut Yüceoğlu, Chairman of TÜSİAD (*Türk Sanayici ve İşadamları Derneği*/Turkish Industrialists' and Businessmen's Association) also voiced his reaction in the same manner. Panagiotis Kutsikos, Co-Chairman of the Turkish – Greek Business Council, appealed his counterparts in a positive way but was not reciprocated. Fuat Aksu, "Confidence Building, Negotiation and Economic Cooperation Efforts in Turkish – Greek Relations (1990 – 2004), *Turkish Review of Balkan Studies*, Annual 2004, pp. 23 – 25. Translation of Koç's letter is not taken verbatim from the cited source. The original Turkish version of the letter is available on <http://www.radikal.com.tr/1990/02/26/ekonomi/02koc.html>.

⁶² Maria Ververidou, *Trends In Greek – Turkish Relations at the Turn of the 20th Century: Prospects for Economic Cooperation*, pp.63 - 67. Bursa Chamber of Commerce signed a protocol with Thessaloniki Chamber of Commerce on 2 – 3 June 2000. İzmir hosted a meeting between İzmir Chamber of Commerce and Lesvos Chamber of Commerce in the same year. The two states also participated in the Association of Balkan Chambers and Euro Chambers.

Commercial Bank of Greece bought 12.5 % of the shares of Işıklar Package Company while Finansbank began to cooperate with Alpha Credit Bank and National Bank of Greece (*NBG/Etniki Trapeza tis Elladas*).⁶³ Turkish exports to Greece in 2005 reached \$ 396 million, while Greek imports to Turkey reached \$ 209 million. The trade volume between the two countries is approximately \$ 600 million for the same period. Automotive industry, related subsidiary industries, and iron-steel industry constitute almost 30 % of Turkish exports while cotton constitutes almost one third of Turkish imports with 30%. According to the data provided by the Undersecretariat of Treasure, the number of companies with Greek capital was 76 in June 2003 and their overall share was 0.40 % among other foreign investors in Turkey. The number of Greek companies in Turkey reached 110 in 2004. Further, there are 10 Turkish companies in Greece, serving in tourism, transportation, food, furniture, foreign trade and communication. The two states concluded agreements on mutual promotion and protection of investment tourism, shipping, and cooperation mutual assistance between customs authorities. After lengthy discussions, the two states signed the Agreement on the Prevention of Double Taxation in 2003 in Ankara which was put into effect in 2005. A Joint Economic Commission was established as envisaged by the 2001 Agreement on Economic Cooperation. Certain cooperation opportunities proposed are long-term cooperation schemes in the field of industry which target production of high quality and low cost items; opening liaison offices of banks in two countries to provide capital for private sector infrastructure financing and to give credits; creation of mechanisms to ensure that Turkish and Greek companies operate in respective stock exchanges simultaneously; and establishment of facilities in the Aegean and third party countries in the framework of joint package

⁶³ *ibid.*, p. 67.

tours which can serve to create the concept of an eastern Mediterranean tourism upon which Eastern – Mediterranean Travel Agencies Association was founded by Turkey, Greece, Egypt and Israel. In the future, new partnership can help introduce ferry cruiser and Ro-Ro navigation in the Black Sea, the Sea of Marmara and the Aegean.⁶⁴

It is argued that Turkey's accession to the EU in the future may affect bilateral relations between Greece and Turkey. On the Greek side, there are prospects in the products which are imported by Turkey and which are also produced in Greece such as machinery, iron and steel, electrical appliances, fertilizers, synthetic fibers, rubber, aluminum, tractors, cigarettes, vegetables, etc. Good prospects include also Greek cotton, used ships, leather, oil and cement, tomato juice, wheat and rice. Moreover, Greece may increase export of medicine to Turkey as Turkey shall be obliged to comply with relevant European standards in the future.⁶⁵ In addition to trade, cooperation between the two states may be enhanced to cover tourism, pisciculture, sea fishing, industrial cooperation, local administrations and universities.⁶⁶ Still, another field is the banking sector in which particularly Greek banks seem to be active unlike Turkish banks. This area of cooperation concerns mostly investment of banking and capital markets. The first bank to open a liaison office in Turkey is NBG which is the biggest Greek bank.

⁶⁴ For more information, see "Türkiye – Yunanistan Ticari ve Ekonomik İlişkileri" June 2005, <http://www.deik.org.tr/bultenler/2005781125Yunanistan-haziran2005.pdf>. For a compact comparative economic analysis of Turkey and Greece, see A. Yavuz Ege, "Old Adversaries, New Partners?" A New Perspective For Greek – Turkish Economic Relations" in Christos Kollias and Gülay Günlük Şenesen (eds.), *Greece and Turkey in the 21st Century: Conflict or Cooperation – A Political Economy Perspective* (New York: Nova Science Publishers Inc., 2003), pp. 117–131.

⁶⁵ Panagiotis Liargovas, "Greek – Turkish Economic Relations", Christos Kollias and Gülay Günlük Şenesen (eds), *Greece and Turkey in the 21st Century: Conflict or Cooperation – A Political Economy Perspective* (New York: Nova Science Publishers Inc., 2003) , p. 143.

⁶⁶ *ibid.*, pp. 144–46.

5.8.1. GREEK BANKS GAINING Foothold IN TURKEY: WHAT DO THE BUYS SAY?

In April 2006, the NBG won the bid for Finansbank and acquired a controlling stake of 46 %.⁶⁷ It is argued that the purchase of shares in Turkish banks was beyond private sector entrepreneurship in Greece and was done with state support. However, the event was praised by most of the media in Turkey who alleged that the Turks did not have any objections regarding the matter putting forward the argument that Turkey should take its part in the globalization process. The results of a simultaneous public opinion survey in Turkey and Greece said otherwise upon which it was revealed that the Greeks found it a positive step that their companies bought shares in Turkish banks, yet they did not want Turks to even open a market in Greece, letting alone purchase of banks.⁶⁸ It is important to note that there are currently no Turkish banks to buy stakes in a Greek bank.

Almost a month later, EFG Eurobank Engasias SA (Eurobank EFG) and Tefken Holding agreed to join forces in the Turkish financial services market. According to the agreement, Eurobank EFG will acquire 70 % of Tefken Group's holding in Tekfenbank together with its wholly-owned subsidiary, Tefken Leasing. Eurobank EFG is the second largest Greek bank with presence in Romania, Bulgaria, Serbia, Poland, Turkey, Luxembourg, and the UK. It is listed on the Athens Exchange in which it ranks second with a market capitalization of nearly \$ 13 billion.⁶⁹ Furthermore, Alphabank of Greece also revealed almost simultaneously

⁶⁷ <http://www.finanznachrichten.de/nachrichten-2006-04/artikel-6226423.asp> as retrieved on 15 September 2006, 01:01:24 GMT.

⁶⁸ Hasan Ünal, "Yunanistan Türkiye'ye Çifte Operasyon mu?", 28 April 2006, *Yeniçağ*; and idem, "Yunanistan Adına 'Pozitif Milliyetçilik' Propagandası", 14 April 2006, *Yeniçağ*.

⁶⁹ "Eurobank EFG To Acquire 70 % in Tekfenbank", <http://www.invgr.com/invgt.htm> as retrieved on 13 August 2006, 04:35:44 GMT.

that it targeted extensive growth in Southeast Europe and confirmed interest in acquisitions in Turkish banks. Yiannis Costopoulos, Chairman of the bank, stated that although Alphabank followed the footsteps of NBG, any acquisition in Turkey would not be the size of the latter's acquisition of Finansbank. It has been argued that Alpha's soft approach was politically fitting because there was a visible nationalist sentiment in Turkey which was expressed by OYAK's chief executive officer Yıldırım Türker, for instance. Türker stated that OYAK would not sell out to Greek banks.⁷⁰ However, later OYAK Bank also sold out.

It is clear that, with state support in Greece, there is an inclination and ambition to take foothold in at least a part of financial system in Turkey. The Greek public opinion is also supportive of this inclination. To reiterate, Greek public opinion does not approve of any Turkish acquisition of anything in Greece. For instance, given that there is a possibility that NBG's ownership of Finansbank could act as a trigger to transform the NBG structure, Greek press wrote that "clearly NBG is not quite ready for a Turkish shareholder yet" although Fiba Holding Chairman Hüsni Özyeğin said he would like to take a stake in NBG if one had been available as part of the deal.⁷¹ It is noteworthy that Greek Deputy Foreign Minister Euripidis Stylianidis stated on a TV program that "Greece became very influential on the financial system in Turkey and even if the latter distanced itself from the EU process, Turkey would not be able to ignore Greek demands" when he was asked whether the government had a "Plan B" if Turkey distanced itself from the EU process after Autumn 2006.⁷² It seems that analysts supportive of Greek acquisitions in Turkish banks tend to see the deal as an endorsement of Turkey's efforts to join the EU and a

⁷⁰ Elaine Green, "Alpha Bank Confirms Turkish Ambitions", <http://www.invgr.com/invgt.htm>, 21 April 2006, as retrieved on 13 August 2006, 04:35:44.

⁷¹ Elaine Green, "Turkey – Where Only Fools Rush In?", 14 April 2006 <http://www.invgr.com/invgt.htm>, as retrieved on 13 August 2006, 04:35:44.

⁷² Hasan Ünal, "Başka Yunan Bankaları Geliyor", 8 May 2006, *Yeniçağ*.

sign of greater cooperation between the two states.⁷³ Yet, they seem to miss the point made by the Greek press that although the NBG buy has seemingly opened the way for further deals, as one banker remarked “timing is everything and the Turkish market could probably not stomach another Greek buy of a Turkish bank within the next few months.”⁷⁴ This is indicative of possible future purchases by Greek banks. The fact that NBG plans to bring in 50 Greek companies to Turkey, such as Intracom, Mailis, and Akkas, operating in technology packaging and textile respectively, only reinforces the possibility of future projects.⁷⁵ Such banking operations seem to prove right what Charles Dallara, Managing Director of the Washington based Institute of International Finance (IIF), said back in 2005: “If you had ten years ago said a Greek bank would have operations in Turkey, no one would have believed it, including myself.”⁷⁶

Most recently, the application by Ziraat Bank to open two branches in Athens and Komitini was approved in July 2007, which means that for the first time a Turkish bank will open branches in Greece. The branches are expected to open in 2008.⁷⁷ Conversely, *BDDK* did not approve the sale of 50% of Alternatifbank to Greek Alphabank on 7 August 2007. While the reason for not permitting the sale was not explained, it was reportedly said that *BDDK* concluded that founding partners of Alphabank did not meet the terms provided in Article 8 of Banking Law, which

⁷³ Elaine Green, “From National With Love”, 7 April 2006, <http://www.invgr.com/invgt.htm>, as retrieved on 13 August 2006, 04:35:44.

⁷⁴ Elaine Green, “Turkey – Where Only Fools Rush In?”, 14 April 2006, <http://www.invgr.com/invgt.htm>, as retrieved on 13 August 2006, 04:35:44.

⁷⁵ “NBG, 50 Yunan Şirketini Türkiye’ye Getiriyor”, 26 September 2006, *Milliyet*.

⁷⁶ “Turkish – Greek Bank Project Taking Shape,” 19 May 2005, *Turkish Daily News*; and “IIF Expects \$ 120 Billion FDI To Turkey In Two Years”, 23 May 2005, *Turkish Daily News*. See also Charles A. Kupchan and Ian O. Lesser, “Turkey Can Strengthen Its Ties With Greece”, 11 February 2000, *International Herald Tribune*; Panagiotis Koutsikos, “Significant Progress in Greek – Turkish Business Relations”, http://www.acci.gr/trade/No34/TRADE_12_13pdf#search=%22greece/%20turkey%20economic%20relations%22.

⁷⁷ “Yunan Vizesi Çıktı, Ziraat Şubelerini 2008’de Açacak”, 4 July 2007, *Hürriyet*.

arranges judicial and commercial record, financial power, prestige, honesty and adequacy, all of which are required for the conduct of banking.⁷⁸

5.9. ECONOMIC RELATIONS BETWEEN TURKEY AND ROMANIA

With the end of the Cold War, Turkish – Romanian economic relations witnessed a steady development leading to an important increase in the commercial exchanges, particularly following the signing of the Free Trade Agreement in 1997. The economic relations between the two states after 1990 was put into a legal framework with the Mutual Protection and Promotion of Investments (1991), Free Trade Agreement (1997), Protocol On Energy and Infrastructure (2001), and Agreement on Cooperation in Tourism (2002), Memorandum of Understanding and Cooperation in the Field of Small- and Medium-Sized Enterprises (2004), Agreement of Cooperation between Eximbank SA Romania and Turk Eximbank AS (2004); and Memorandum of Understanding concerning the Cooperation in the Field of Defense and Research and Technology (2004). The main export items in bilateral trade include automotive, rubber, iron – steel, electrical items, cotton, woven items, edible fruits, while the import items include iron – steel, mineral fuel, organic chemicals, rubber fertilizers, automotive and related industry, wood, electrical items, vegetal oil and ships.⁷⁹ The dynamism in bilateral trade placed Turkey in the summer of 2004 at the fourth place among Romania’s commercial partners after Italy, Germany, and France, from the sixth place in 2003 after Italy, Germany, France, UK and the

⁷⁸ “Abank’ın Yunan Alpha’ya Satışına Veto”, 8 August 2007, <http://ntvmsnbc.com/news/416662>.

⁷⁹ “Türkiye – Romanya Ticari ve Ekonomik İlişkileri” <http://www.deik.org/tr/bultenler/Romanya-Subat2006.pdf>.

Russian Federation.⁸⁰ Romania is currently Turkey's first trading partner in the Balkans and the Black Sea region after the Russian Federation, while Turkey is the first trade partner of Romania in the Black Sea region.⁸¹

The dynamism in bilateral relations developed out of exploring the resources in the country in the immediate aftermath of Cold War. In the early 1990s, a considerable number of Turkish companies entered the Romanian market which was appealing for Turkish investors for three reasons: people were faced with a new system in which there were insufficient resources to obtain basic goods, even food and clothing, which meant that the investors could exploit the market easily; one only had to pay a thousand dollars as a guarantee to enter the Romanian market and open a liaison office; and foreign investors had been exempted from tax for two years.⁸² Upon such background, Turkish companies began to do business in Romania in the fields of transportation, tourism, banking, insurance, food processing, and restaurants and so on, while they later engaged in cooperation in implementing strategic projects particularly in the energy field such as laying an undersea electric cable between Constanta and İstanbul, the Nabucco gas pipeline.⁸³ Current advantages that make Romanian market appealing are cheap labor and the obligation to pay 16 % tax to the state regardless of income level. However, the fact that Romania's membership in the EU in 2007 means that investment in Romania will be

⁸⁰ "Bilateral Economic and Commercial Relations" http://www.roembtr.org/en_rotr.htm, as retrieved on 18 November 2006, 07:14:01 GMT.

⁸¹ Having started the EU accession talks in 1997, Romania is Turkey's gateway to Europe in economic terms. It is the second largest potential in Central Europe with its cheap labor after Poland. There are special areas in Romania for those investors who seek rapid growth among whom are Turkish businessmen.

⁸² Mustafa Baki Cihangiroğlu, "Black Sea Economic Cooperation as a Regional Cooperation Model and the Case of Bilateral Trade Relations between Turkey and Romania", A Master's Thesis Submitted to Marmara University, 1998, p. 165 taken from Hasret Atalay, "*Romania in Transition: 1989 – 2001*", p. 57.

⁸³ "Turkey and Romania Hand in Hand For a Better Tomorrow", 1 February 2006, *The New Anatolian*.

investment in the EU, which the Turkish businessmen should explore duly.⁸⁴ Overall capital of Turkish companies in Romania was estimated to be around \$ 391 million in May 2005. Some of the direct investors from Turkey are Efes Pilsen, Pak Holding, FİBA Holding, Bayındır Holding, ENKA, Hayat Holding, Kombassan, Yaşar Holding, Escort Computer, Arçelik, and Erdemir. There are three actively operating Turkish banks in Romania which are Finansbank, Libra Bank, and Garanti Bank International. However, unlike Turkish investment in Romania, Romanian investment in Turkey remains limited. There were only 33 Romanian companies in Turkey in June 2005, 29 of which operate in services sector and four in production industry.

As for the problems faced in bilateral economic relations, one deficiency to be noted is the frequent change of laws put into force in the process of promotion of foreign investments and privatization in Romania. Second, the freight limits, the one-day waiting period, and the heavy fines in transportation are other concerns for Turkish investors. It is also known that high freight rates at Constanta – Bucharest railway make export conditions unfavorable and bring an extra amount on transportation costs. Third, the settlement of commercial disputes takes time and mostly results in unfavorable decisions due to the sluggish legal system. Fourth, the attitude of the Romanian government and public toward Banco Turco – Romana (BTR) in Romania when the Bank faced liquidity problems in November 2000⁸⁵ and

⁸⁴ “Romanya Odalar Birliği Odamızdaydı”, 9 May 2006, <http://www.izto.org.tr/IZTO/TC/Duyuru.Etkinlik/Resmi+Ziyaretler/Gelen+Heyetler/romanya2006.htm> as retrieved on 30 October 2006, 14:34:41 GMT.

⁸⁵ Banco Turco – Romana opened in Bucharest in order to support Turkish companies in Romania. The Bank is reported to have approximately 7000 customers, 60 % of which are companies. When the crisis unfolded in November 2000, a large number of deposit holders filled the branches of the Bank to withdraw their money. Bayındır Holding transferred \$ 90 million to the Bank to solve the liquidity problem: “Bayındır Transfers \$ 90 Million to Assist BTR”, *Nineoclock*, 23 November 2000; and “New Crisis Shakes Romanian Bank System: Turkish Romanian Bank”, 13 November 2000, *Romanian Economic Daily*, taken from Hasret Atalay, “*Romania in Transition: 1989 – 2001*”, p. 57;

subsequently the Romanian Central Bank froze its transactions worsened when the Central Bank of Turkey laid hands on Demirbank only to add to the impression that they were too risky to do business with. These problems also prevented the Turkish companies to smoothly carry out their financial transactions. Fifth and related with the fourth, money transfers between the two states take one or two days in the Romanian banking system. Finally, businessmen and workers are granted visa and work permit for only one year at most which has negative effects upon overall productivity. Long-term and multiple visas would at least bring a short-term solution to the problem.⁸⁶

However, the benefits of prospective investments outweigh the problems in economic activities. The sectors of prospective cooperation are energy, construction, defence industry and information technologies. Moreover, there are regions in Romania with a 30 % unemployment rate, underdeveloped and isolated, for which the companies are provided incentives. These regions include Altan Hill mine field in Tulcea, Alba, Apuseni mine field, Cugir region, Bacau, Comanesti mine field, Bihor, and so on. The investment fields in these regions are agriculture, stockbreeding, services, production, trade, environmental protection, and technology. The goods imported for the purpose of investment in these regions are exempt from value added tax and customs duties. The raw material imported for production in the region is also exempt from customs duties.⁸⁷

“Çörtük’e İki Hafta Süre”, 7 December 2000, *Radikal*; and “Çörtük’ün Bankası Değil Türkiye’nin İmajı Batar”, 4 December 2000, *Hürriyet*.

⁸⁶ “Türkiye – Romanya Ticari ve Ekonomik İlişkileri” <http://www.deik.org/tr/bultenler/Romanya-Subat2006.pdf>

⁸⁷ Ülke Dış Pazar, *KobiEfor*, March 2005, <http://www.kobi-efor.com.tr/print.asp?id=1033>, as retrieved on 24 November 2005, 07:56:16 GMT.

Despite the large state-owned and subsidized enterprises, the Romanian government is gradually realizing the goal of foreign direct investment in economic development. It is increasingly opening itself to attract foreign direct investment including privatization programs through improving its regulatory framework regarding taxation and foreign exchange systems. In such an improving environment, Turkish investment has gained such a sound foothold in the country that companies from third countries interested in investing in Romania are recommended to consider Turkish partners due to their long experience and direct transportation links, which affirms the present as well as the prospective established nature of Turkish trade with Romania.

5.10. TURKISH – BALKAN ECONOMIC RELATIONS: AN EVALUATION

It can be argued that there are domestic and external factors which shape Turkey's economic policies towards the region. In general, these include inadequate economic infrastructure such as incentives, trade and investment agreements; the tendency of investing in Central Asia and Caucasia which are rich in natural sources and work power; restrictions in newly evolving economic orders in the regional states; unfavorable tariff arrangements; incompatible legislations; sluggish banking systems; limited market opportunities in the region; political instability and nonstrategic natural resources.⁸⁸ Upon such background, it is observed that Turkey's share in the region's \$174 million worth overall foreign trade was \$6,7 million in 2006, which constituted only 4% in the overall figure. While Turkey's trade with regional states is

⁸⁸ Murat Doruk, *1989 Sonrası Balkan Ülkeleriyle İktisadi İlişkiler*, A Master's Thesis Submitted to the Department of Economics, Celal Bayar University, 2001, p. 158, citing Nurcan Özgür "Globalleşme ve Türkiye'nin Balkan Ekonomi Politikası, 1989 – 1998", *İktisat Dergisi*, January 1998, pp. 58 – 71.

8%, it was 30 % with close and neighboring states in 2006.⁸⁹ Turkey's trade with the region have focused mostly on Romania, with low but increasing trade relations with other states due to relatively more stable and larger markets compared to other regional states. It would be acknowledged that there is need to formulate long-term and well-devised economic policies towards the region, and that there is no need to reiterate that this applies to political and military fields as well. When the prospective EU membership of the regional states is duly considered, one is compelled to think that countries such as key countries of the EU as Germany, France, Italy, and also Russia, would not be likely to view Turkey's efforts to take its regional activities further positively. That is why it would have been better if Turkey could take such efforts in the immediate aftermath of the Cold War, if, of course, there was no war in Bosnia and economic crises in Turkey. Among others, it is the lack of domestic economic stability and abundance of economic problems that Turkey could not compete with the other rival powers in the last 15 years, because the production which gets more costly due to inflationary effects, and thus Turkish products cannot compete with EU price indices as it should. That was why it was important for Turkey to conclude free trade agreements with the regional states. On the other hand, one expectation on the part of the Turkish communities living in the Balkan states has been to form their own group of entrepreneurs with the support of Turkey and relevant efforts were launched in the early 2000s. It should also be noted that the absence of economic reports and plans which serve to inform and direct economic activities have caused the entrepreneurs to make do with their own capabilities which in turn constituted a barrier on the road to success by slowing down the flow of Turkish capital. Organizations such as DEİK, TİKA, İTO, İSO and Undersecretariat

⁸⁹ *Bizim Sesimiz*, 19 April 2007, TRTInt.

of Foreign Trade launched activities to remedy the deficiencies in this respect. Turkish Balkan Business Councils, Rumeli Businessmen Association, TÜSİAD, TURKTRADE, and fair commissions are no less significant. Furthermore, it is necessary to establish a prospective “Balkan States Institute” to enhance economic relations and coordination.⁹⁰

It can be maintained that Turkish entrepreneurs have invested in Balkan markets; however, this was confined to certain limits as Turkey could not develop long-term policies in face of domestic and external events, which turned out to be haphazard, if not on the spur of the moment. However, there is no ground to argue about a change to the worse as Turkey’s trade volume with the regional states indicate increasing figures. Economic relations are likely to be taken further provided that the region is not underrated by Turkish investors. It could even be argued that better results could be recorded if underrating is eliminated on the part of Turkish investors, along with negligence, and lack of interest, and information towards the region.

⁹⁰ Murat Doruk, *1989 Sonrası Balkan Ülkeleriyle İktisadi İlişkiler*, pp. 250 – 259.

CHAPTER VI

TURKEY'S MILITARY RELATIONS WITH THE BALKAN STATES IN THE POST-COLD WAR ERA

6.1. TURKEY'S SECURITY AND DEFENSE POLICIES THROUGH AND AFTER THE END OF THE COLD WAR

Turkey's security considerations through the end of the Cold War was framed around the consideration that Turkey was located on a fragile and strategic point taking into account the balance of power and general international conjuncture at the material time. The fundamentals of national defense policy were based on "peace at home, peace in the world" principle as well as peaceful solution of conflicts, noninterference in internal affairs of countries, goodneighborliness, and *pacta sunt servanda* principle, as stated in 1987 White Paper of the Ministry of Defense. In this framework, it was considered that it was necessary to maintain the existing balance for world peace and to support the solution of conflicts under the UN umbrella. Given the bipolar structure of the world at the time, Turkey secured its defense by its NATO membership. The security and defense policies of Turkey also rested on support for elimination of tension between two blocs and for armament. Another

consideration in this regard was the acknowledgment of the fact that Turkey was located in conflict-ridden region and that it constituted NATO's important southern flank in that respect. Therefore, Turkey maintained its national defense capabilities and its armed forces at the highest levels possible.¹

When the irreversible and rapid wind of change became visible in 1990s, Turkey's security and defense considerations became replete with due emphasis on two peculiarities of the time: uncertainty and instability. It was stated that Iraq, which emerged as the stronger side from war with Iran, acted contrary to the efforts to establish peace and stability in the Middle East as was seen in its invasion of Kuwait. The other issue of note was international terrorism which also had impact on Turkey. The fundamentals of defense policy in 1987 White Paper were preserved in their entirety. It was maintained that following Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, Turkey had shown due sensitivity and responsibility for the establishment of peace and stability in the Middle East by way of acting in line with UN sanctions.²

The White Paper of 1993 referred to ethnic conflicts, instability and uncertainty in the regional context for the first time. The book posited that the disintegration of the Warsaw Pact and the Soviet Union, arms control, and introduction of new measures in the security field brought about a new security understanding based on mutual trust and dialogue and cooperation in problem-solving. It was stressed that the disappearance of a large scale military threat on the West produced parallel transformation in threat perceptions and therefore the classic perceptions were now replaced with multidimensional risks and threats against

¹ *Beyaz Kitap - Türkiye'nin Savunma Politikaları ve Silahlı Kuvvetlerin Yapısı* (Ankara: General Staff Publication House, 1987), pp. 25-26.

² *Beyaz Kitap 90 – Savunma Politikası ve Türk Silahlı Kuvvetleri* (Ankara: Ministry of National Defense, 1990), pp. 28-30.

security. The new threats and risks were identified in a way to cover not only individual military power of states but also political, economic and social instabilities, class conflicts, religious, national and ethnic conflicts, attempts for gaining authority in certain regions in a country, religious fundamentalism and terrorism. In this context, specific reference was made to the Balkans, the Caucasus and the Middle East. In this new security environment, the defense policy defined in 1993 White Paper was summarized as follows: (1) to take all measures necessary to build and maintain peace at home and in the world, (2) to contribute to the elimination of all types of international tension and to build a just and sustainable peace, (3) to protect the independence and integrity of the country, (4) to take all measures to prevent war, and (5) to participate in collective security systems and share responsibilities.³

The 1996 White Paper drew attention to regional problems, just as the 1993 White Paper, this time with special emphasis on Bosnia – Herzegovina arguing that the peace plans which were negotiated before Dayton Peace Accord rewarded the aggressor and gave concessions to encourage the Serbs to spread clashes throughout the Balkans. It is seen that Turkey's international relations were based on two principles: peaceful relations and cooperation with all states. For the first time since 1987, it is also observed that Turkish security policies and doctrines were defined as defensive in nature.⁴

The 1998 White Paper pointed out that the abovementioned pillar of defense and defense policy were reinforced with a military strategy which consisted of four components: deterrence, collective security, forward defense and military contribution, crisis management and intervention at times of crises. It was stressed

³ *Beyaz Kitap- Savunma Politikası ve Türk Silahlı Kuvvetleri* (Ankara, 1993), pp. 25-26.

⁴ *Defense Policy of Turkey and Turkish Armed Forces, The White Paper 96* (Ankara: Ministry of National Defense, 1996), pp. 5-6 and 15-16.

that as Turkey was subject to multidimensional internal and external threats due to its geopolitical and geostrategic location, the achievement of a military strength capable of maintaining the national defense security policy as well as the maintenance and development of this capability as circumstances may demand constituted the milestones of the policy of Turkey in preparing for the 2000s.⁵ While the four components of Turkey's military strategy were reiterated, the targets of defense policy were stated as (1) to contribute to peace and security in the region and to spread it to larger areas, (2) to become a country producing strategy and security that can influence all the strategies concerning its geography and beyond, (3) to become an element of power and balance in its region, (4) to make use of every opportunity and take initiatives for cooperation, (5) to contribute to reducing international tension and maintenance of just and lasting peace, (6) to preserve and protect independence, territorial integrity and the republic, (7) to take all measures to prevent crises and conflicts, and (8) to take an active part in collective defense systems and to fulfill its responsibilities.⁶

Turning back to the military relations between Turkey and the Balkans, the efforts taken by Turkey regarding security in the Balkans have been and are in the context of multilateral and bilateral activism since 1990. Turkey's participation in peace operations in the region has taken place in the context of international organizations. While Turkey developed its military relations with regional states on a bilateral basis since the end of the Cold War, it also took due efforts to launch new regional initiatives such as Multinational Peace Force in Southeast Europe and BLACKSEAFOR.

⁵ *White Paper, Defense, 1998* (Ankara: Ministry of National Defense, 1998), pp. 9-17.

⁶ *White Book, Turkey* (Ankara: Ministry of National Defense, 2000), pp. 35-36.

6.1.1. MULTINATIONAL PEACE FORCE IN SOUTHEAST EUROPE

The origins of Multinational Peace Force in Southeast Europe (MNPFSSEE) lies in the efforts of the Defense Ministries of Southeast European states and the U.S.A. who launched the Southeast Europe Defense Ministerial (SEDM) process in 1996 to serve as a regional cooperation mechanism bringing together NATO states and PfP states. The seeds of the MNPFSSEE were sown in the meeting of Defense Ministries of Southeast European states and the U.S.A. in Bulgaria two years after the war in Bosnia had ended. The participating states reached a compromise to enhance cooperation between Albania, Bulgaria, Macedonia, Romania, Slovenia, Croatia, Turkey, the U.S.A., Italy and Greece. The second meeting was held in Romania in 1998. It was observed during this meeting that Greece refused to participate in a force established with the initiative of Turkey, yet it eventually agreed to participate in principle. Within this force, an on-call brigade (SEEBRIG) operates. The brigade headquarter was activated in Bulgaria in 1999 for four-year rotating periods following Bulgaria, Romania, Turkey and Greece. The deployment of SEEBRIG is not restricted to the region; it may be deployed in different geographical locations as well. The SEEBRIG is composed of ground elements and tactical air control parties. It consists of a headquarter of multinational staff, headquarter company, a signal company to be provided by the host nation, maneuver units, combat support units and multinational combat service support battalion. Turkey contributes to the peace force with a mechanized infantry battalion, one reconnaissance company, one artillery battery, one engineering company, combat support and combat service support units. Turkey will provide headquarters to the SEEBRIG between 2007 and

2011. Albania contributes with one company, Bulgaria with one battalion, Italy with one regiment, Macedonia with one battalion, and Greece with one battalion.⁷

6.1.2. THE BLACK SEA FORCE – BLACKSEAFOR

The second regional security initiative spearheaded by Turkey was inked in İstanbul in April 2001 with a view to pulling the naval forces to form a joint force to emerge as the Black Sea Naval Cooperation Task Group, in other words BLACKSEAFOR. It is known that the initiative was put forward in the first half of 1998,⁸ despite Kiev's insistence that the process was put forth by Ukraine originally. The agreement includes all littoral states, and although it consists of naval forces, it is not a purely military formation, nor is it directed against any state or group of states, or intended to emerge as a military alliance. The BLACKSEAFOR is assigned with search and rescue, humanitarian assistance, mine counter measures, environmental protection, goodwill visits, and other tasks as deemed appropriate by the parties. Although BLACKSEAFOR is a regional formation, it may also be entrusted with operations under UN or OSCE. It consists of four to six ships from every state (Turkey, Bulgaria, Romania, Russian Federation, Ukraine, Georgia). Warships to be assigned to the force are frigate/destroyer, corvette, patrol boat, mine counter measures ship, amphibious ship and auxiliary ship and vessel.⁹

⁷ For detailed information, see Mustafa Aksaç, *Turkey's Military Efforts for Peace in the Balkans*, a Master's Thesis Submitted to the Department of International Relations, Bilkent University, 2003, pp. 69-80.

⁸ Hasan Ulusoy, "A New Formation in the Blackseafor" 4(4), December 2001 – February 2002, *Perceptions*, <http://www.sam.gov.tr/perceptions/volume6/December2001-February2002/hasanulusoy.PDF>.

⁹ Information on the establishment, operational aspects, political chain of command, agreement and its annexes, communiqués, activations, transformation of the BLACKSEAFOR, see <http://www.blackseafor.org>.

It can be argued that the BLACKSEAFOR bears significance viewed from three aspects. First and foremost, it has brought together the once archrival littoral states of the Cold War years into common platform and thus helped take a giant step to transform the Black Sea into an area of cooperation. Second, and linked with the first, by joining naval forces, it has provided a military cooperation example between all littoral states. Finally, as its tasks would suggest, it also has a humanitarian aspect since it covers humanitarian assistance as well as search and rescue.¹⁰

6.2. TURKEY'S BILATERAL MILITARY RELATIONS WITH THE BALKAN STATES IN THE POST-COLD WAR ERA

6.2.1. MILITARY RELATIONS BETWEEN TURKEY AND BOSNIA – HERZEGOVINA

A multinational peace force, United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) was assigned in the Balkans between February 1992 and December 1995. The Implementation Force (IFOR) under NATO command took over the military duty after December 1995, which was renamed as Stabilization Force (SFOR) a year later. The duties and tasks of SFOR were taken over by the EU in December 2004 by a decision taken in the NATO Summit in İstanbul. Turkey sent a mechanized task force of 1400 soldiers to Zenica in August 1994. After NATO took over commandership, this force was turned into a brigade in December 1994 under IFOR.

¹⁰ Hasan Ulusoy, "A New Formation in the Blackseafor".

Turkish troops were included in SFOR and later EUFOR. The EUFOR is also a multinational force which consists of approximately 7000 troops.¹¹ A total of 33 nations including 22 EU member states and 11 non-EU Troop Contributing Nations provide the necessary capabilities to carry out EUFOR's tasks. The EUFOR multinational task forces are British, Austrian and Spanish officers and report to EUFOR Headquarters in Sarajevo.¹²

Turning back to the bilateral military relations between Turkey and Bosnia – Herzegovina, it is seen the two states signed the military cooperation accord in Ankara in August 1995. The accord envisaged cooperation between Turkey and Bosnia – Herzegovina in the field of military training, defense industry infrastructure, military technology, scientific research and development, and medicine. As the arms embargo still continued at the time, diplomatic sources stated the military cooperation accord with the Sarajevo government would not mean the violation of arms embargo against former Yugoslavia.¹³ A year later, Turkey and Bosnia – Herzegovina signed another agreement on military training cooperation aimed at bringing the Bosnian Army to NATO standards. This agreement envisaged regular visits by high-level officials and delegations, participation in exercises as observer, training of military personnel, and contributing to the Train and Equip Program. The aim of the agreement was to bring the Muslim – Croat Federation Forces up to a par with the Bosnian Serb Army by the time IFOR left the country. Within this framework, Bosnian military personnel was trained in military staff colleges, Army War Academy, Air War Academy, Gülhane Military Medical

¹¹ Tevfik Uyar, “Görkemli Tarihin Görkemli Koruyucusu: TSK”, <http://www.milscint.com/yazar.asp?yid=12&id=73>, retrieved on 8 January 2007, 09:59:21 GMT.

¹² <http://www.euforbih.org/organisation/organisation.htm>.

¹³ “Turkey, Bosnia Sign Military Cooperation Accord”, 12 August 1995, *Turkish Daily News*; and Lowell Bezanis, “Turkey, Bosnia Sign Military Cooperation Deal”, OMRI, on <http://www.binfo.com/places/Bulgaria/news/95-08/aug14.omri>, as retrieved on 1 February 2007, 20:28:53 GMT.

Academy, Language School, Military High Schools, branch schools of Land, Air and Gendarmerie Command and technical schools of Air Forces.¹⁴ Approximately after six months the agreement was signed, Turkish Deputy Chief of Staff General Çevik Bir expressed his firm position against the influence of what he labeled “fanatics”, i.e. the Iranian fundamentalists, in Bosnia – Herzegovina. General Bir was quoted in Washington Post story on training of Bosnian military personnel in Turkey as stating that it was Turkey’s mission to convince the Bosnian government not to follow the fanatics. General Bir noted that 190 Bosnian soldiers were trained in Polatlı and Etimesgut near Ankara as well as said that there had been no discord between the U.S.A. and Turkey over the training of the Bosnian Army. The State Department, on the other hand, emphasized that Turkey was training Bosnians with its own funds. The former Chief of General Staff Doğan Güreş, a deputy in TPP at the time, also held that Turkey should export its secular model to other states. The Bosnian troops were trained near Ankara with American M60 tanks, a part of \$98,4 million worth of U.S. military hardware which were supposed to be shipped to Bosnia once all Iranian fighters left Bosnia. The Bosnian President İzzetbegovic also assured the Acting Assistant Secretary of State John Kornblum that all foreign fighters, that is, the Iranians, would leave Bosnia shortly.¹⁵

Turkish Armed Forces’ massive efforts for Bosnia – Herzegovina were often expressly appreciated by top ranking officials from the Muslim – Croat Army. Jovan Divjak, Deputy Chief of General Staff of the Bosnian Army and its sole general of Serbian origin, praised the sensitive approach of the Turkish General Staff towards the Bosnian Army. At the time, Turkey had one of the largest IFOR military

¹⁴ *Balkanlar ve Türkiye’nin Bölgeye Yönelik Politikaları Sempozyumu*, Harp Akademileri Komutanlığı (İstanbul: Harp Akademileri Publication House, 1999), p. 207.

¹⁵ Uğur Akıncı, “General Bir: Turkey Won’t Allow Bosnia Follow Fanatics”, 8 June 1996, *Turkish Daily News*.

presences in Bosnia – Herzegovina with a 1500-brigade consisting of artillery units, a mechanized infantry company, armored operation vehicles, a tank company, a bomb disposal team, a logistical support company, and a medical unit including dentists and doctors.¹⁶

The Turkish Brigade sent to Bosnia – Herzegovina within UN framework in 1994 was decreased in number to form a battalion task force in 2000. The main duty of the Turkish battalion in Bosnia – Herzegovina¹⁷ is to monitor preservation of peace under NATO umbrella. The battalion consists of 350 personnel and contributes to preservation of peace, provides food for the poor, as well as contributing to infrastructure construction of bridges, highways and schools. The Land Forces Command opened a Turkish language school course and laboratory in 1999 to offer language courses to the Bosnian – Croat Federation Army. The second Turkish language course was opened by Bosnian Air Forces Command in 2001. As Bosnia – Herzegovina cannot participate in the exercises conducted under the PfP program for not being a PfP country, Turkey invited Bosnia – Herzegovina only to national exercises as an observer. Bosnia- Herzegovina participated as an observer in Joint Battalion Task Force 2000, 2001, 2002, Winter 2000, 2002 and Mehmetçik 2000, 2002.¹⁸

Apart from its military tasks, Turkish Armed Forces are also engaged in providing social, educational and health services. The management of the displaced people's camp is the duty of the Turkish Armed Forces. The camp was established by Norway in 1994 and hosts families whose accommodation, education and health

¹⁶ Metehan Demir, "Turkey's Training of Bosnian Continues as Fate of the Federation Remains Hazy", 30 August 1996, *Turkish Daily News*.

¹⁷ "Başbakan Erdoğan, Zenica'da Görev Yapan Türk Askerlerini Ziyaret Etti", 21 April 2004, [http://www.basbakanlik.gov.tr/sour.ce/index.asp\(?\)wpg=detay&did=basbakanlik.709370](http://www.basbakanlik.gov.tr/sour.ce/index.asp(?)wpg=detay&did=basbakanlik.709370), as retrieved on 4 February 2007, 04:14:18 GMT.

¹⁸ Mustafa Aksaç, *Turkey's Military Efforts for Peace in the Balkans*, p. 115.

services are met. Turkish Armed Forces also collaborates with Zenica University and built a park in Zenica. Furthermore, it took pivotal action in the adoption of Liaison Observation Team (LOT) system and in the establishment of LOT houses. Turkish Armed Forces actively participate in LOT houses activities. The aim of the system is to conduct visits to villages and towns in person as soldiers, to gather information and monitor the general situation, to take necessary measures with advance information on possible ethnic clashes and to take efforts to prevent them, rather than acting as an intelligence agency trying to collect information as undercover agents. The LOT house personnel are provided standard housing, they visit neighboring villages and towns, submit their observations to the officer at the headquarters. The LOT houses in Zenica, Zadovici, Visoko and Kladenj are occupied by Turkish Armed Forces.¹⁹

In August 2006, Turkey and Bosnia – Herzegovina signed another cooperation accord aimed at enabling Bosnia – Herzegovina to use a NATO anti-terror training base and to benefit from free access to the NATO-run base.²⁰

6.2.2. MILITARY RELATIONS BETWEEN TURKEY AND SERBIA

The agreement that provided the legal framework for bilateral military cooperation was signed in July 2004 in Serbia. This Agreement was the first of its kind that Serbia (and Montenegro) reached with a NATO member. In accordance with the agreement, Serbia (and Montenegro) will receive military equipment supply support from Turkey. The defense ministers of two countries, Vecdi Gönül and Prvoslav

¹⁹ Tevfik Uyar, “Görkemli Tarihin Görkemli Koruyucusu: TSK”.

²⁰ “Bosnia, Turkey Sign Military Agreement” *Agence France Presse*, 14 August 2006.

Davinic, agreed on future mutual visits by military representatives of each country. The deal is expected to provide opportunities for the Serbian military industry which does not find market for its products.²¹ The same year, President Sezer voiced support for plans to include Serbia (and Montenegro) in NATO's PfP program. NATO officials said Serbia (and Montenegro) could be invited to join NATO's program on the condition that it cooperates in the hunt for war crimes suspects, defense reforms and dropping the complaint at the international court over NATO's raid during the 1999 Kosovo War. However, it was also noted that Turkey's support over the PfP was encouraging as it offered political and military cooperation with NATO but did not necessarily lead to NATO membership.²²

Through mid-2005, the agreement on cooperation in military scientific and military technical field was put into effect. The agreement envisages cooperation in the following fields: military training, military cooperation between armed forces, organization of armed forces, equipment and structure of armed forces, personnel management, environmental issues, military observer exchange for exercises, logistics and its management, cooperation in defense industry, military medical services, military topography and mappings, military history and military museums, military publication and archives, social, sport, cultural activities between armed forces, cooperation in undertaking scientific research and projects to develop new defense-military equipment, cooperation in exporting them to third countries.²³

As known, Turkey had backed NATO's 1999 air war to halt Serb forces' offense on ethnic Albanians in Kosovo. However, relations have been improving

²¹ Igor Jovanovic, *Southeast European Times in Belgrade*, 7 September 2004, "Serbia – Montenegro, Turkey Sign Agreement on Military Cooperation", http://www.mfa.gov.yu/FDP/set_070904_e.html, 9 March 2007, 03:44:46 GMT.

²² "Turkey Backs Serbia and Montenegro's NATO Partnership" 14 February 2004, *Turkish Daily News*.

²³ "T.C. Hükümet ile Sırbistan ve Karadağ Bakanlar Konseyi Arasında Askeri – Bilimsel ve Askeri – Teknik İşbirliği Konusunda Anlaşmanın Onaylanmasının Uygun Bulunduğuna Dair Kanun Tasarısı ve Dışişleri Komisyonu Raporu", <http://www.gov.tr/sirasayi/donem22/yil01/ss938.htm>.

since Milosevic was ousted in 2000. Turkey has repeatedly announced that Serbia's participation in NATO's PfP program would help bring stability to the Balkans. In similar vein, enhanced military relations are expected to serve the same end, and as the agreement itself suggests, to the betterment of military relations.

6.2.3. MILITARY RELATIONS BETWEEN TURKEY AND CROATIA

During the war in Bosnia, Croatia wanted to have close relations with Turkey. However, due to international arms embargo and the need to balance relations with Bosnia accordingly, Turkey's approach to Croatia's appeal appeared to be cautious.²⁴ After the war officially ended with the Dayton Peace Accord, Croatian Foreign Minister Mate Granic came to Turkey for a meeting between Turkish, Bosnian and Croatian foreign ministers. Granic stated that Croatia was inclined to sign a military cooperation and training agreement with Turkey. Pointing out Croatia had signed a similar agreement with Hungary, Granic said they were ready to sign such agreements with all friendly countries. The Croatian Foreign Minister discussed the signing of military, cultural, scientific, tourism and technical cooperation agreements with his Turkish counterpart Emre Gönensay.²⁵ Croatia considered a military agreement with Turkey very important for its goal of becoming a member of NATO, particularly because Turkey has a lot of experience as a NATO member. It was argued that the cooperation agreement could pave the way for other cooperation agreements between Croatia and Turkey in the defense

²⁴ Pınar Yürür, "Tarihi Süreç İçerisinde Hırvatistan Dış Politikası", p. 223.

²⁵ "Croatia Wants Military Cooperation Agreement", 28 May 1996, <http://www.byegm.gov.tr/YAYINLARIMIZ/CHR/ING/05/96x05x28.TXT>, as retrieved on 26 November 2006, 02:07:27 GMT; and "Turkey and Croatia Ponder Military Cooperation", 29 May 1996, *Turkish Daily News*.

industry field.²⁶ Eventually, Deputy Chief of General Staff General Çevik Bir went to Croatia in August 1996 for the signing of the agreement. The agreement envisaged an exchange of staff between the armed forces of the two states and training of officers at Turkish and Croatian military training institutions. With this agreement, Turkey had signed military agreements with all the Balkan countries except Greece and new Yugoslavia by then.²⁷ Earlier in the same month, Turkey had already planned to sell 3 Spanish-designed CASA CN-235 light transport aircraft, produced by Turkish Aerospace Industries (TAI), to Croatia. During the first phases of negotiations between the Croat and Turkish delegations, the Croats had difficulty finding a way to meet the cost of the three CASA aircraft but later the problem was solved in a way to allow Croatia not to pay for three aircraft until the last 52nd CASA had been delivered to the Turkish Air Force (TUAF), i.e. in the end of 1998. The three CASA aircraft would be paid for with the credit opened by main producer Spain to be used by Turkey. The aircraft was intended for civil transportation.²⁸ Within the framework of the 1996 agreement, Turkey and Croatia began military training cooperation. 593 Croatian military personnel completed their training in branch schools of Land Forces and Air Forces Commands, Army Staff College, Gülhane Military Medical Academy and language schools by the end of 2003. The short-term courses offered by Turkey to Croatian military personnel are command of infantry battalion, command of artillery battery, and command of Infantry Company. Croatian military personnel participate also in the courses and seminars conducted by the Turkish PfP Center. The military cooperation includes exercises as

²⁶ “Turkey and Croatia To Sign Military Cooperation Agreement”, 14 June 1996, *Turkish Daily News*.

²⁷ “Military Agreement With Croatia”, Hellenic Resources Network, 23 August 1996, <http://www.hri.org/news/turkey/trkpr/1996/96-08-23.trkpr.html#15> .

²⁸ “Turkey to Sell Three CASA Light Transport Aircraft to Croatia”, 3 August 1996, *Turkish Daily News*.

well. Turkey and Croatia invite each other to the exercises conducted in the framework of national and PfP program as observers. Croatia participated in Mehmetçik – 2000 military exercise. Moreover, Croatian Chief of General Staff together with force commanders visited Turkey in 2000 and negotiated the purchase of F-16s and deepening cooperation.²⁹ In the 2003 IDEF International Military Fair, Turkey showed particular interest for the first Croatian-made tank “*Degman*” and the two sides expressed views on enhanced military cooperation.³⁰ By and large, as Croatia’s military needs and defense budget plummeted after the war, military relations with the country remained limited to training activities, which was coupled with the fact that Tudjman’s rigid stance towards Bosnia – Herzegovina contributed to the limited nature of military relations at his time.³¹

6.2.4. MILITARY RELATIONS BETWEEN TURKEY AND MACEDONIA

As the country which was the first to open an embassy in Macedonia after the declarations of independence, Turkey built strong ties with the country in various domains including the military field. In the immediate aftermath of the declaration of independence, Macedonia was an isolated weak country with no international recognition, suffering ethnic problem and poor economy. It also faced security threat from Greece.

The first military visit between the two states took place when Macedonian Chief of Staff came to Turkey in June 1993. The military training and cooperation

²⁹ Mustafa Aksaç, *Turkey’s Military Efforts for Peace in the Balkans*, pp. 120-121.

³⁰ Mile Franicevic, “Ankara’daki Fuarda Dikkatleri En Çok Hırvat Tankı Çekti”, *Vjesnik*, 1 October 2003, on <http://www.byegm.gov.tr/YAYINLARIMIZ/DISBASIN/2003/10/02x10x03.htm>, as retrieved on 25 December 2006, 15:02:10 GMT

³¹ Pınar Yürür, “Tarihi Süreç İçerisinde Hırvatistan Dış Politikası”, p. 223.

activities started in 1994 as per the related agreement on military training concluded by the two parties in March 1994. In the ensuing years, high level bilateral visits continued by the Macedonian Chief of General Staff, Deputy Chief of General Staff, the Defense Minister, and delegations from the General Staff and Army War Academy. In terms of training, Turkey offers training courses to Macedonian military personnel in Armed Forces College, Army Staff College, Language School, and School of Air Forces.³² In 1995, the Chiefs of General Staff from Turkey and Macedonia signed the Skopje Document on Confidence and Security Building Measures (CSBMs).³³ A year later, Turkey and Macedonia signed an agreement envisaging cooperation between air forces as Macedonia had no air force at the time. Turkey trained Macedonian pilots and also offered to sell twenty F-5 war planes in excess which was welcomed by Macedonia. Talks with the U.S.A. which holds the license of these planes started, however the project was later shelved.³⁴

The military cooperation activities included “special forces” training in both countries. Macedonian Special Forces were given commando training in Turkey. Similarly, Special Forces under the command of Turkish Naval Forces offered relevant courses to Macedonian military personnel in 1998.³⁵

By the following year, Turkey had sent approximately \$2 million worth military aid to Macedonia, which included military equipment and ammunition worth \$1.9 million. The aid was handed over at a military facility near Skopje in the presence of Turkey Ambassador Mustafa Fazlı Kesmir and Macedonian Defense

³² Mustafa Aksaç, *Turkey's Military Efforts for Peace in the Balkans*, p. 104.

³³ 22 July 1995, *Cumhuriyet*. Turkey regards bilateral and regional – level Confidence Building Measures (CBMs) as an integral part of overall disarmament activities. In this respect, the Vienna Document is a key CSBMs instrument that aims at contributing security in the OSCE region. In similar vein, Turkey has engaged in bilateral CSBMs regulations in the spirit of Vienna Document since 1990. The Skopje Document is one of the bilateral CSBM arrangements as Sofia Document (1991), Edirne Document (1992), Tirana Document (1995), and Skopje Document (1995).

³⁴ Metehan Demir, “Arap Emirlikleri’ne Türk F-16’sı”, 10 November 1998, *Hürriyet*.

³⁵ Mustafa Aksaç, *Turkey's Military Efforts for Peace in the Balkans*, p. 105.

Minister Nikola Klusev.³⁶ Subsequently, a team of six personnel from Turkish Armed Forces began to train Macedonian Special Forces in Macedonia in 2000. After the forces were deployed around the border region against separatist groups, Turkish forces returned to Turkey in 2001.³⁷ When the clashes on Macedonian – Kosovo border region escalated in March 2001, Macedonian Foreign Minister Sircan Kerim came to Ankara for a meeting with Prime Minister Ecevit and Foreign Minister Cem. The two sides reaffirmed their compromise for the continuation of defense aid by Turkey and stated that sending troops to Macedonia was not an issue in their agenda. In this respect, Kerim did not ask for military support from Turkey but requested a more active stance from NATO.³⁸ Furthermore, military exercises have been a significant means to enhance military relations. The first of these exercises was carried out in Macedonia with the participation of a Turkish team of 70 troops. These are Cooperative Dragon (Albania, June 2000), Cooperative Key (Romania, September 2000), Cooperative Best Effort (Romania, September 2000), Seven Stars (Bulgaria, September 2000), SEEBRIG CAX (Bulgaria, March 2001), Cornerstone (Albania, April – July 2001), Cooperative Best Effort (Australia, September 2001), Rescuer (Bulgaria, September 2001). Macedonia was also invited to the following exercises conducted by Turkish Armed Forces in 2000: Joint Battalion Task Force (BNTF), Peaceful Star, and Mehmetçik.³⁹

In July 2006, the Macedonian Information Agency (MIA) reported that Turkey made a new military grant of \$750.000 to the Macedonian Army and that a total of \$15 million worth military equipment was donated by Turkey since 1994. The deal was signed by Macedonian Deputy Chief of General Staff and the Chief of

³⁶ “Turkey Sends Military Aid To Needy Macedonia”, 14 June 1999, *Turkish Daily News*.

³⁷ Mustafa Aksaç, *Turkey’s Military Efforts for Peace in the Balkans*, p. 105.

³⁸ “Üsküp’e Savunma Yardımı”, 18 March 2001, *Cumhuriyet*.

³⁹ Mustafa Aksaç, *Turkey’s Military Efforts for Peace in the Balkans*, pp. 106-107

the Department for Defense Planning in the presence of Turkish Ambassador to Macedonia Taner Karakaş who stated that the donation aimed at support to Macedonia's efforts for integration in the Euro-Atlantic structures. The donation involved motorized military vehicles and means for connection produced in Turkey and compatible with NATO standards.⁴⁰ Most recently, Macedonian Chief of General Staff Miroslav Stojanovski visited his counterpart Yaşar Büyükanıt in early March 2007.⁴¹

6.2.5. MILITARY RELATIONS BETWEEN TURKEY AND ALBANIA

Bilateral military relations between Turkey and Albania began in early 1990s. Albania started defense cooperation almost simultaneously with Turkey as well as with the U.S.A. The first meeting of significance at the ministerial level between the two states took place in Ankara in late July 1992 during which the parties signed a Defense Cooperation Pact. The then Minister of Defense Nevzat Ayaz stated that the agreement focused on broadening cooperation in the field of military education and technology. During his visit to Turkey, Albanian Defense Minister Safet Zhulali was allowed to visit Turkish military facilities such as factories, command centers and bases, to which at the time only NATO members were allowed top secret access. In return, Turkish naval vessel, Fevzi Çakmak visited the Albanian Port of Drac in late August 1992, the first such visit of a Turkish naval vessel to Albania

⁴⁰ "Turkish Military To Donate \$750.000 of Domestic – Produced APCs to Macedonian Army", 4 July 2006, on <http://www.balkananalysis.com/security-intelligence-briefs/07042006-turkish-military-to-donate-750000-of-domestic-produced-apcs-to-macedonian-army/>, as retrieved on 2 March 2007, 22:43:26 GMT.

⁴¹ "Jandarma Bandosundan Konuk Genelkurmay Başkanına Jest", 7 March 2007, on <http://www.haberler.com/jandarma-bandosundan-konuk-genelkurmay-baskanina-haberi/>

since the days of the Ottoman Empire. Turkish officers visited Albanian Defense Ministry in mid-November the same year.⁴² The two states concluded the Defense Technology and Military Training Cooperation during this visit⁴³ and Albania also asked for arms aid October 1993.⁴⁴

In mid-July 1996, Turkish contingent of 40 soldiers left for Albania to take part in the Peaceful Eagle 96 military exercise conducted under the auspices of NATO's PfP program. Along with the Turkish contingent, headed by Lieutenant Colonel İhsan Balabanlı, troops from Albania, the U.S.A., Italy, Macedonia, Bulgaria and Romania took part in the military exercise. During the exercise, the use of light weapons, first aid training, mine sweeping, reconnaissance and security drills were practiced.⁴⁵ A month later, a delegation of Albanian military offices headed by Major General Armando Vincani, the Deputy Chief of General Staff, came to Turkey for a meeting with their Turkish counterparts for an exchange of views on military issues.⁴⁶ After the meeting it was stated that Turkey and Albania would hold a joint military exercise in the Adriatic Sea off the coast of Albania in late August. The office of the chief of General Staff stated that three Albanian warships including a minesweeper and two torpedo ship and Turkish Turgut Reis, one of the best frigates in the Turkish Navy, were scheduled to participate in the exercise. It was also stated that Turkey would provide military aid and assistance to Albania. The training included naval operations, on board fire fighting techniques

⁴² Mikro Dakovic and Boro Miseljic, "Destabilizing the Balkans: US and Albanian Defense Cooperation in the 1990s", *Independent Center for Geopolitical Studies, Jugoistok*, Belgrade Serbia, 22 March 2001, <http://www.antiwar.com/orig/dakovic2.html>; retrieved on 22 January 2007, 15:57:12 GMT.

⁴³ Birgül Demirtaş – Coşkun, "Arnavutluk'un Dış Politikası ve Balkanlarda Arnavutluk Sorunu", p. 87

⁴⁴ 6 October 1993, *Cumhuriyet*.

⁴⁵ "Turkish Troops Take Part in Military Exercise", 15 July 1996, *Turkish Daily News*.

⁴⁶ "Albanian Military Delegation in Turkey", 21 August 1996, *Turkish Daily News*.

and rescue operations, which were monitored by foreign attachés in Albania and officers from NATO.⁴⁷

In early 1997, unrest broke out in the country when a series of fraudulent investment schemes collapsed resulting in thousands of citizens' loss of their lives' savings. In early April 1997, Turkish parliament approved sending troops to Albania while Albanian Deputy Foreign Minister Albert Rakipi was engaged in talks during his two-day visit in Ankara. During the unrest, militants armed with weapons looted from military barracks, estimated at some 200,000 guns, seized control of much of southern Albania. Turkey feared that as the rebels refused to hand over the guns, the weaponry could be carried over to Macedonia and Bulgaria and made its voice heard since the outbreak of clashes and followed intensive diplomacy in cooperation with Italy.⁴⁸ After the Turkish troops' duration of 3-month stay ended in late July, 781 soldiers returned to Turkey.⁴⁹

During Albanian Defense Minister Luan Haydarağa's visit to Ankara, Defense Minister İsmet Sezgin assued that Turkey was opposed to any kind of activity that would undermine peace and stability in the Balkans and two sides signed an agreement for a \$5 million Turkish grant to Albania.⁵⁰ For the second time, two weeks after the Albanian Defense Minister's visit, Turkish parliament unanimously authorized the deployment of Turkish troops to Albania when the conflict in Kosovo escalated. The authorization left it up to the Cabinet to decide the needs, size, place and time of the deployment. The move would also allow the deployment of soldiers for possible international peacekeeping missions in Albania. A small group of soldiers went to the southern Albanian town of Vlora to protect a

⁴⁷ "Turkey and Albania to Hold Joint Naval Exercise", 24 August 1996, *Turkish Daily News*.

⁴⁸ "Turkish Parliament Approves Troops For Albania", 11 April 1997, *Turkish Daily News*.

⁴⁹ "Turkish Troops in Albania Will Return Home", 26 July 1997, *Turkish Daily News*.

⁵⁰ "Albanian Defense Minister in Turkey", 11 July 1998, *Turkish Daily News*.

Turkish technical team engaged in repairing a military shipyard, port and army barracks. There were also voices in the Parliament suggesting Turkey should also send Red Crescent aid for Kosovar Albanian refugees.⁵¹

In August 1998, an amphibious Turkish division was scheduled to set out for Albania to take part in a NATO exercise which would also be participated by the members of the Pfp. General Staff's related statement said that eleven NATO states, Belgium, Canada, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, the Netherlands, Spain, Turkey, the U.S.A. and Britain and three Pfp countries, Albania, Russia, Lithuania in the Cooperative Assembly 98 exercises. The other Pfp countries took part as observers. The maneuvers were carried out in Albanian and Macedonian territories, and were based on a scenario to end regional conflicts peacefully. The land, air, and naval forces of the participating countries were involved in search-and-rescue (SAR) missions, medical evacuation (MEDEVAC), and airdrop operations. Apart from the amphibious division, Turkey sent four F-16s, a transport plane, a frigate and logistic support.⁵² The following year, part of a 126-strong Turkish military unit left for Tirana, along with a number of vehicles and assorted equipment, in mid-May to join a special NATO force deployed in Albania to take part in the distribution of humanitarian aid to the Kosovar refugees who escaped from Yugoslavia.⁵³

In 2002, National Defense Minister Sabahattin Çakmakoglu met his Albanian counterpart Luan Rama in Tirana. Çakmakoglu stated that the latest developments between the two states were discussed and added that Turkey would contribute to the modernization of Albania in the military field.⁵⁴ The harvest of this visit was reaped during the visit of Chief of General Staff General Hüseyin

⁵¹ "Parliament Approves Sending Troops to Albania", 25 July 1998, *Turkish Daily News*.

⁵² "Turkey to Take Part in NATO Exercise in Albania", 8 August 1998, *Turkish Daily News*.

⁵³ "First Group of Turkish Soldiers Leaves For Albania", 17 May 1999, *Turkish Daily News*.

⁵⁴ "Çakmakoglu Visits Albania", 22 June 2002, *Turkish Daily News*.

Kıvrıkoğlu to Albania where he met several dignitaries and officials, both political and military. During the visit, Kıvrıkoğlu was received by Albanian president Recep Mejdani who said relations between the two states fostered stability and peace in the region and drew attention to the rebuilding Kucova airport. Kıvrıkoğlu signed a logistic application protocol with Rama. The protocol establishes the provision of \$2,5 million worth of assistance to help the Albanian Army reach NATO standards. Kıvrıkoğlu also met with Albanian Chief of General Staff Pillumb Kazimi and discussed military relations and Kazimi stated that Albania would send units to assist the Turkish Army's mission in Afghanistan.⁵⁵

Turkish Armed Forces offer Albanian military personnel education and training activities in military colleges, Gülhane Military Medical Academy, military academies, military high schools, branch schools, and language schools. The number of Albanian military personnel to have attended the PfP training activities is 468.⁵⁶ In Albania, Turkey contributed to the reorganization and training of certain units and modernization of some military institutions. Turkish military personnel offered courses to Albanian military personnel concerning the establishment of a commando battalion. The training group, Turkish Organization and Training Team also engaged in the Training of Albanian Commando Brigade since 1997. The training of the unit of Republic Guards by Turkey also started under the command of General Staff Special Forces in 1999. Turkey also trained Albanian Special Forces Battalion. Furthermore, Turkey also contributed to the reconstruction of Albanian military institutions. For instance, Turkey reconstructed and modernized Albanian Naval War Academy and Pashaliman Naval Base. While the former opened in 2000, the Pashaliman Port was submitted to Albania in 2001. Turkish

⁵⁵ "Kıvrıkoğlu Visit Fosters Military Ties With Albania", 6 July 2002, *Turkish Daily News*.

⁵⁶ Participation of PfP Courses, <http://www.bioem.tsk.mil.tr>

ammunition company Mechanical and Chemical Industry Corporation (*Makina ve Kimya Endüstrisi Kurumu*) bought out and modernized the biggest ammunition plant in Albania. Turkey also supplied radar systems for the surveillance of the Albanian air space and of telecommunication equipment.⁵⁷

6.2.6. MILITARY RELATIONS BETWEEN TURKEY AND KOSOVO

A short travel in the chronology of key events in Kosovo's history manifests a miniature portrait of post-Cold War history of the Balkans. Frequent power shifts, mixture of different groups not getting along well, and consequent ethnic strife. Due to the unfixed characteristic of the Serbian province, which is in fact Serbian only officially, it would be helpful to scan the timeline of events that took place in the history of Kosovo since 1987, a key moment in the history in Slobodan Milosevic's rise to power when he rallied a crowd of Kosovo Serbs who protested against alleged harassment by the majority Albanian community. Two years later, Milosevic revoked Kosovo's autonomy under 1974 amendments to the Serbian Constitution, thus bringing the province under Belgrade's direct control. In 1990, ethnic Albanian leaders declared independence from Serbia and Belgrade dissolved Kosovo government. More than 100,000 Kosovo Albanian employees in state-owned companies were sacked. In 1991, Albania recognized the self-proclaimed Republic of Kosovo. In 1992, an academic, Ibrahim Rugova, was elected president and in the ensuing years, ethnic tension escalated. For instance, Serbian court sentenced 68 Kosovo Albanians, charged with setting up a parallel police force to up to eight

⁵⁷ Mustafa Aksaç, *Turkey's Military Efforts for Peace in the Balkans*, pp.100-103.

years in prison. In 1996, a separatist rebel group, calling itself the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) emerged claiming responsibility for a series of bombings and attacks against Serbian police and state officials. In 1997, KLA staged attacks on Serbian leaders, police and Kosovo Albanians who collaborated with the Serbs. Open conflict between Serb police and the KLA took place for the first time in 1998 upon which NATO gave an ultimatum to Milosevic to halt the crackdown on Kosovo Albanians.⁵⁸ In face of escalating events, Kosovo's self-declared leader Rugova began to seek support in Turkey in 1998. Kosovo's representative in Turkey, Enver Tali, stated that Turkey had special meaning for them and they expected more support from Turkey than any other NATO country.⁵⁹

When Belgrade rejected an internationally-brokered peace deal, which had been signed by the Kosovo Albanians, international peace monitors evacuated Kosovo. Thereafter, NATO prepared for imminent air attack. At the time, although analysts did not expect Turkey to take an active part in the operations, Ankara prepared its air, naval, and land forces. Air Force Commander General İlhan Kılıç confirmed that Turkey had 11 F-16s at NATO bases in Italy. Defense Minister Hikmet Sami Türk also stated that Turkey carried out preparations for possible involvement in a NATO strike saying that Turkish Air Force was on duty, one of the warships was in the Adriatic and the army prepared a battalion although a land operation was out of question. At the time, it was stressed that Turkey was in favor of an enhanced autonomy for Kosovo, within Yugoslavia's territorial integrity.⁶⁰

⁵⁸ "Timeline: Kosovo", BBC News, as retrieved on 2 February 2007, 18:09:37 GMT, http://www.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/1/hi/world/europe/country_profiles/3550401.stm; and "Kosovo ... Timeline of Events", 15 December 2006, http://www.setimes.com/cocoon/setimes/xhtml/en_GB/features/setimes/special/kosovo/contexts/timeline

⁵⁹ "Kosovan Leader Rugova To Seek Support in Turkey", 11 August 1998, *Turkish Daily News*.

⁶⁰ "Ankara Preparing For NATO Strike", 25 March 1999, *Turkish Daily News*.

After NATO launched air strikes in March 1999, Turkey as an alliance member had to face the heavy task of countering the enemy resistance. This war was the first war beyond Turkey's borders since 1974 intervention in Cyprus. The military officials stated that Turkey's role in the region should not be underestimated and that Turkish jets were assigned to protect NATO's bomber planes that bombarded targets in Yugoslavia.⁶¹ In the midst of the air strikes in April, General Staff announced that Turkish Armed Forces F-16s stationed at Ghedi Air Base in Italy had flown almost 650 hours as part of their Combat Air Patrol – CAP mission. Turkey did not participate in the bombardment for the risks involved for Turkey as a Balkan country as Ecevit put it, as well as, reportedly, due to lack of sophisticated bombing equipment with pinpoint target systems.⁶² Before the air strikes were called off, there were interpretations that the outcome of NATO's Kosovo intervention would determine the course of several problems waiting to take place around Turkey. While Turkey was busy trying to carve a space with the then evolving European Security and Defense Identity (ESDI), it was argued that it should on this occasion have made its priority to support the leadership of NATO and try to urge NATO not to leave Kosovo with a vagueness. A possible NATO failure in Kosovo would signal a clear risk for Turkey's security.⁶³ At the time, Turkey had made arrangements to receive more than 20,000 refugees in Turkey and established camps for another 20,000 in Macedonia and Albania which was a decision as part of the NATO effort to help frontline countries to handle the burdens of the flow of refugees.⁶⁴ In late May 1999, the Pentagon said that 54 American F-15 and F-16 fighter jets would be deployed in June 1999 at three Western Anatolian

⁶¹ "Turkey Actively Participates in NATO Strikes in Yugoslavia", 28 March 1999, *Turkish Daily News*.

⁶² "NATO Air Strikes: To Pursue the Serbs, or The Refugees?", 18 March 1999, *Turkish Daily News*.

⁶³ "A Case of Immaculate Coercion Going Astray", 24 April 1999, *Turkish Daily News*.

⁶⁴ "The Kosovo Cross", 12 May 1999, *Turkish Daily News*.

air bases that Turkey opened for use by NATO. Although Turkish officials preserved their silence about direct Turkish participation in the NATO air strikes, Pentagon spokesman Kenneth Bacon expressly stated that 18 Turkish jets would also take part in the air strikes, announcing that out of 72 fighter jets to be deployed in the air bases in Bandırma, Balıkesir, and Çorlu, 54 planes would be American F-15s and F-16s, and the rest would be Turkish aircraft.⁶⁵ In June 1999, President Milosevic agreed to withdraw troops from Kosovo and NATO called off air strikes. UN Security Council passed Resolution 1244, welcoming Yugoslavia's acceptance of a political deal, including an immediate end to violence and a rapid withdrawal of its military, police and paramilitary forces. Placing Kosovo under UN administration, the Resolution also authorized the establishment of UNMIK and the deployment of NATO-led KFOR. NATO forces arrived in the province and the KLA agreed to disarm. By defining the Kosovo events as half-war, the critics alleged that what was brought to Kosovo was half-peace in the new era, and as regards the turnout of events in Turkey, their criticism hinged on the argument that letting alone establishing a Turkish zone in Kosovo beside the Germans, Italians, British, Americans, French and Russians, Turkey could not even transport its troops to Kosovo.⁶⁶

Seeking to take on an active role in post-war Kosovo, Turkey expanded efforts to secure a solid Turkish participation both in the peacekeeping mission and the reconstruction plans in the region. Ankara had a growing frustration over its apparent alienation from the decision-making process in Kosovo since the air strikes were called off, which was voiced by Foreign Minister Cem and Prime Minister

⁶⁵ "54 US, 18 Turkish Jets To Be Deployed for Kosovo Strikes", 22 May 1999, *Turkish Daily News*.

⁶⁶ Harun Kazaz, "Half-War Delivers Half-Peace in the New Era", *Turkish Daily News*, 19 June 1999. The same article also argued that the Europeans did not have transport airplanes when they wanted to carry out military maneuvers in the Canary Islands. So they went out and rent Russian, and not American, military transport planes and eventually conducted military maneuvers.

Ecevit in June 1999. Turkey engaged in a controversy about deployment under KFOR as well as NATO's delay in discussing its passage through Bulgaria. The relevant accord was inked by NATO and Sofia and was opened to what was called the "silence procedure" which meant that if no member state objected in 48 hours, the accord would automatically be considered accepted by NATO and then would be submitted to the Bulgarian parliament for approval. Yet, the accord faced the objection of France and accustomed objection of Greece. However, the obstacles were eliminated eventually and preparations to send 987-strong Turkish unit began. Meanwhile, regarding the location of Turkish KFOR troops, Prime Minister announced that the troops would be stationed in the German-controlled sector, in Prizren as opposed to former arrangements envisaging deployment in U.S.-controlled sector in the town of Kosovska Kamenica. In fact the decision was welcomed by Ankara as it corresponded to the initial Turkish proposal for Prizren where a majority of Turkish population lives.⁶⁷ By 26 June, the Bulgarian parliament had still not approved the passage of the Turkish unit through Bulgaria. General Staff Plans and Action Department Chief General Ethem Erdağı said that the talks over the exact location of Turkish unit still continued. The equipment would be transported by railway, and the heavy armored vehicles would go by road while most of the personnel would go by plane.⁶⁸ Finally, Turkish Battalion Force set off for Kosovo from Mamak in Ankara in early July 1999. The first contingent made up of approximate 130 soldiers was scheduled to travel through Bulgaria and Macedonia to Kosovo. The rest were assigned to contribute to the NATO-led KFOR

⁶⁷ "Frustrated Turkey Seeks Active Role in post-war Kosovo, 21 June 1999, *Turkish Daily News*. As a response to critiques who pinpointed the immediate deployment of Greek troops in Kosovo in comparison to late Turkish deployment, Foreign Minister Cem stated that Turkish authorities acted swiftly and applied to NATO in May 17, when Greece had not even applied. Moreover, Cem stressed that if Turkey had a border, the deployment would be even harder. "Cem: Turkish Unit to be Deployed in Kosovo Within Three Weeks", 23 June 1999, *Turkish Daily News*.

⁶⁸ "Turkey Mulls Over Opening Office in Kosovo", 26 June 1999, *Turkish Daily News*.

were planned to be dispatched in 7 July and travel by rail and plane.⁶⁹ The first group of the Turkish unit in KFOR entered Prizren in 4 July consisting of 133 troops and 52 vehicles.⁷⁰

The mandate of Turkish unit is to ensure the implementation of the military-technical agreement inked by NATO and the Republic of Federal Yugoslavia, as well as the obligations undertaken by Serbian forces and KLA; to deter Serbia from engaging in an offensive act towards Kosovo; to ensure security of the borders of Kosovo within its area of responsibility and to perform military exercises. This mandate includes operational and humanitarian tasks. While the former is based on border control, patrol and checkpoint conducting, search operation, monitoring Dragas and Tuzsuz quarters in Prizren, and CIMIC (Civil-Military Cooperation) activities, the latter includes limited school repair work, cooperation with UNICEF, and medical care by military doctors of the unit. As regards the composition and deployment, Turkish unit comprises of 1081 personnel and the figure includes Azerbaijani and Georgian platoon in accordance with bilateral agreements.⁷¹ Turkish unit is deployed in five different camps. The majority of the unit is in Camp Sultan Murad in Prizren, one mechanized infantry company in the Dragas area, another mechanized infantry company in the Mamusa area. Some units are deployed in Pristina at KFOR Headquarters Main and a platoon is in Skopje at KFOR Headquarters Rear.⁷² On 29 May 2007, Turkey took over the leadership of Southern

⁶⁹ “First Group of Turkish Peacekeepers Leave for Kosovo”, 2 July 1999, *Turkish Daily News*.

⁷⁰ “Turkish Peace-Keepers Arrive in Kosovo”, 5 July 1999, *Turkish Daily News*.

⁷¹ Mustafa Aksaç, *Turkey’s Military Efforts for Peace in the Balkans*, pp. 51-53.

⁷² “The Turkish Battalion”, http://www.nato.int/kfor/chronicle/2002/chronicle_03/09/htm, as retrieved on 10 February 2007, 20:04:42 GMT. In brief, Turkey contributes with a maneuver battalion including Azerbaijani and Georgian platoons, an engineering company and military police force, a reconnaissance platoon in reconnaissance company and a radar unit, two LOTs, three personnel in the Multinational Medical Force, sixteen personnel in Task Force HQs, eleven personnel in KFOR HQ.

Task Force for May 2007 - May 2008 period to leave the duty to Australia in May 2008.⁷³

The timeline of events since the end of 1999 clashes in Kosovo do not seem to display a conclusive portrait, either. In February 2002, İbrahim Rugova was elected president by the Kosova parliament after ethnic Albanian parties reached a power-sharing deal and Bayram Rexhepi became Prime Minister. In October 2003, first direct talks between Serbian and Kosovo Albanian leaders took place since 1999 and then UN set out conditions for the final status talks in 2005. In March 2004, 19 people were killed in the worst clashes between Serbs and ethnic Albanians since 1999. In October 2004, Rugova's pro-independence Democratic League won 47 seats in the 120-seat parliament, which was boycotted by Serbs. In December the same year, the parliament re-elected Rugova and elected former rebel commander Ramush Haradinaj as Prime Minister. In February 2005, Serbian President Boris Tadic visited Kosovo and promised to defend the rights of Serbs in the province. In the following month, Haradinaj was indicted to face UN war crimes tribunal in The Hague and resigned as Prime Minister to be succeeded by Bayram Kosumi. In July 2005, simultaneous blasts took place near UN, OSCE and Kosovo parliament buildings in Pristina and fortunately with no casualty or injury. In February 2006, Rugova died in Pristina and was succeeded by Fatmir Sejdiu and the following month, UN-sponsored talks on Kosovo's final status began. In March 2006, Kosumi resigned and was succeeded by former KLA commander Agim Ceku. The first direct talks since 1999 between Serbia and Kosovar leaders took place in Vienna. In October 2006, Serbs in Serbia proper approved a new constitution which

⁷³ <http://www.genelkurmay.info/eng/uluslararası/barisdestekharekati.htm>, as retrieved on 30 March 2007, 15:34:48 GMT; Süleyman Kurt, "Turkey Seeks UNIFIL Maritime Force Command", *Today's Zaman*, 3 March 2007; and "Kosova'da Komuta Türkiye'de", *ANKA News Agency*, 29 May 2007, on <http://www.haberler.com/kosova-da-komuta-turkiye-de-haberi/>, as retrieved on 16 June 2007 16:45:18 GMT.

declared Kosovo as an integral part of the country upon which the Albanian majority in Kosovo boycotted the referendum. In February 2007, UN envoy Martti Ahtisaari announced a plan to set Kosovo to the road to independence, which unsurprisingly was welcomed by Kosovo Albanians and refused by Serbia.⁷⁴ The UN Report proposing a controlled independence for Kosovo was submitted to UN Security Council on 26 March 2007. The report, penned by UN Special Envoy for Kosovo Martti Ahtisaari, fully supported by Secretary – General Ban Ki – Mun envisaged independence as the only choice for Kosovo. The plan proposed an internationally monitored independence for Kosovo and an assignment of an international civil representative in Kosovo, whose duration of stay in Kosovo is not defined in the plan. The plan stated that the international administration in Kosovo was unsustainable and autonomous Kosovo within Serbia was not supported. Ahtisaari also maintained that a possible return to Serbian governance in Kosovo would be unacceptable for the majority of Kosovar population. In fact, the plan gave extensive rights to Serbian minority in Kosovo. However, Kosovar Albanians wanted full independence, while the Serbs rejected it. The plan was scheduled to be opened for vote in April or May 2007. Russia refused both the Ahtisaari Plan and to recognize Kosovo's independence. The U.S.A. and the EU were supportive of the plan.⁷⁵ It was expected that the possible refusal of the plan by the Serbs could trigger untoward violent acts in Kosovo when one is reminded of the still fresh unpleasant history in the province. This compels one to think that Turkey with its military presence is likely stay in Kosovo at least in the short- and medium-term.

⁷⁴ "Timeline: Kosovo", BBC News, as retrieved on 2 February 2007, 18:09:37 GMT.

⁷⁵ "Kosova'ya Kontrollü Bağımsızlık", CNNTurk, 26 March 2007; "Ahtisaari: Kosova İçin Tek Uygun Seçenek Bağımsızlık", ABHaber, 26 March 2007, http://www.abhaber.com/haber_sayfasi.asp?id=16584, as retrieved on 26 March 2007, 21:06:18 GMT.

6.2.7. MILITARY RELATIONS BETWEEN TURKEY AND BULGARIA

In the immediate aftermath of the change of regime in Bulgaria, the rapprochement observed in political relations did not easily translate itself to bilateral military relations. Although Bulgarian officials expressly stated that the recent assimilation campaign on Turks in Bulgaria had been a grave mistake in Bulgaria's history and said they were ready to open a new page in bilateral relations, it seemed the military side of the story said otherwise, at least for the material time. This was not evident in Bulgarian Chief of Staff General Raudniu Mincev's remark when he said "We fear Turkey's (military) presence in Thrace"⁷⁶ which was affirmed by Bulgarian Prime Minister Andrei Lukanov' by way of saying that there was threat from Turkey even though in theory and that Bulgaria looked to OSCE for provision of security.⁷⁷ Such remarks were interpreted by President Özal as an obvious fear on the part of Bulgarians and that was why they wanted to conclude a nonaggression pact with Turkey.⁷⁸ The following year, Bulgarian Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Stojan Ganev maintained that it was necessary to conclude an agreement on defense in December 1991⁷⁹ which was in fact produced as Sofia Document two weeks later, launching an era of cooperation between the armed forces of the two states and signed by the chiefs of General Staffs of Turkey and Bulgaria.⁸⁰ The first contact in the military sphere was established in the General Staff level the same year by General Mehmet Önder.⁸¹

⁷⁶ 19 November 1990, *Hürriyet*.

⁷⁷ 21 November 1990, *Cumhuriyet*.

⁷⁸ 28 November 1990, *Hürriyet*.

⁷⁹ 7 December 1991, *Cumhuriyet*.

⁸⁰ 21 December 1991, *Cumhuriyet*.

⁸¹ Nurcan Özgür, "1989 Sonrası Türkiye – Bulgaristan İlişkileri", p. 377.

In 1992, Bulgarian Defense Minister Dimitr Lucev came to Ankara for an official visit which was first of its kind since 1917⁸², which was to be followed by the Edirne Document on friendship, goodneighborliness, cooperation and security.⁸³ The first concrete implementation as per Edirne Document was observed when part of the Turkish forces close to Turkish - Bulgarian border was moved from Edirne to Lüleburgaz and from Kırklareli to İstanbul with a ceremony attended by Bulgarian Chief of Staff Lyuben Petrov. The improvement in military relations produced a positive atmosphere in relations so much so that former President Zheliu Zhelev was prompted to state in 1995 that the only state which did not attack Bulgaria since 1885 was Turkey.⁸⁴

In early 1996, Turkey and Bulgaria signed a military agreement in Sofia. The cooperation agreement was signed by Deputy Chief of the Bulgarian General Staff General Petko Prokopiev and Deputy Chief of the Turkish General Staff General Çevik Bir. The agreement envisaged Turkey and Bulgaria to participate in joint military exercises in 1996 and exchange of military advisors.⁸⁵ This agreement was followed by another cooperation agreement in July 1997 concluded during Stojanov's three-day visit to Turkey. The agreement covered defense, security, training, medicine, public relations and sports activities. Chief of General Staff General İsmail Hakkı Karadayı said that the agreement would improve relations between the two states and would contribute to peace in Europe. Bulgarian Chief of General Staff Miho Mihov said that the agreement was a first step towards

⁸² 11 March 1992, *Milliyet*.

⁸³ 13 November 1992, *Milliyet*.

⁸⁴ Nurcan Özgür, "1989 Sonrası Türkiye – Bulgaristan İlişkileri", p. 378. Actually, Zhelev forgot the Second Balkan War (1913) when the Ottoman Empire recovered territory lost to Bulgaria in largely bloodless offensive in July 1913.

⁸⁵ "Turkey, Bulgaria Sign Military Agreement", Office of the Prime Minister, Directorate General for Press and Information, *Turkish Press Review*, 26 January 1996, on [http://www.byegm.gov.tr/YAYINLARIMIZ/CHR/ING/=/!\)&x01x26.TXT](http://www.byegm.gov.tr/YAYINLARIMIZ/CHR/ING/=/!)&x01x26.TXT), as retrieved on 14 December 2006, 21:46:37 GMT.

sustaining good relations along with Turkey's support for Bulgaria's bid for NATO membership.⁸⁶

The development of closer ties between defense sectors of Turkey and Bulgaria was seen once more during Turkish Chief of General Staff Hüseyin Kıvrıkoğlu's visit to Bulgaria in 1999 to discuss Sofia's bid to join NATO and cooperation between the two states' militaries within the framework of SEEBRIG. Turkey's interest in exploring prospects for participation in the privatization of Bulgarian defense industry was re-expressed during the visit, reaffirming the remarks of Defense Minister İsmet Sezgin in Sofia that Ankara was inclined to contribute to the modernization of the Bulgarian Army to bring it to a par with NATO standards.⁸⁷

As part of the process Turkey initiated with some of the neighboring states aimed at cleaning common borders from anti-personnel mines (APMs), the first positive results were obtained by way of an agreement regarding the prevention of APMs use and their removal from border areas. Signed in 1999, the agreement was put into effect in May 2002.⁸⁸ In addition to high level visit, mutual group visits have also been conducted between the states. Groups from Bulgarian Naval War Academy and the Shooting Team of Bulgarian Armed Forces came to Turkey while Turkish military groups from Military Staff Colleges and Naval War Academy visited Bulgaria. Bulgarian Armed Forces personnel also receive training in Turkish military institutions such as Armed Forces College, Army War Academy, medicine courses, and the Turkish PfP Center. Likewise, Turkish Armed Forces personnel

⁸⁶ 30 July 1997, Cumhuriyet, "Bulgaria and Turkey Sign Military Cooperation Agreement", on <http://www.hri.org/news/turkey/trkpr/1997/97-07-30.trkpr.html>, retrieved on 8 March 2007, 06:33:38.

⁸⁷ "Closer Defense Cooperation With Turkey Underway", *Southeast Europe Project*, http://www.wilsoncenter.org/index.cfm?topic_id=109941&fuseaction=topics.documents&documents_id=114896&group_id=114885, as retrieved on 5 March 2007, 09:40:30 GMT.

⁸⁸ "Arms Control and Disarmament", www.turkey.org/governmentpolitics/issuearms.html.

also participate in training and education activities carried out in Bulgaria such as Bulgarian language course and the seminar of CHARALITZA-2000 concerning simulation systems and models. In 2001, military cooperation between Turkey and Bulgaria moved to a higher level with an exchange of soldiers stationed at border regions to allow them to engage in the field exercises and weaponry demonstrations. Within the framework of the abovementioned 1992 agreement to increase border security, twenty Bulgarian soldiers and twenty Turkish soldiers carried out the two-day exercises simultaneously at the Bulgarian base at Harmanlı and the Turkish base at Kırklareli.⁸⁹ The previous exercises also aimed at enhancing bilateral military relations, although not as comprehensive and frequent as those after 2001. These include Poyraz 1- 94 which was carried out by Turkish and Bulgarian Naval Forces in the Black Sea. The Cooperative Communication 96 was conducted with the Turkish and Bulgarian tactical signal units deployed near Kapitan Andreevo (in southern Bulgaria) and Kapikule border checkpoints. As an activity under the PfP program, the aim of the exercise was to test the technical compatibility of signal means.⁹⁰

Turkey participated in Seven Stars – 2001 carried out by SEEBRIG with mechanized infantry battalion. Turkish Defense Minister and Operational Chief of General Staff attended the exercise. In the same year, Turkish and Bulgarian land forces organized a Mutual Border Unit Training and Maneuver Program. The exercise carried out in the same year include Efes - 2001, Deniz Kurdu – 2001, Joint BnTf- 01, Deniz Yıldızı – 01, Karadeniz Ortaklık – 2001, Peaceful Star – 2001. In 2002, following exercises were carried out: Mutual Border Unit Exercises, Mutual

⁸⁹ “Military Border Exercises with Turkey”, *Southeast Europe Project*, http://www.wilsoncenter.org/index.cfm?topic_id=109941&fuseaction=topics.documents&documents&doc_id=114896&group_id=114885, as retrieved on 5 March 2007, 09:40:30 GMT.

⁹⁰ Mustafa Aksaç, *Turkey’s Military Efforts for Peace in the Balkans*, pp. 109-110.

Unit Exchange Exercise, Seven Stars – 2002, Deniz Kurdu 2002, Corner Stone, Breeze – 2002, Karadeniz Ortaklık – 2002.⁹¹ In 2003, the two states conducted another unit exchange exercise. Forty five personnel belonging to Kırklareli 33rd Mechanized Infantry Brigade Command went to the province of Stara Zagora in Bulgaria, where the exercise would be carried out ⁹² and a similar exercise was carried out in 2004 in Turkey.⁹³ In 2005, Turkey and Bulgaria participated in Black Sea Partnership and Blackseafor – 2005 exercises which were based on joint maneuvering communication, search and rescue operations, cooperation in counterterrorism, antiboat, antisubmarine and air defense exercises.⁹⁴ In 2006, Bulgaria and Turkey were involved in the exercise named Breeze 2006. A total of 25 combat and auxiliary ships and a helicopter, from the Bulgarian Navy as well as two Su-25s of Bulgarian Air Force joined the exercise. Turkey, Greece and France joined with warships and the U.S.A. with a patrol aircraft and coast guard ship.⁹⁵

6.2.8. MILITARY RELATIONS BETWEEN TURKEY AND ROMANIA

Romanian Armed Forces started a comprehensive reform process in 1990 including the concept of defense, organization, training and procurement. After the fall of Communism in the country, Romania repeatedly expressed its inclination to become a NATO member. Accordingly, it began to participate in the PfP program which

⁹¹ *ibid.*, p. 111.

⁹² “Bulgar Ordusunun Makyajlı Askerleri”, 5 November 2003, *Akşam*.

⁹³ “Turkish and Bulgarian Troops Exchange Exercise – Bulgarian Military Delegation Departs From Turkey”, 16 May 2004, *Anadolu Agency*.

⁹⁴ “Russian Joint Military Exercises With Foreign Countries in 2005”, Moscow Defense Brief by Center for Analysis of Strategies and Technologies, on <http://mdb.cast.ru/mdb/2-2005/facts/rusjoint>., as retrieved on 1 March 2007, 16:58:23.

⁹⁵ “Bulgarian Navy to Hold Military Exercises in Black Sea”, *People’s Daily Online*, 22 June 2006, http://www.english.people.com.cn/2006/06/22/print20060622_276388.html.

brought it close to Turkey. The first military contacts were achieved in 1992 when Romanian Defense Minister visited Turkey during which the two states signed an outline military cooperation agreement. When Turkish Chief of General Staff returned the visit after a short a time and signed the agreement on training, technique and scientific cooperation n the military field.⁹⁶ Mutual visits continued in the ensuing years with top military officials' visits. In this context, Romanian Chief of General Staff Constantin Degeratu visited Turkish Chief of General Staff İsmail Hakkı Karadayı in April 1997. The two military officials stressed historical cooperation between the two states and they expressed their inclination to take it to higher levels.⁹⁷ Almost two weeks later, President Demirel welcomed his Romanian counterpart Emil Constantinescu and said Turkey supported the integration of Romania in to the EU and NATO.⁹⁸

The following year, on the occasion of the transfer of Norwegian and Russian natural gas to Anatolia, Turkey and Romania came together and reached a compromise to work jointly about the matter. However, the other issue of primary concern was the production of 1800 6-wheeler military vehicles which were about to be completed as well as joint production of helicopters and tanks. It was stated that the joint production of eight samples of 6-wheeler military vehicles was about to be finished and that they would be handed over to Turkish Armed Forces. It was also noted that if the Armed Forces approved, 1800 of such military vehicles would be produced, which would cost \$500 million in total.⁹⁹

The issue of military cooperation was raised once more during Constantinescu's visit in late July 1998 as the two states asserted their support fro

⁹⁶ Mustafa Aksaç, *Turkey's Military Efforts for Peace in the Balkans*, p. 116.

⁹⁷ "Basın Birinci Kuvvet", 15 April 1997, *Milliyet*.

⁹⁸ "Turkey Supports Romanis's NATO and EU Bid", 30 April 1997, *Turkish Daily News*.

⁹⁹ "Türkiye ve Avrupa Doğalgazı Geliyor", 18 April 1998, *Cumhuriyet*.

the formation of a Balkan multinational peace force, which at the time, was planned to take immediate action in case of crisis situations in the region. The issue was also raised in the previous meeting in Ankara and Constantinescu expressed support for Plovdiv as the deployment location, upon which Demirel asked Constantinescu to support Turkey as a Balkan state. At the time, Edirne, Plovdiv and Romanian province of Constanza were the strongest contenders.¹⁰⁰

In a 1998 interview, Romanian Defense Minister Victor Babiuc stated that the continuation of friendly relations between Turkey and Romania was very important concerning the stability and security of Southeast European states and affirmed his content with respect to Turkey's support for Romania's NATO bid. Babiuc stressed that it would be easier to strengthen military cooperation against security risks that may emerge in the Balkans when Romania entered NATO. Romanian Defense Minister pointed out the regular official meetings, the PfP exercises, Turkey's military training offerings and Southeast Europe Multinational Peace Force, joint projects in defense industry.¹⁰¹ The same were confirmed by Chief of General Staff Hüseyin Kıvrıkoğlu during his official visit in Romania in October 1999¹⁰² and in November 2000.¹⁰³

Turkey and Romania carry out training activities within the framework of the military cooperation agreement. These activities which are carried out in Turkey are based on long-term education activities in Turkish military institutions and short-term courses. Romanian military personnel are offered such courses in the military institutions, which cover military staff colleges, language schools, and Commando

¹⁰⁰ "Turkey and Romania Reiterate Support for Balkan Peace Force" 29 July 1998, *Turkish Daily News*.

¹⁰¹ "Tarihten Ders Alalım", 1 November 1998, *Türkiye*; and "Turkey Strongly Supports Romania As a NATO Ally", 27 November 2002, *Turkish Daily News*.

¹⁰² "Kıvrıkoğlu Romanya'dan Cenazeye Yetiştii", 24 October 1999, *Cumhuriyet*.

¹⁰³ "Orgeneral Kıvrıkoğlu'nun Romanya Temasları", 24 November 2000, *Türkiye*.

School. Gülhane Military Medical Academy also provided courses on various war surgeries. Romanian military personnel also took courses and seminars at the Turkish PfP Center. The training activities in Romania focus on Turkish language courses. Turkish Chief of General Staff opened a Turkish language laboratory in Romanian Military Staff College in 1997. Turkey appointed a Turkish officer as teacher and in 2000, it sent a staff officer to Romanian High Staff College. The two countries also participated in various exercises to date, such as the Hezarfen – 97, carried out within the framework of PfP which was based on air traffic control tactics, the control of airspace and flight training, search and rescue operations as well as parachuting. The two states along with Bulgaria, Georgia and Ukraine, took part in the Joint Black Sea Corporation in 1999 in the western Black Sea. Within the framework of SEEBRIG, they participated in joint military exercises and Romania took part in Black Sea Partnership – 2002 carried out under the Turkish Navy Command. Romania also participated in Denizyıldızı 2001, Peaceful Star 2001, Black Sea Partnership 2001, Mehmetçik 2002, as an observer.¹⁰⁴ The two states carried out a joint commando military exercise in Kayseri in August 2004.¹⁰⁵ In the exercise conducted in Karasazlık region in İncesu district, Turkish and Romanian units exercised parachute landing and landed unit and ammunition with CASA and C130 planes. The exercise was followed by Romanian Land Forces 2nd Aerial Landing Brigadier Ion Chinanescu and Kayseri 1st Commando Brigadier Second Commander İsmet Erdağ. The exercise scenario was to neutralize the terrorists hidden in caves.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁴ Mustafa Aksaç, *Turkey's Military Efforts for Peace in the Balkans*, pp. 116 -118.

¹⁰⁵ "Turkish – Romanian Joint Commando Military Exercise Ends in Kayseri", 26 August 2004, Anadolu Agency, <http://www.hri.org/news/turkey/anadolu/2004/04-08-26.anadolu.html#22>.

¹⁰⁶ "Kayseri'de Hava İndirme Tatbikatı Sona Erdi", 24 August 2004, *İhlas News Agency*.

The following year, Turkey and Romania conducted a bilateral tactical exercise named Blue Eagle which took place in the two states simultaneously carried out by Romanian 34th Light Infantry and the Turkish Commando Brigade. The goal of this exercise was defined as to train and check the troops' capability of conducting complex operations for the countering of threats to safety and security as well as the presentation of the particulars against terrorism.¹⁰⁷ In 2006, Turkey held a joint naval drill with Romania and Greece named Turkish Minex – 2006 in the Aegean Sea. The participants declared by Turkish Naval Forces Command were Turkish, Romanian, and Greek warships, Standing NATO Response Force Mine Countermeasure Group 2 (SNMCMG) and Turkish Armed Forces aircraft.¹⁰⁸

In addition to training and military exercises, Turkey and Romania also cooperate in the defense industry field including production of military garment, standardization, production of armored personnel carrier, and quality guarantee.¹⁰⁹ Romania preserves its supportive attitude concerning Turkey's future EU membership in return for the support Turkey gave Romania for its NATO bid until Romania eventually joined the alliance in 2004. Romanian Ambassador in Turkey Constantin Grigorie's remarks pointed to the same in his 2007 interview in Turkish daily: "We haven't forgotten the support we received from Turkey when we wanted to join NATO, and now it is our turn to support Turkey to join the EU."¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁷ "Turkish – Romanian Tactical Exercise", 24 August 2005, Romanian Military Newsletter, http://www.mapn.ro/newsletter/2005/n_2005_018.pdf.

¹⁰⁸ "Turkey to Hold Joint Naval Drill with Romania and Greece", *Xinhua*, http://english.people.com.cn/2000611/07/eng20061107_319221.html, as retrieved on 1 April 2007, 12:43:44.

¹⁰⁹ Mustafa Aksaç, *Turkey's Military Efforts for Peace in the Balkans*, p. 118.

¹¹⁰ "Romania: Turkey Supported Our Joining NATO, Now It's Our Turn", 2 February 2007, *Zaman*.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION

The Balkans have come to be depicted for the region's political, military, and economic significance for Turkey and this dissertation was no exception to this depiction. Turkey has been no stranger to the region since the end of the 14th century, when the Ottoman domination of the region began and lasted until the beginning of the 18th century, putting its imprint on the coming years as well. However, the coverage of Balkan issues and Turkey's relations with the Balkans to date gives the impression of the approach that the issue should be devoted more scrutiny, yet it seems that this approach has not translated into practice. Relevant research on the issue is redundant concerning the pre-1990 period, however there is not as much research on the post-1990. The majority of the scholarly pieces in Turkish literature seems to focus on the Bosnian war and Turkey's relations with Bosnia – Herzegovina and Kosovo, predominantly from a political point of view.

As such, this dissertation aimed to bring together diplomatic/political, economic, and military relations of Turkey with all the Balkan states namely, Bosnia – Herzegovina, Serbia (and Montenegro), Croatia, Macedonia, Albania, Kosovo, Romania, Bulgaria, and Greece with special emphasis on the post-Cold War era. The main argument of the dissertation was the assumption that the Balkans have been underrated in Turkey's relations and the diplomatic/political field has been treated

with the highest concern and this approach has come to downplay the role of the economic and the military relations. However, these venues are obviously interrelated and have the potential to consolidate one another if explored and exploited duly. The existing approach has yet to be replaced with a multidimensional one in order to be characterized differently in the future. Furthermore, this study also aimed to provide insight for future bilateral and regional relations as well as to make policy recommendations. Recent regime transformations in all regional states and possible future confrontations have the potential to translate into novel and substantial policy discords, and that requires an informed and well devised foreign policy towards the region.

In this context, the first chapter explored the historical backdrop as to how Turkey fits in the Balkans. After being pushed back territorially with World War I, Turkey tried to preserve its new frontiers in the Republican era and sought to develop peaceful relations with the region to this end. That was why the Balkan states were among the first states with which Turkey tried to develop friendly relations. In the Cold War years, Turkey became part of the *Pax Americana* after 1952, yet regional states took position on the opposite camp, except Greece. The Cold War proved that Turkish foreign policy towards the region hinged on the well-being of the Turkish minority as well as their protection. The polarized structure of world politics did not allow Turkey to develop a chance to build bilateral and regional relations in a regular course. With the exception of Bulgaria, the Communist regional states remained mostly marginal for Turkey. With the outbreak of the war in Bosnia in 1992, Turkey became preoccupied with the region once again. However, as the crisis subsided, Turkey was prompted to engage more with the Middle East than the Balkans by mid-1990s. The break-up of Communism did not bring a fresh positive start in the region

and would bring to pass a new Balkanization, which coincided a time when Turkey began to pursue activism in foreign policy making. Turkey assumed a more participatory attitude and left aside the policy of non-involvement in regional affairs after 1990. This remarkable activism in regional relations gave rise to arguments which labeled Turkish foreign policy towards the Balkans as neo-Ottomanist. However, Turkey's Balkan policy was seen a natural expression of the age-old geographical, historical, and cultural links in Ankara. In fact, although Turkey was concerned with the unfolding events in the Balkans in 1991, the region was not a top priority in Turkey in early 1991 as Turkey had to tackle more pressing issues such as the PKK terrorism, the Gulf War, and the war between Azerbaijan and Armenia. Despite the accusation of neo-Ottomanism, Turkish foreign policy towards the Balkans faced feverish national public opinion and expectations, limited means for action to create stability in the region, the necessity of acting in harmony with the multinational regional structures and of preserving policies in line with the West as a staunch ally. Due to the abovementioned more pressing policy issues as well as the economic crisis in Turkey in the mid-1990s, the activism in foreign policy making in the first half of the 1990s lost momentum. Although Turkey existed in the Balkans in political, economic, and military terms, it lacked the organizational network between these venues which was required to achieve desired levels in relations.

Upon this preparatory ground, the second chapter investigated the historical development of Turkey's relations with the Balkan states from the end of the Great War to the end of the Cold War for the purpose of being able to compare Turkish foreign policy making towards the region in different time frames throughout the 20th century. Turkey's Balkan policy during the interwar years manifested Atatürk's foreign policy pillars, namely; Realism, tactical expertise, openness in dialogue,

knowledge of history, reliability, balanced self-reliance, activism in foreign policy, nationalism, humanitarianism, western orientation, and implementation of the “peace at home, peace in the world” as a principle. Upon the recent experience of war with the regional states, Atatürk’s foreign policy tenets were instrumental in building the disrupted relations with the Balkan states. The 1930s gave way to the signing of the first regional arrangement; the Balkan Entente in 1934. Turkey assumed a pivotal role in the conclusion of this agreement. Similarly, it adhered to this agreement until it completed its lifetime and dissolved during World War II. While the war continued full scale, Turkey, as well as Britain and the Soviet Union, grew concerned because Germany headed towards Romania and Bulgaria in 1940 and 1941. Britain proposed a bloc formed by Turkey, Greece, Yugoslavia, and Bulgaria against Germany, which yielded no result. After Romania and Bulgaria fell into the hands of Germany in early 1940s, Turkey made an appeal in the meeting of Balkan states in Belgrade, calling for standing against Germany. Turkey’s attempts failed in 1941 when Yugoslavia was invaded by German troops. Turkey considered the rise of Communism in the Balkans after World War II a serious issue due to the possibility that the Soviet Union could further proceed to dominate the Aegean and perhaps the Mediterranean Sea. If Communism took power in Greece, the possibility for Turkey to become “an island in the sea of Communism” would be reinforced. The most important consequence for Turkey with respect to the efforts towards establishing blocs in the Balkans, and Greek Civil War, in line with the Cold War system, was that Turkey began to recognize that regional conflicts were those between the U.S.A. and the Soviet Union and considered them a matter of aligning its relevant policies parallel to those of the U.S.A. By 1953, Turkey, Greece and Yugoslavia signed the Friendship and Cooperation Agreement in Ankara and a year later, Balkan alliance

was signed. These agreements did not last long, however efforts for cooperation in the region continued. After 1955, relations between Turkey and Greece became rocky and Turkey did not participate in the Stoica Plan. The previous unsuccessful attempts for a cooperative framework and Turkey's prioritizing the Middle East after 1955 were two other factors. Between 1945 and 1955, Turkey saw its security threatened in the Balkan region and preferred to ensure security through regional organizations and inked the Balkan pact and alliance in 1953 and 1954. The views of the ruling Democrat Party were based on the consideration that peace in the world presented integrity, so the security of a country could not be viewed independent from the overall security of the bloc to which that country belonged. That was why Turkey did not assume an active independent attitude towards the Balkans unlike Greece, and so it acted in line with the Western bloc. In line with the requirements of the Cold War system, Turkey did not hold bilateral negotiations, or enter bilateral agreements; or cooperate with the Balkan states that were in the opposite camp. In the 1960s and 1970s, Turkey conducted multilateralism in foreign policy which also included the Balkans. Relations with the Balkan states were attached utmost importance, yet this did not include Greece. Relations with the region further improved during Ecevit administration. The Balkans posed a relatively stable picture in the 1980s excluding the pressure on Turkish minority in Bulgaria, due to which relations with this country were strained in 1989. After taking office in 1983, Özal government acted cautiously about the minority issue and referred the issue to international fora. While Greece entered a rapprochement with Bulgaria on this occasion, relations between Yugoslavia and Turkey became closer, although not overtly pronounced.

The third chapter showed that relations with the Balkans were shaped in a totally different framework with Communism gone. While Turkey handled relations with the Balkans during the Cold War within the framework of a bipolar structure, it now had to redefine its bilateral and multilateral relations in political, economic, and military fields when it found itself surrounded by regional conflicts in the Transcaucasus, the Gulf, and the Balkans. Although Turkey took every effort in diplomatic, political, and military terms for war to come to an end, it was observed that while Turkey's allies in the West listened to the pleas of Turkish politicians and officials with respect, Turkey remained unable to realize its central goals. From the beginning until the end, Turkey rejected the idea of a unilateral intervention and tried to act as a reliable and responsible mediator. However, Turkey's efforts of mediation never rested on an aloof stance at any point throughout the war. Indeed, the Action Plan proposed by Turkey in as early as August 1992 to the ambassadors of the UN Security Council Ankara was adopted, if not in its entirety, through the end of the war. As regards the domestic repercussions of the war in the parliament, Turkish foreign policy did not present a uniform character, the opposition parties were critical of the government's policies mostly by way of alleging that they were ineffective, inadequate, and devoid of any power of deterrence. While WP's criticisms hinged more on the common denominator of religion as the departure point, other opposition parties, MP and DLP, stressed the lack of an active stance on the part of the government and the lack of attempts of call on the international community to end the conflict. Their common criticism was that the government did not have a well-defined Balkan policy. On the other hand, the statements of the government centered on the argument that Turkey would in no way engage in a unilateral intervention but act in compliance with the international community. Frequent sessions and feverish

discussions in the parliament lost momentum with the signing of the Dayton Peace Accord. The current state of affairs between Turkey and Bosnia – Herzegovina is enough reason to maintain that even if there had been no war in Bosnia in the 1990s, relations between Turkey and Bosnia would still preserve its particular nature owing to the common history. As for Serbia and Montenegro in former Yugoslavia after the conflict erupted, Turkey faced a dilemma because while the relations were strained due to the Bosnian War and the anti-Turkish attitude of ultranationalist Serbian leaders, the fact that Yugoslavia was the gateway for Turkish trade routes to Europe stood as a primary concern in Turkey's policy formulation. Turkey took efforts to avert an Orthodox – Muslim conflict in the region in respect of which it avoided to follow a policy not to antagonize Serbia's main ally Greece when Turkey and Greece already had strained relations. As such, Turkey's foreign policy towards Serbia was the subject of severe criticism. It took at least four, or even five years, for the bilateral relations to enter normalization stage due to the crisis in Kosovo. As the issue of Kosovo still remained at the time of the writing of this dissertation, it can be argued that Turkey should duly revisit its Balkan policy in face of the possibility that in the absence of Milosevic, there is still a possibility that Serbia's main opposition party and the Socialist Party would not miss the time to elevate Milosevic posthumously to a national hero. In fact, to a remarkable portion of Serb population, he is so, and that implies a remaining threat to the security of the Balkans with regard to Kosovo. The relations between Turkey and Croatia used to be defined as one of competing national interests; but the two states now share the common view that the EU and NATO are the basis of stability and peace in the Balkans and Europe. Turkey's relations with Croatia are linked, and are likely to remain linked, to Croatian – Bosnian relations; the three states have developed a system of

trilateralism to further their relations as of 1994 which provided a forum for periodic consultations. Turkish foreign policy towards Croatia was conducted with Demirel's personal attempts after 1995, due to mostly which the Croatian attitude towards Bosnia displayed a conciliatory nature after Dayton, and equally importantly, averted collaboration with the Serbs. As regards the last former Yugoslav republic Macedonia, after Turkey recognized Macedonia in February 1992, the diplomatic relations began in late August and Turkey was the first state to open an embassy in Skopje. Turkey sent aid to Macedonia which proved vital in the winter of 1992 when the country had to face the Greek embargo. As in the case of other Balkan states, Turkey's interest towards the region was at its peak between 1992 and 1995. However, after the fall of Erbakan government in 1997, relations re-entered a normalization path. In face of Macedonia's willingness towards integration with Euro-Atlantic structures, Turkey has repeatedly stated its support for Macedonia's integration into the EU and NATO and is likely to continue to do so in the ensuing years. As the most isolated and the weakest communist state in the 1970s, Albania found itself in an even weaker and more fragile environment by 1991 and paid particular attention to its relations with Turkey and wanted to establish good bilateral ties. The absence of any major dispute in bilateral relations was conducive in improving relations and Albania was seen as the natural ally of Turkey. Turkey stated that it would extend a \$ 50 million humanitarian and technical aid to Albania in as early as 1992 and such an improvement in bilateral relations made former Greek Foreign Minister Andonis Samaras define Albania as part of the alleged "Muslim Axis" led by Turkey. The country became closer to Greece after 1997, when Greece altered its policy towards Albania into a friendly one. However, Albania became closer once again to Turkey when the Kosovo crisis erupted. Turkey

supported Kosovar Albanians against the Serbs since the Kosovar Albanians were mostly Muslim and Turkish public opinion was favorable towards them; Turkey would not afford to assume a pro-Serbian stand or act neutrally after the Bosnian experience. Turkey also had close relations with Albania and this was particularly important in respect of Albania's improving relations with Greece. As things stand now, Albania and Turkey possess common policies regarding the future of Kosovo as well as the stability in Europe. Turkey's relations with Bulgaria entered a new phase after Bulgaria's accession to the EU on 1 January 2007. Turkey has come to voice support for Bulgaria's EU and NATO – membership and has received due reciprocation from its Balkan neighbor. Since the restoration of the memory of the assimilation campaign towards the Turkish minority in Bulgaria, Turkish – Bulgarian relations have been on the rise in many fields, and particularly in economy, defense, tourism, culture, and science. Bulgaria is an important regional state for Turkey for being its geographical gateway to Europe. Given that Turkey's main trading partner is the EU with an export of 27 billion Euros from the EU and an import of 22 billion Euros to the EU in 2006, Bulgaria is the first stop on Turkey's trade route to Europe, through which Turkey carries out trade activities with its transport fleet which is the largest in Europe. Land transport is equally important for human transport, and primarily for the Turks in Germany. As such, transportation for trade and humans are profitable for Bulgaria for tax revenue. Moreover, as Turkey is on Bulgaria's trade route to the Middle East, preservation of transport facilities are also crucial for Bulgaria. Therefore, land transport is a common concern for both Turkey and Bulgaria. Furthermore, viewed in respect of the Turks in Bulgaria, preservation of stability in mutual relations and in domestic politics of Bulgaria are fundamental to ensure that they live in the country with a certain degree of integration and the least

possible problems in this regard. Turkey's military, political, and economic initiatives towards Bulgaria have been formulated around such considerations. In turn, these initiatives contributed to the normalization, improvement, and consequently the exemplary nature of relations. Given that the ruling party in Turkey emerged once again as the majority party from the recent elections, it seems most likely that there will not be any particular radical change in the course of Turkish – Bulgarian relations in the short- and medium-term. With the end of the Cold War and the outbreak of new conflicts in the Balkans, Turkey and Greece embarked into a political and economic competition as the most powerful two regional states. This competition was conducted overtly by Greece and not too straightforwardly by Turkey. Greece's Balkan policy after mid-1990s hinged on seeking ways of economic cooperation via confidence, friendship and equal cooperation package and transforming that duly into an agreement between Balkan states in establishing and maintaining democracy; forming an economic cooperation zone in the region; building goodneighborliness relations with Albania and Macedonia, and ensuring the expansion of NATO's peace umbrella in a way to cover the Balkans. However, above all, Greece's most valuable asset was its EU card with which it used the political and economic advantages of its membership. Greece had strained relations with Albania and Macedonia until 1997; it altered its policies to improve ties with these states after 1997 and tried to surpass Turkey's activism in the region, mostly through economic investment. Among formerly communist Balkan states, Romania comes to fore as the state with which Turkey improved its relations on a stable basis and had almost no problems. Turkey and Romania improved their ties mostly through economic activities. The main foreign policy tenets implemented by Romania to ensure national security and regional stability are linked to the promotion

of partnership relations for entering NATO and European institutions; participating in regional and sub-regional projects; establishing bilateral relations; and avoiding military adventures. As in the case of other regional states, Turkey backed Romania's integration into EU and NATO. In such a framework, Turkish – Romanian relations continued to improve although the two states had been on different sides during the Bosnian War and the country now ranks first in terms of bilateral export and import, among the regional states with which Turkey has commercial ties.

The fourth chapter explored in what ways the activities in the economic activities in the region function as one of the tools that could serve to bolster political, cultural, and social relations. Despite Turkey's continuous efforts, bilateral economic relations with the region still remain below desired levels. Yet on the whole, Turkish private sector has invested and participated in privatization projects considerably in the region since 1990s. Turkey also provided credit to Balkan states in pursuit of contributing to the establishment of stability after handicapped relations with the region during the Cold War period. Both external and internal factors such as inadequate economic infrastructure including incentives, trade and investment agreements, the common tendency to invest in Central Asia and Caucasus which are rich in natural sources and work power, sluggish and evolving economic systems in the regional states, unfavorable tariff agreements, weak banking systems, political instability and absence of strategic natural resources prevented economic ties to become stronger. Turkey's share in the region's \$174 million worth overall foreign trade was \$6,7 million in 2006, which constituted only 4% in the overall figure. While Turkey's trade with regional states is 8%, it was 30 % with close and neighboring states in 2006. Turkey's economic ties are the strongest with Romania as

Romania offers a relatively more stable and larger market in the region. Turkish entrepreneurs have invested and are investing in Balkan markets. However, this is confined to certain limits as Turkey could not develop long-term policies in face of domestic and external factors mentioned, which turned out to be haphazard. However, there is no ground to argue about a change to the worse as Turkey's trade volume with the regional states are on the increase compared to previous years. Long-term trade relations can be reinforced if the region is not underrated by Turkish investors.

The fifth chapter examined the military relations of Turkey with the regional states. Cognizant of the fact that military cooperation inspires confidence also in politics and economy, Turkey established bilateral, regional, and international military relations with the Balkan states since the end of the Cold War, when the states still harbored suspicion towards each other with the fresh memory of the Cold War. Turkey took efforts for the normalization of relations by proposing joint exercises. Turkish military forces took due initiatives as the significance of enhanced military relations also boasts political and diplomatic, as well as economic ties, by way of bringing together the once archrival states of the Cold War years into a cooperative framework. The existence of Turkish Armed Forces in former trouble spots, such as Bosnia – Herzegovina and Kosovo, also proved their competence. Training, health, social, and education facilities carried out by the Turkish Armed Forces both in Turkey and in the regional states are enough reason to maintain that military is the field in which Turkey has asserted itself most strongly and effectively in the region. The intensity of cooperation in the field of defense and military would definitely be unthinkable two decades ago. However, it can safely be argued that the overall improving nature of bilateral relations owes much to the military venue in the

form of cooperation in bilateral, regional, and international platforms in the post-Cold War era.

Bilateral relations between Turkey and Balkan states entered a new phase after the integration process of regional states recently began to materialize with full EU membership. Accordingly, it is possible to maintain that Turkey's relations with these states will be brought to pass both in individual bilateral structures and in connection with the EU and NATO. Turkey has come to back NATO and EU bids of Balkan states both in principle and in practice. Although not at desired levels, Turkish – Balkan relations are gradually improving. The Balkans preserves its significance for Turkey for being its geographical gateway to Europe. The fact that Turkey's main trading partner was the EU with an export of 27 billion Euros from the EU and an import of 22 billion Euros to the EU in 2006 is self-explanatory in this regard. Furthermore, viewed in respect of the Turks in the Balkans, preservation of stability in mutual relations and in domestic politics of host states are fundamental to ensure that the Turks in the Balkans live in their respective host countries with a certain degree of integration and the least possible problems in this regard. It remains to be seen whether this can be achieved with a revised, long-term, well-worked foreign policy towards the region where the government, diplomats, military, and businessmen work in close cooperation.

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APPENDIX A

PACT OF BALKAN AGREEMENT BETWEEN YUGOSLAVIA, GREECE, ROMANIA, AND TURKEY

Athens, 9 February 1934

His Majesty The King of Yugoslavia, the President of the Republic of Greece, His Majesty The King of Romania and the President of the Republic of Turkey, in a wish to contribute to the consolidation of peace in the Balkans,

Inspired by the spirit of accommodation and conciliation which was of decisive importance in the elaboration of the Briand-Kellogg Pact and the adoption of the decisions of the League of Nations relating to it,

Strongly determined to ensure the respect for the already existing treaty obligations and the maintenance of the territorial order now established in the Balkans,

Have decided to conclude a

PACT OF BALKAN AGREEMENT

and, for this purpose, designated as their Plenipotentiaries:

His Majesty The King of Yugoslavia:
His Excellency Mr. Bogoljub Jevtić, Minister of Foreign Affairs,

The President of the Republic of Greece:
His Excellency Mr. Dimitrios Maximos, Minister of Foreign Affairs,

His Majesty The King of Romania:
His Excellency Mr. Nicola Titulescu, Minister of Foreign Affairs,

The President of the Republic of Turkey:
His Excellency Mr. Rushdi Bey, Minister of Foreign Affairs,

Who, after exchanging their Full Powers which were found to be in good and prescribed form, agreed on the following provisions:

Article 1

Yugoslavia, Greece, Romania and Turkey shall mutually guarantee the security of their Balkan borders.

Article 2

The High Contracting Parties undertake to reach agreement on measures which must be taken if cases should arise that could affect their interests as defined by the present Agreement. They assume the obligation not to take any political action towards any other Balkan country which is not a signatory to this Agreement, without a prior mutual notification and not to assume any political obligation towards any other Balkan country without the consent of the other Contracting Parties.

Article 3

The present Agreement shall come into force upon its signing by all the Contracting Powers and shall be ratified within the shortest possible time. The Agreement shall be open to any Balkan country for accession which shall be taken into favourable consideration by the Contracting Parties and shall come into effect as soon as the other signatory countries notify their consent.

In witness whereof of the afore-mentioned Plenipotentiaries have signed this Pact. Done in Athens, this ninth February one thousand nine hundred thirty four, in four copies, one copy having been handed to each High Contracting Party.

(L.S.) (signed) B.D. Jevtić

(L.S.) (signed) D. Maximos

(L.S) (signed) N. Titulescu

(L.S) (signed) Dr. Rushdi Bey

The above Pact of Balkan Agreement was ratified by His Majesty King Alexander I, King of Yugoslavia, in Belgrade on 16 June 1934, Conf. No. 13991 - Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Belgrade, 23 June 1934.

APPENDIX B

TREATY OF FRIENDSHIP AND COLLABORATION BETWEEN THE FEDERAL PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF YUGOSLAVIA, THE KINGDOM OF GREECE AND THE TURKISH REPUBLIC

SIGNED AT ANKARA, ON 28 FEBRUARY 1953

The Contracting Parties,

reaffirming their belief in the principles set forth in the Charter of the United Nations,

determined to live in peace with all the peoples and to contribute to the maintenance of international peace,

desirous to consolidate the friendly relations existing between them,

resolved to defend the freedom and independence of their peoples, as well as their territorial integrity against any force exerted from outside,

determined to unite their efforts in order to render more effective the organization of their defence against any aggression from outside and to act in concert collaborate regarding all questions of mutual interest and, particularly, regarding questions concerning their defence,

convinced that the mutual interests of their peoples and all peaceloving peoples require that appropriate measures be taken for the safeguarding of peace and security in this part of the world, pursuant to Article 51 of the United Nations Charter,

Have resolved to conclude this treaty and the Heads of their States have appointed as their respective Plenipotentiaries:

The President of the Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia:

His Excellency Monsieur Koca POPOVIC,
Secretary of State;

His Majesty the King of the Hellenes:

His Excellency Monsieur Stephanos STEPHANOPOULOS,
Minister of Foreign Affairs;

The President of the Turkish Republic:

His Excellency Professor Fuad KÖPRÜLÜ
Minister of Foreign Affairs,
Deputy of Istanbul;

who after exhibiting their full powers and finding them in good and proper form,
have agreed upon the following provisions:

Article I

In order to ensure their collaboration permanently, the Contracting Parties shall proceed to consultations concerning all problems of mutual interest.

The Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Contracting Parties shall hold a regular conference once a year and, if necessary, more often, in order to examine the international political situation and make appropriate decisions in accordance with the aims of this Treaty.

Article II

The Contracting Parties intend to pursue their mutual efforts for the safeguarding of peace and security in their region and jointly continue to examine the problems of their security, including the concerted measures of defence, which might become necessary in case of a non-provoked aggression against them.

Article III

The General Staffs of the Contracting Parties shall pursue their collaboration in order to submit to their Governments, by common consent, recommendations concerning questions of defence, with a view to making co-ordinated decisions.

Article IV

The Contracting Parties shall develop their collaboration in the economic, technical and cultural spheres; whenever necessary appropriate agreements shall be concluded and necessary organizations set up for the purpose of solving economic, technical and cultural problems.

Article V

The Contracting Parties undertake to settle any dispute which may arise between them by peaceful means, in accordance with the provisions of the United Nations Charter and in a spirit of understanding and friendship; they also undertake to refrain from interfering with the internal affairs of the other Contracting Parties.

Article VI

The Contracting Parties shall refrain from concluding any alliance, or from taking part in any action, directed against anyone of them, or in any action which may be prejudicial to their interests.

Article VII

The Contracting Parties, each for itself, declare that none of the international obligations now in force between them and one or several other States is in contradiction with the provisions of the present Treaty; on the other hand, they engage themselves not to assume in the future any international obligations conflicting with the present Treaty.

Article VIII

This Treaty does not affect, and cannot be interpreted as affecting in any way, the rights and obligations of Greece and Turkey deriving from the North Atlantic treaty of April 4, 1949¹.

Article IX

After the coming of this Treaty into force any other state, whose collaboration for the realization of the aims of this Treaty is deemed useful by all the Contracting Parties, will be able to accede to the Treaty under the same conditions and with the same rights as the three signatory States.

Each State acceding to this Treaty shall become a Contracting Party of the Treaty by depositing an instrument of accession.

Article X

The present Treaty, whose French version shall be authentic, shall be ratified by all the Contracting Parties and the instruments of ratification shall be deposited with the Secretary of State of the Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia in Beograd; it shall enter into force on the date of deposit of the last instrument of ratification.

At the expiration of five years after the coming into force of the present treaty, each Contracting Party may cease to be a party to the Treaty by notifying the Governments of the other Contracting Parties one year in advance.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF the respective Plenipotentiaries have signed this Treaty.

DONE in Ankara, this twenty-eight day of February one thousand nine hundred and fifty-three, in three copies, one copy being delivered to each Contracting Party.

Koca POPOVIC, *m.p.*

Stephanos STEPHANOPOULOS, *m.p.*

Fuad KÖPRÜLÜ, *m.p.*

APPENDIX C♦

THE CHRONOLOGY OF KEY EVENTS IN THE BALKANS

1989

- * 27 February: Yugoslav troops sent to suppress unrest in Kosovo.
- * 8 May: Milosevic becomes President of Serbia
- * 28 June: Milosevic addresses mass rally of Serbs at Kosovo Polje on the six hundredth Battle of Kosovo.

1991

- * May: Beginning of Croatian – Serb rebellion
- * 25 June: Slovenia and Croatia declare independence
- * 27 June: Yugoslav Army attacks Slovenia
- * 25 September: UN imposes arms embargo on all former Yugoslavia
- * 19 November: Fall of Vukovar to Serb forces

1992

- * 2 January: UN mediator Cyrus Vance negotiates ceasefire for Croatia
- * 15 January: EC recognizes Croatia and Slovenia
- * 21 February: UN sends fourteen thousand peacekeeping troops to Croatia
- * 29 February: Bosnia – Herzegovina declares independence. Bosnian Serbs proclaim separate state.
- * 5 April: Bosnian Serbs begin siege of Sarajevo

1993

- * 2 January: Cyrus Vance and Davis Owen unveil at Geneva peace talks to divide Bosnia into ten semi-autonomous provinces.
- * 22 February: UN set up war crimes tribunal for former Yugoslavia
- * 6 May: UN declares six “safe areas” for Bosnian Muslims: Srebrenica, Zepa, Sarajevo, Bihac, Tuzla and Gorazde
- * 15-16 May: In a referendum Bosnian Serbs vote for an independent Bosnian Serb state

♦ Margaret Thatcher, *Statecraft* (New York: Harper Collins, 2002), pp. 293 -296.

1994

- *5 February: Sixty killed and two hundred wounded in mortar attack on Sarajevo
- *18 March: Bosnian government and Bosnian Croats sign US-brokered accord
- *13 May: Five-nation Contact Group announces new plan and eventual partition Bosnia
- *20 July: Bosnian Serbs reject peace plan
- *21 November: NATO launched major air strike on Serb airfield.
- *25 November: Serbs detain fifty-five Canadian peacekeepers.

1995

- *1 May: Ceasefire expires. Croatia launches offensive to retake Western Slavonia
- *26 May: Serbs take more UN peacekeepers hostage. Eventually 370 seized.
- *28 May: Aircraft carrying Bosnian Foreign Minister Ljubijankic shot down by Serbs by Serbs over Bihac.
- *15 June: Serbs step up shelling of Sarajevo and other 'safe areas'
- *11 July: Serbs overrun Srebrenica 'safe area'.
- *12-13 July: Thousands of Muslim men detained (later murdered), while twenty thousand Muslim women, children and elderly are expelled to Tuzla
- *25 July: Serbs take Zepa.
- *4 August: Croatia launches assault on rebel Serbs in Knin (Serb 'Krajina')
- *28 August: Bosnian Serb shell kills thirty-seven in the Sarajevo bazaar. UN secretly pulls peacekeepers out of Gorazde
- *30 August: NATO launches major air strikes on Serb guns around Sarajevo. Serbs retaliate by shelling Sarajevo
- *1 November: Bosnian peace talks begin in Dayton
- *21 November: Dayton Peace Accord signed. Fifty-one per cent of Bosnian territory granted to Bosnian-Croat Federation, 49 per cent to Serbs
- *23 November: UN Karadzic accepts peace plan.
- *30 November: UN votes to end peacekeeping mission by 31 January 1997
- *1 December: NATO authorizes deployment of sixty thousand troops to Bosnia
- *14 December: Serbs, Bosnians and Croats sign peace plan. Bosnian and Serb governments agree to formal diplomatic recognition
- *20 December: NATO strikes over command of Bosnia peace mission

1997

- *15 June: Tudjman re-elected President of Croatia
- *15 July: Milosevic becomes President of Yugoslavia

1998

- *31 March: UN Security Council condemns Yugoslavia's excessive use of force in Kosovo and imposes economic sanctions
- *August: Serbs forces attack Kosovo Albanian villages in Drenica region, forcing thousands to flee

1999

- *January: Evidence comes to light of Serb massacre of Kosovars at Racak
- *6 February: Rambouillet peace talks begin in France. Milosevic refuses to attend
- *18 March: Kosovo Albanian delegates finally sign autonomy plan at Rambouillet. Serbs refuse, and begin exercises in Kosovo the following day
- *24 March: Kosovo air war begins
- *27 May: ICTY announces indictment of Milosevic
- *9 June: NATO and Yugoslav authorities agree terms for Serb withdrawal from Kosovo
- *10 June: NATO suspends bombing. UN Security Council adopts Resolution 1244, permitting deployment of international civil and military personnel in Kosovo
- *12 June: Russian troops take control of Pristina airport. NATO forces move into Kosovo
- *14 June: Ethnic Albanians begin flooding back into Kosovo. Over six hundred thousand return within three weeks
- *20 June: Serb forces complete withdrawal from Kosovo

APPENDIX D[♦]

SUMMARY OF THE DAYTON PEACE ACCORD ON BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA

General Framework Agreement

- Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia agree to fully respect the sovereign equality of one another and to settle disputes by peaceful means.
- The FRY and Bosnia and Herzegovina recognize each other, and agree to discuss further aspects of their mutual recognition.
- The parties agree to fully respect and promote fulfillment of the commitments made in the various Annexes, and they obligate themselves to respect human rights and the rights of refugees and displaced persons.
- The parties agree to cooperate fully with all entities, including those authorized by the United Nations Security Council, in implementing the peace settlement and investigating and prosecuting war crimes and other violations of international humanitarian law.

Annex 1-A: Military Aspects

- The cease-fire that began with the agreement of October 5, 1995 will continue.
- Foreign combatant forces currently in Bosnia are to be withdrawn within 30 days.
- The parties must complete withdrawal of forces behind a zone of separation of approximately 4 km within an agreed period. Special provisions relate to Sarajevo and Gorazde.
- As a confidence-building measure, the parties agree to withdraw heavy weapons and forces to cantonment/barracks areas within an agreed period and to demobilize forces which cannot be accommodated in those areas.
- The agreement invites into Bosnia and Herzegovina a multinational military Implementation Force, the IFOR, under the command of NATO, with a grant of authority from the UN.
- The IFOR will have the right to monitor and help ensure compliance with the agreement on military aspects and fulfill certain supporting tasks. The IFOR

[♦] Available on University of Minnesota web site, <http://www1.umn.edu/humanits/icty/dayton/daytonaccord.html> as retrieved on 9 April 2006 21:14:52 GMT.

will have the right to carry out its mission vigorously, including with the use of force as necessary. It will have unimpeded freedom of movement, control over airspace, and status of forces protection.

- A Joint Military Commission is established, to be chaired by the IFOR Commander. Persons under indictment by the International War Crimes Tribunal cannot participate.
- Information on mines, military personnel, weaponry and other items must be provided to the Joint Military Commission within agreed periods.
- All combatants and civilians must be released and transferred without delay in accordance with a plan to be developed by the International Committee of the Red Cross.

Annex 1-B: Regional Stabilization

- The Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Federation and the Bosnian Serb Republic must begin negotiations within 7 days, under Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) auspices, with the objective of agreeing on confidence-building measures within 45 days. These could include, for example, restrictions on military deployments and exercises, notification of military activities and exchange of data.
- These three parties, as well as Croatia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, agree not to import arms for 90 days and not to import any heavy weapons, heavy weapons ammunition, mines, military aircraft, and helicopters for 180 days or until an arms control agreement takes effect.
- All five parties must begin negotiations within 30 days, under OSCE auspices, to agree on numerical limits on holdings of tanks, artillery, armored combat vehicles, combat aircraft and attack helicopters.
- If the parties fail to establish limits on these categories within 180 days, the agreement provides for specified limits to come into force for the parties.
- The OSCE will organize and conduct negotiations to establish a regional balance in and around the former Yugoslavia.

Annex 2: Inter-Entity Boundary

- An Inter-Entity Boundary Line between the Federation and the Bosnian Serb Republic is agreed.
- Sarajevo will be reunified within the Federation and will be open to all people of the country.
- Gorazde will remain secure and accessible, linked to the Federation by a land corridor.
- The status of Brcko will be determined by arbitration within one year.

Annex 3: Elections

- Free and fair, internationally supervised elections will be conducted within six to nine months for the Presidency and House of Representatives of Bosnia and Herzegovina, for the House of Representatives of the Federation and the National Assembly and presidency of the Bosnian Serb Republic, and, if feasible, for local offices.

- Refugees and persons displaced by the conflict will have the right to vote (including by absentee ballot) in their original place of residence if they choose to do so.
- The parties must create conditions in which free and fair elections can be held by protecting the right to vote in secret and ensuring freedom of expression and the press.
- The OSCE is requested to supervise the preparation and conduct of these elections.
- All citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina aged 18 or older listed on the 1991 Bosnian census are eligible to vote.

Annex 4: Constitution

- A new constitution for the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, which will be known as "Bosnia and Herzegovina", will be adopted upon signature at Paris.
- Bosnia and Herzegovina will continue as a sovereign state within its present internationally-recognized borders. It will consist of two entities: the Federation and the Bosnian Serb Republic.
- The Constitution provides for the protection of human rights and the free movement of people, goods, capital and services throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina.
- The central government will have a Presidency, a two chamber legislature, and a constitutional court. Direct elections will be held for the Presidency and one of the legislative chambers.
- There will be a central bank and monetary system, and the central government will also have responsibilities for foreign policy, law enforcement, air traffic control, communications and other areas to be agreed.
- Military coordination will take place through a committee including members of the Presidency.
- No person who is serving a sentence imposed by the International Tribunal, and no person who is under indictment by the Tribunal and who has failed to comply with an order to appear before the Tribunal, may stand as a candidate or hold any appointive, elective, or other public office in the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Annex 5: Arbitration

- The Federation and the Bosnian Serb Republic agree to enter into reciprocal commitments to engage in binding arbitration to resolve disputes between them, and they agree to design and implement a system of arbitration.

Annex 6: Human Rights

- The agreement guarantees internationally recognized human rights and fundamental freedoms for all persons within Bosnia and Herzegovina.
- A Commission on Human Rights, composed of a Human Rights Ombudsman and a Human Rights Chamber (court), is established.

- The Ombudsman is authorized to investigate human rights violations, issue findings, and bring and participate in proceedings before the Human Rights Chamber.
- The Human Rights Chamber is authorized to hear and decide human rights claims and to issue binding decisions.
- The parties agree to grant UN human rights agencies, the OSCE, the International Tribunal and other organizations full access to monitor the human rights situation.

Annex 7: Refugees and Displaced Persons

- The agreement grants refugees and displaced persons the right to safely return home and regain lost property, or to obtain just compensation.
- A Commission for Displaced Persons and Refugees will decide on return of real property or compensation, with the authority to issue final decisions.
- All persons are granted the right to move freely throughout the country, without harassment or discrimination.
- The parties commit to cooperate with the ICRC in finding all missing persons.

Annex 8: Commission to Preserve National Monuments

- A Commission to Preserve National Monuments is established.
- The Commission is authorized to receive and act upon petitions to designate as National Monuments movable or immovable property of great importance to a group of people with common cultural, historic, religious or ethnic heritage.
- When property is designated as a National Monument, the Entities will make every effort to take appropriate legal, technical, financial and other measures to protect and conserve the National Monument and refrain from taking deliberate actions which might damage it.

Annex 9: Bosnia and Herzegovina Public Corporations

- A Bosnia and Herzegovina Transportation Corporation is established to organize and operate transportation facilities, such as roads, railways and ports.
- A Commission on Public Corporations is created to examine establishing other Bosnia and Herzegovina Public Corporations to operate joint public facilities, such as utilities and postal service facilities.

Annex 10: Civilian Implementation

- The parties request that a High Representative be designated, consistent with relevant UN Security Council resolutions, to coordinate and facilitate civilian aspects of the peace settlement, such as humanitarian aid, economic reconstruction, protection of human rights, and the holding of free elections.
- The High Representative will chair a Joint Civilian Commission comprised of senior political representatives of the parties, the IFOR Commander and representatives of civilian organizations.

- The High Representative has no authority over the IFOR.

Annex 11: International Police Task Force

- The UN is requested to establish a UN International Police Task Force (IPTF) to carry out various tasks, including training and advising local law enforcement personnel, as well as monitoring and inspecting law enforcement activities and facilities.
- The IPTF will be headed by a Commissioner appointed by the UN Secretary General.
- IPTF personnel must report any credible information on human rights violations to the Human Rights Commission, the International Tribunal or other appropriate organizations.

Agreement on Initialing the General Framework Agreement

- In this agreement, which was signed at Dayton, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia agree that the negotiations have been completed. They, and the Entities they represent, commit themselves to signature of the General Framework Agreement and its Annexes in Paris.
- They also agree that the initialing of the General Framework Agreement and its Annexes in Dayton expresses their consent to be bound by these agreements.