

FUNDAMENTAL DYNAMICS OF TURKISH FOREIGN POLICY TOWARDS  
UKRAINE (2002-2016)

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Approval of the Institute of Social Sciences

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I certify that this thesis satisfies all the requirements as a thesis for the degree of Master of Arts.

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**I hereby declare that all information in this thesis has been obtained and presented in accordance with academic rules and ethical conduct. I also declare that, as required by these rules and conduct, I have fully cited and referenced all material and results that are not original to this work; otherwise I accept all legal responsibility**

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## ABSTRACT

### FUNDAMENTAL DYNAMICS OF TURKISH FOREIGN POLICY TOWARDS UKRAINE (2002-2016)

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This thesis aims to reveal the concepts, contexts and chain of events in which Turkish foreign policy towards Ukraine in AK Party Era (2002-2016) occurs. Stressing the historical foundations and up-to-date determinants of these relations, it puts effort to deal with the new questions arose especially from Russian occupation of Crimea. The study derives from several sources including official archive documents, reports and minutes in addition to open sources and articles, and concludes that economic and trade relations, issues of Crimean Tatars and Turkey's relations with Russia have been fundamental to Turkey's foreign policy-making towards Ukraine between 2002 and 2016.

**Key Words:** Turkish-Ukrainian Relations, Turkish Foreign Policy, Crimea

## ÖZ

### TÜRKİYE’NİN UKRAYNA POLİTİKASININ TEMEL DİNAMİKLERİ (2002-2016)

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Bu tez, Türkiye’nin AK Parti dönemi Ukrayna politikasının (2002-2016) temelindeki kavramları, bağlamı ve olaylar zincirini ortaya çıkarmayı amaçlamaktadır. Çalışma, ikili ilişkilerin tarihi dayanaklarını ve güncel etkenlerini vurgularken, aynı zamanda, Kırım’ın Rusya’yı ilhakı gibi yeni ortaya çıkan sorunlara da değinmektedir. Açık kaynaklara ek olarak resmi arşiv belgeleri, raporlar ve meclis tutanaklarından faydalanılan bu çalışma, 2002-2016 yılları arasında Türkiye’nin Ukrayna politikasının temel dinamiklerinin ikili ekonomik ve ticari ilişkiler, Kırım Tatarlarının meseleleri ve ikili ilişkilere Rusya etkisi olduğunu ileri sürmektedir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Türkiye-Ukrayna İlişkileri, Türk Dış Politikası, Kırım

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER	
1. INTRODUCTION: OVERVIEW OF THE BILATERAL RELATIONS BETWEEN TURKEY AND UKRAINE.....	1
2. CHAPTER 2: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY.....	7
2.1. RESEARCH QUESTION.....	9
2.2. AIMS OF THE RESEARCH.....	9
2.3. LIMITS OF THE RESEARCH.....	9
3. CHAPTER 3: TURKEY AS A TRADING STATE WITH UKRAINE.....	10
3.1. RATIONALES FOR TRADE AND ECONOMIC RELATIONS.....	11
3.2. AGREEMENTS AND PROTOCOLS SIGNED BETWEEN TURKEY AND UKRAINE (2002-2016) .....	16
3.3. TRADE VOLUME.....	18
3.4. FREE TRADE NEGOTIATIONS.....	21
3.5. TURKEY’S DIRECT INVESTMENTS IN UKRAINE.....	23
3.6. TOURISM’S ROLE IN BILATERAL RELATIONS.....	24
3.7. PROBLEMS IN THE BILATERAL ECONOMIC RELATIONS.....	25
4. CHAPTER 4: HISTORICAL LEGACY/HISTORICAL RESPONSIBILITY: CRIMEA IN TURKISH FOREIGN POLICY TOWARDS UKRAINE.....	29
4.1. OPERATIONS OF TIKA.....	31
4.2. ANNEXATION OF CRIMEA AND TURKISH FOREIGN POLICY.....	37
4.2.1. THE ANNEXATION.....	38
4.2.2. TURKISH FOREIGN POLICY TOWARDS UKRAINE AFTER THE ANNEXATION OF CRIMEA.....	40
4.2.2.1. TURKISH FOREIGN POLICY WITH REGARD TO INTERNATIONAL LAW.....	40
4.2.2.2. TURKISH FOREIGN POLICY WITH REGARD TO ITS RELATIONS WITH OTHER ACTORS.....	42

4.2.2.3. CRIMEAN TATAR DIASPORA IN TURKEY AND TURKISH FOREIGN POLICY TOWARDS UKRAINE AFTER THE ANNEXATION OF CRIMEA.....	45
5. CHAPTER 5: RUSSIA AS AN INFLUENCING ACTOR IN TURKEY'S FOREIGN POLICY TOWARDS UKRAINE.....	52
5.1. RUSSIA'S REGIONAL POLITICS.....	52
5.2. TURKISH-RUSSIAN RELATIONS.....	53
5.3. ENERGY POLITICS AMONG TURKEY, UKRAINE AND RUSSIA.....	56
5.4. TURKISH-UKRAINIAN RELATIONS VIS-À-VIS TURKISH-UKRAINIAN RELATIONS.....	58
5.5. UKRAINIAN CRISIS AND TURKISH FOREIGN POLICY TOWARDS UKRAINE.....	62
5.5.1. THE COURSE AND COMPLEXITY OF THE UKRAINIAN CRISIS.....	62
5.5.2. TURKEY'S APPROACH TO THE UKRAINIAN CRISIS.....	65
CONCLUSION.....	69
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	73
APPENDIX A.....	93
APPENDIX B.....	98



## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

It was not until the end of the Cold War that diplomatic relations between Turkey and Ukraine took shape. Before the dissolution of the USSR, bilateral relations between the parties existed only during the short period of Ukrainian independence in the early 1920s (Matos, 2000). The protocol initiating Turkish-Ukrainian bilateral relations after Ukraine's freedom from the USSR was signed in February 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1992 (Ozdal, Demydova, 2011). Starting in Kravchuk's presidential era in Ukraine and establishing in strong ground, the relations developed for 11 years during Kuchma's term (Oncu, 2014b). Kuchma's term was remarkable in the sense that a new era was started in bilateral relations, which Kuchma himself coined as "constructive partnership" (Oncu, 2014b). When Kuchma paid a visit to Turkey in 2000, he returned to his country signing 9 agreements with Turkey (Kayaer, 2004). The range of these agreements spanned from judicial cooperation to medical cooperation and from military information exchange to media cooperation.

In his visit to Turkey, Kuchma stated that for both countries there is no alternative, but the West and the two countries can succeed great deal in this point by collaborating and supporting each other (Oncu, 2014b). Turkish-Ukrainian relations have reached its peak in the last 15 years. The main reason for such improvement might be counted as AK Party's active foreign policy towards its neighbors. An active foreign policy has been regarded as a prerequisite for Turkish foreign policy by the AK Party government (Yesilbas, Balci, 2013). This means that Turkey has been increasing its capacity to develop policies of its own, rather than pursuing the policies that came out from the global power structure (Yesilbas, Balci, 2013). In other words, rather than going along with the global developments and having a reactionary approach to these developments, the new Turkish foreign policy aims to get involved in these developments directly so that it can give a direction to them (Yesilbas, Balci, 2013). In the Ukrainian case, this implies that Turkey is supposed to establish its own norms and principles within its relations with Ukraine rather than accommodating with the roles given to it and follow what is expected of it.

Remarkably, in 2003, Turkish government chose Ukraine as one of the pilot countries with which Turkey was supposed to enhance its relations to the extent that such improvement would be exemplary (Ozdal, Demydova, 2011). This decision was implemented by a prime-ministerial decree (Ozdal, Demydova, 2011). After one year, Erdogan paid a visit to Kiev, which accelerated the trade relations between the countries (Kayaer, 2004). In his meeting with Yanukovich, then Prime-minister Erdogan stated that Turkey would do everything to help Ukraine move towards West and transport Ukraine's resources to the markets (Oncu, 2014b). Three years later, in 2007, Cooperation in Defense Industry Agreement was signed between the parties (Ozdal, Demydova, 2011). The same year meetings for a free trade agreement between Ukraine and Turkey were initiated and the negotiations are expected to be finalized in 2017.

During Prime-minister Erdogan's visit to Kiev in January 24<sup>th</sup>-25<sup>th</sup>, 2011, the mechanism of Turkey-Ukraine High Level Strategic Council was established (Ukrayna'nın Genel Ekonomik Durumu Ve Türkiye ile Ticari-Ekonomik İlişkileri, 2016). Thus, the relations between Turkey and Ukraine was enhanced to the level of strategic partnership. In other words, Turkey and Ukraine recognized that they share long term goals and interests on a range of issues from security to trade and that they are ready to put efforts for the enhancement of bilateral relations in this sense. The Council has met five times in five years. These meetings were productive in the sense that various agreements between the parties, including the Visa-free Regime Agreement, were signed (Ukrayna'nın Genel Ekonomik Durumu Ve Türkiye ile Ticari-Ekonomik İlişkileri, 2016). In 2014, Ukraine suffered from internal disturbances and Turkey declared its support for her. In the following years, trade relations between the countries were improved and by June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017, Passport-free Travel Regime between Ukraine and Turkey was initiated.

In retrospect, after Ukraine declared its independence, all the governments came in power in Turkey tried to establish working ties with Ukraine and spared a special emphasis for it (Oncu, 2014b). Several reasons for Turkey's willingness to pursue good relations with Ukraine might be pointed out. Before all, Ukraine has a crucial place for Turkey's regional politics. Stability and security in the Black Sea Region is one of the venues on which Turkish-Ukrainian relations are grounded (Ozdal, Demydova, 2011). The

Organization of Black Sea Economic Cooperation that was founded in line with this objective has been viewed as having the potential to improve Turkish-Ukrainian relations, especially in the areas of trade, banking and finance, energy, tourism, agriculture etc. (Ozdal, Demydova, 2011). It is important to keep in mind that regional cooperation organizations such as Black Sea Cooperation Organization (BSCO) are not alternatives to EU, but they are complementary to it (Kanbolat, 2010). Therefore, BSCO strengthens Turkey's and other members' positions vis-a-vis EU (Kanbolat, 2010).

Furthermore, for Turkey to be a regional power, it was necessary to support newly independent Ukraine and establish good relations with it (Oncu, 2014a). Otherwise, Ukraine might fall in Russia's control and this would lead Turkey's loss of influence in the region (Oncu, 2014a). After all, beginning of the 21st century was vague in terms of Black Sea regional cooperation since the regional states had more differences than commonalities and thus more diverging objectives and less enthusiasm to act together (Kushnir, 2017). It is also noteworthy that each country had been experiencing major political, economic and social breakthroughs which paved the way for independent strategies, including some of them playing for regional leadership (Kushnir, 2017), such as Russia and Turkey. In this context, improving its relations with Ukraine, especially regarding the rival Russia's potential to be in a conflicting status with Ukraine, has been a must for its regional interests.

Second, Ukraine and Turkey shares similar geopolitical positions due to that they both are cradles of civilizations between the West and the East and they are the intersection of communication between the two (Parahonskiy, 2001). Additionally, their orientation towards the West and desire to establish Western oriented socio-economical systems are balanced with an orientation towards the East as well due to their Turkish-Islamic or Orthodox-Slavic cultural traditions (Parahonskiy, 2001). Such characteristics of the countries pull them together. European oriented foreign policy creates a bond between Ukraine and Turkey (Vorotnyuk, 2010). Turkey has been in favor of a Ukraine with stronger ties with Euro-Atlantic alliance and its institutions (Vorotnyuk, 2010). Following Ataturk's death, the relations with Soviet Union and Turkey pursued a downward path and Turkey got closer to the Western block, getting membership in NATO and other

Western security organizations (Olcara, 2007). If Turkey hadn't followed this course, it was possible that it could end up as where Ukraine did today (Olcara, 2007). In other words, Turkey could be an area of Russian active influence (Olcara, 2007). In the changing realities of world politics, it is possible for Turkey today that it implements foreign policies both towards EU, the US and a more liberal and democrat Russia (Olcara, 2007). Such potential would enhance by cooperating with Ukraine since both countries have the features of being a connection point in Eurasia (Olcara, 2007). Thus, it is part of Turkey's grand strategy to establish good relations with Ukraine due to their common orientation and compatible background.

Third, the last motivation for Turkey to establish good relations with Ukraine has been that the return of Crimean Tatars back home would only be possible in such way (Oncu, 2014a). Not only matter of Crimean Tatars brought Turkey and Ukraine together because Ukrainian state shared Turkey's view that Crimean Tatars should be subject to rehabilitation, it also created new areas of cooperation, such as humanitarian aid to Crimean Peninsula and infrastructure development of the peninsula.

For all these reasons, as Parahonskiy (2001) pointed out, "there is no objective condition for Turkish-Ukrainian relations to have a conflict of interests in a way that such a situation will be a threat to international security. It is precedented that such conditions will hardly occur, even never come true." Parahonskiy's analysis can justified regarding that the sole moments the two countries' relations were tensioned were when Turkish fishermen crossed in Ukrainian economic waters and got shot by Ukrainian forces (Oncu (II), 2014). Problems related to fishermen occurred several times, especially in the years 1995, 1998 and 2000. Cooperation between Turkey and Ukraine would provide the region with security and prosperity since they would acquire necessary military strength (Kushnir, 2017). This can be historically exemplified with the alliance of Ottomans, Crimean Tatars and Zaporozhian Cossacks against Poland in 1648 (Kushnir, 2017). In 1658, the same trio had successfully fought against Muscovite troops (Kushnir, 2017). Although the current military capacities are significantly different than it was back then, the idea of Turkish-Ukrainian cooperation should not be underestimated (Kushnir, 2017).

However, the relations between Turkey and Ukraine in the modern age had lacked a common projection that goes beyond regional security matters, no matter that there had been no long-standing issues between the parties (Ozdal, Demydova, 2011). Adding upon that Ozdal and Demydova proposes that the establishment of High Level Strategic Cooperation Council might trigger a new phase in the bilateral relations. This thesis not only agrees with this proposition, it also argues that it was evident that Turkey's foreign policy towards Ukraine entered in a new era by the AK Party government and there have been fundamental changes with regard to it. In fact, rather than security matters, the scope of Turkey's foreign policy towards Ukraine in the AK Party era has been economic and trade relations and rehabilitation of Crimean Tatars.

Evidence from the minutes of the general meetings in the Turkish Grand National Assembly (TGNA) supports this proposition. In 2003, only one year after the AK Party government was established, the opposition party Republican People's Party (CHP) deputy Şükrü Elekdağ voiced the issue of Ukraine in TGNA. Pointing out that Ukraine's geographical extend, strategical position for Black Sea and European security and industrial capabilities provide various areas of cooperation with it, Elekdağ stated that high level meetings between Turkey and Ukraine had been paused for the last years and it was a positive development that President of the time visited Ukraine ("Dönem 22, Yasama Yılı 1, 104 üncü Birleşim", 2003).

Another speech conducted in TGNA by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the time, Ahmet Davutoğlu also reveals Turkey's new and active attitude towards Ukraine. Situating Turkey's relations with its relations within its grand strategy, Davutoglu proposed that the principles of the new foreign policy of Turkey are first, minimizing the problems with neighbors and maximizing the integration in order to fulfil the capacities of cooperation ("Dönem 23, Yasama Yılı 4, 95 inci Birleşim", 2010). Second principle is to pursue an active foreign policy towards the neighbors so as to contribute to stability and permanent peace ("Dönem 23, Yasama Yılı 4, 95 inci Birleşim", 2010). In order to reach the first objective, Turkey established High Level Strategic Cooperation Councils with its neighbors such as Iraq, Syria, Greece and Russia ("Dönem 23, Yasama Yılı 4, 95 inci Birleşim", 2010). Davutoglu states it is also necessary to establish this cooperative

mechanism with Ukraine as well (“Dönem 23, Yasama Yılı 4, 95 inci Birleşim”, 2010), which was completed less than a year after his speech.

Considering the data similar to this, which is provided in the chapters below, there is a need for the exploration of the dynamics in which new Turkish foreign policy towards Ukraine occurs. Accordingly, the main pillars that AK Party’s foreign policy towards Ukraine is grounded, in this research, are taken as the economic and trade relations between the parties, rehabilitation of Crimean Tatars and the Crimean crisis, and Turkish-Russian relations as an influencing factor. Turkish-Ukrainian trade volume drastically increased in the last decade, paving the way for strategic partnership and most of the agreements signed between the parties during AK Party era is based on this venue of bilateral relations. Problems of Crimean Tatars have been one of the priorities of former Turkish governments and this did not change in AK Party era, rather, assistance policies for rehabilitation of Crimean Tatars accelerated. On the other hand, the Russian factor is always worth considering when analyzing Turkey’s foreign policy towards Ukraine since it limits the potentials of Turkish-Ukrainian relations. Turkey, having an unstable yet crucial partnership with Russia is bound to act regarding the interests of its relations with her. Compartmentalizing its relations with Russia leads to compartmentalizing its relations with Ukraine as well.

## CHAPTER 2: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Turkey's strategy towards Ukraine has been seemingly simple but, in essence, a complicated one. The main dynamics of Turkish foreign policy towards Ukraine have consisted of mutually beneficial rising trade volume and enhancing economic relations, Crimean factor, and the influence of Russia. Such intricate nature of the dynamics requires multifaceted methods, such as a combined statistical, historical and theoretical International Relations analysis. The studies over Turkish-Ukrainian relations are not very abundant, especially those focusing on the AK Party era. During this period, on the one hand, Turkey continues to develop its trade and economic relations along with assistance policies for Crimean Tatars in almost full extent, on the other hand, there has been a careful approach, calculating its moves with regard to its relations with Russia. This research aims to shed light on all these matters via a combined methodology elaborated below.

In other words, this thesis embraces both qualitative and quantitative research methods. Open statistical data on trade between Turkey and Ukraine is highly important in order to observe the trends and interpret trade relations vis-à-vis different periods of time. Therefore, the chapter on Turkish-Ukrainian trade and economic relations will partially be depended on statistical data. In addition to the data reported from TUIK, reports from the office of Turkish Commercial Representatives of Ministry of Economics are utilized. The available reports from Turkish Commercial Representatives are comparatively analyzed. The reports are remarkably telling in terms of Turkey's commercial attitude towards Ukraine and include both quantitative and qualitative data. The reports are highly relevant for understanding Turkish-Ukrainian trade and economic relations since they are the firsthand product of policy implementers and include what is planned or expected to realize as well as what has been done so far.

The major source for this chapter, however, is the data derived from the archives of Official Gazette published by the Turkish Prime Minister's Office. The research on this archive provided all the official declarations of the agreements and protocols signed by Turkey and Ukraine and approved by their responsible organs. Measuring the

concentration and distribution of the agreements and protocols signed, it is possible to deduce on which venue the countries work together more. Such an insight would provide us an opportunity to compare the data from open sources; the speeches and declaration by the political figures and actual developments; namely, bilateral relations in practice. It is also possible to interpret, in this way, on which ground Turkey lays its foreign policy vision towards Ukraine.

The chapter on Crimean issue and Crimean Tatars as a key factor in Turkish foreign policy towards Ukraine derives analysis from first, open sources; second, TİKA archives of annual activity reports and development aid reports; third, interviews with Crimean Tatar diaspora in Turkey. In addition to the open sources, especially those of political figures touching upon the Crimean issue, TİKA operations in Crimea are listed and analyzed. Besides, the interviews conducted by the author with the representatives of Crimean Tatar diaspora in Turkey might be argued to strengthen the thesis considering the diaspora's influence on foreign policy. Along with the diaspora's stance on Turkey's foreign policy towards Ukraine with regard to the Crimean issue, their potential to direct Turkish foreign policy and based on this, possible direction of Turkish foreign policy towards Ukraine in Crimean matter might be foreseen via this kind of data.

The chapter on Russian factor as another key factor in the bilateral relation between Ukraine and Turkey also relies on open sources. In addition, it derives from international relations theory and concepts of economic interdependence and compartmentalization. Open sources in this chapter are those of speeches and declarations by political figures. An International Relations perspective is crucially necessary to comprehend the complicated nature of Turkish-Ukrainian relations vis-à-vis Turkish-Russian relations. In addition to the assumptions and claims of realist and liberal international relations theories, main concepts of Turkish foreign policy proposed by the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Policy are utilized in order to get an International Relations perspective.

In order to strengthen the thesis' methodological integrity overall, archival research on two key archives was utilized. The first is the Records of the General Proceedings and the second is Commissions in the National Assembly. The research on the first archive partly



revealed Turkish policy making process towards Ukraine and the discussions underwent in the Assembly. It also helped interpreting the views of Turkish politicians on Turkish foreign policy towards Ukraine. The research on the second archive, however, did not reveal evidence that could be of importance for the purpose of this study.

### **2.1. Research Question**

The main research question that this thesis tries to deal with is the main dynamics and elements of Turkish foreign policy towards Ukraine in the AK Party era. With this feature, the study shows the characteristics of an exploratory research. The sub-questions the thesis aims to respond are background, contextuality and prospects of the bilateral relations. Namely, the study provides an understanding of Turkish foreign policy towards Ukraine in AK Party era as well as stresses the historical foundations and up-to-date determinants of these relations and deals with the new questions arose especially from Russian occupation of Crimea.

### **2.2. Aims of the Research**

The aims of the research are to reveal the concepts, contexts and chain of events in which Turkish foreign policy towards Ukraine occurs. The expected benefits of the research are to provide policy makers with a comprehension of Turkey's foreign policy towards Ukraine in more depth and therefore develop well-grounded strategies towards both Ukraine and any other country that has a heavy role in that matter.

### **2.3. Limits of the Research**

The research focuses on the Turkey's foreign policy framework that can be observable between 2002 and 2016. Because AK Party rule still continues in Turkey and keeps shaping Turkey's foreign policy, this research can be criticized in the ground that it provides only a partial understanding of AK Party foreign policy towards Ukraine. It is also noteworthy, in terms of the limitations, that the research derives very little from Ukrainian and Russian sources and is heavily depended on Turkish sources. Although, this might not jeopardize the research's integrity overall, because it is about *Turkey's foreign policy towards Ukraine*, utilizing sources from Ukrainian sources and some portion of Russian sources would definitely strengthen the study.

### **CHAPTER 3: TURKEY AS A TRADING STATE WITH UKRAINE**

The first customs union in Black Sea region was a Convention on Trade signed between the Ottomans and Cossack Hetmanate, which gave Cossacks privilege to trade tax-free within Ottoman territories (Kushnir, 2017). In other words, although, Turkey and Ukraine do not have a long history in diplomatic relations in terms of the modern states of both nations, their trade can be traced back to a longer period of time and indeed they share a history of trade, which can prescribe an identity to the bilateral economic relations of the parties.

The main basis of Turkish-Ukrainian economic relations in the modern sense is established by the Trade and Economic Cooperation Agreement signed in 1992 and launched implementing in 1994 (Olcár, 2007). The economic relations were accelerated until 2000s through different economic cooperation agreements and meetings of Joint Economic Commission, but it had its real boom during AK Party Era. According to the report by ITO (Istanbul Chamber of Commerce) published in 2007, the trade volume between the parties was quadrupled between the years 2001 and 2006. Another source confirms that trade volume between the countries has smoothly increased. Especially in 2004, it grew by 74%, setting the first step of a stabile advancement (Ozdal, Demydova, 2011). This can be explained by two terms that were coined among the principles that directs Turkish foreign policy. One of these terms is Turkey being a 'trading state'. The concept of trading state has been used to define Turkey's policy of improving its relations with neighbors via trade (Yesiltas, Balci, 2013). As Kirisci (2009) quotes from Davutoglu, the states pursuing export-oriented development like Turkey are very likely to put their economic interests at the heart of their foreign policy. Therefore, trade has become a priority in Turkish foreign policy in order both for the sake of prosperity of herself and establishing working relations with its neighbors. Improving relations via trade is normally expected to result in a raise in trade volume and consequently in economic interdependence (Yesiltas, Balci, 2013). Economic interdependence is the second term that was mentioned above and is seen as the most crucial instrument to reach Turkey's strategic depth by Turkish foreign policy makers (Yesiltas, Balci, 2013). The assumption that economic interdependence will provide countries with peaceful means to

resolve their problems and avoid conflict and bring stability to the region is the basis of the concept's importance (Yesiltas, Balci, 2013). In fact, in 2010, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, who also conceptualized the new foreign policy, explained the importance of economic interdependence in the Turkish Grand National Assembly. Stating that visa-free regimes would remove the barriers against trade, Davutoglu finds actualization of Turkey's potential to be a leading economy and power in its region in free trade ("Dönem 23, Yasama Yılı 4, 95 inci Birleşim", 2010). He continued to highlight that as long as people, businessmen/women and goods would move around freely without being stopped at the borders, security for all and peace would prevail ("Dönem 23, Yasama Yılı 4, 95 inci Birleşim", 2010). All in all, it is possible to conclude that the reasons Turkey has been improving its trade relations with Ukraine are the economic benefit that is to be gained, stability in the Black Sea region and Turkey's soft power in the region and overall. Let us now examine the rationales behind Turkey's eagerness to trade with Ukraine more.

### **3.1. Rationales for trade and economic relations**

Parahonskiy (2001) argues that the economic base of Turkish-Ukrainian relations are mutually beneficial trade possibilities and large scaled projects. Strengthening the relations and cooperation is beneficial to both parties' economic progress (Beybulayeva, 2015), therefore it is always better to work together rather staying neutral to each other. In Turkish-Ukrainian case, new markets are vital for their economic development. Therefore, regarding that both countries require new markets for their economic growth, it has become apparent that strategic partnership is more suitable level for their relations (Beybulayeva, 2015), which is a step they took in 2011 and have successfully continuing to pursue.

Yet, having the same needs is not a sufficient reason for establishing such strong ties. Ukraine is an attractive country for Turkey in terms of investment and regional relations considering Ukraine's market size, open economy, convenient geographical location and the labor market (Beybulayeva, 2015). Ukraine's potential was repeatedly voiced by both the ruling party and the opposition parties in Turkish Grand National Assembly (TGNA). In the very first months of the AK Party government, AK Party deputy Asım Aykan raised the issue that economic relations with Ukraine should be improved ("Dönem 22, Yasama

Yılı 1, 4 üncü Birleşim”, 2002). Aykan’s proposal, however, was in line with Turkey’s overall all Black Sea Cooperation Organization policy, rather than being specific to Ukraine. Republican People’s Party deputy Şükrü Elekdağ, on the other hand, highlighted in a session, that in addition to Ukraine’s strategic importance for both European and Black Sea regional security and stability, he pointed out there could be many venues on which Turkey can cooperate with Ukraine (“Dönem 22, Yasama Yılı 1, 104 üncü Birleşim”, 2003). Elekdağ stressed that Ukraine has an important size of population and under a well-functioning administration and a liberal economy, the economic potential of the country could be actualized (“Dönem 22, Yasama Yılı 1, 104 üncü Birleşim”, 2003). That is why Turkey was to be more active in its relations with Ukraine (“Dönem 22, Yasama Yılı 1, 104 üncü Birleşim”, 2003). Lastly, Ukraine’s potential for military industrial relations was voiced in TGNA. Nationalist Movement Party deputy Kamil Erdal Sipahi, expressed that Ukraine took over a significant portion of the Soviet Union and therefore owned an established military industry, from which Turkey could transfer technology (“Dönem 23, Yasama Yılı 2, 121 inci Birleşim”, 2008). Thus, the archival research on the minutes of TGNA sessions reveals that the deputies from different parties agreed on enhancing the economic relations with Ukraine on solid grounds. Perhaps, one of the reasons for the fact that Turkish-Ukrainian relations improved dramatically in AK Party era was that there was a consensus among the parties.

In addition to the justifications for Turkish-Ukrainian advancement stated above, there is yet another rationale for Turkey to collaborate with Ukraine. Although Ukraine has one of the highest potentials of agriculture in the world with its fertile land and convenient climate conditions and 55% of Ukrainian land is arable (Ukrayna'nın Genel Ekonomik Durumu Ve Türkiye ile Ticari-Ekonomik İlişkileri, 2015), some of the Ukrainian fruit and vegetable production does not meet with the demand (Gursoy, 2014). In the end, high quality Turkish products enter the market (Gursoy, 2014). Half of Ukraine’s citrus import is from Turkey and Turkey is the first fruit and vegetable provider to Ukraine and other countries in the region (Gursoy, 2014). On the other hand, it is crucial for Ukraine to reach its energy from alternative ways and to reach a market where it can sell its food and industrial products (Parahonskiy, 2001). This case is approved in the report by Embassy of Turkey in Kiev. The report suggests that the structures of economies of Ukraine and

Turkey have a complementary characteristic (Ukrayna'nın Genel Ekonomik Durumu Ve Türkiye ile Ticari-Ekonomik İlişkileri, 2015). This is revealed in the trade items exchanged between the countries. Turkey imports raw material and semi-manufactured products from Ukraine while it exports manufactured products to Ukraine (Ukrayna'nın Genel Ekonomik Durumu Ve Türkiye ile Ticari-Ekonomik İlişkileri, 2015). An illustration of complementary characteristic of bilateral trade relations between the countries can be examined in the Figure 1 and 2. Thus, development level of both countries and well-matched economic structures enable Turkey and Ukraine to engage in mutually beneficial trade.

**Figure 1: Major Items of Ukraine's Export to Turkey in 2015 (1.000 US Dollars )**

HS Code	ITEM	EXPORT	Change compared to the last year (%)	Share in total amount (%)
72	Iron and steel	1.363.377,7	65,4	49,2
12	Oilseed and fruits; various grain, seed and fruits; herbs used in industry and medicine; roughadge	389.473,1	173,9	14,1
31	Fertilizers	223.318,8	109,5	8,1
23	Residues of food industry, roughadges	164.962,3	118,4	6,0
44	Wood and woodenware	158.386,8	115,8	5,7
15	Grease and vegetable oil and their decompositin products, packaged edible grease	117.701,9	76,7	4,2
26	Metal ores, cinder	71.274,5	90,3	2,6
28	Anorganic chemicals; organic or anorganic compounds of precious metals, radioactive elements; rare soil metals and their isotopes	61.487,7	69,3	2,2
10	Grains	57.000,9	45,8	2,1
25	Salt, sulphur; soils and rocks; plasters, limes and cement	21.779,2	102,0	0,8

27	Mineral fuels, mineral oils and products acquired from their distillation; Mineral yakıtlar, mineral yağlar ve bunların damıtılmasından elde edilen ürünler; bitumenic goods; mineral waxes	21.125,1	13,9	0,8
89	Ships	20.620,7	439,9	0,7
73	Iron or steel ware	16.326,6	75,4	0,6
84	Cauldrons, machines and devices	10.345,4	110,6	0,4
74	Copper and copperware	9.955,3	82,4	0,4
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2.771.669,0</b>		<b>100</b>

**Figure 2: Major Items of Ukraine's Import from Turkey in 2015 (1.000 US Dollars)**

HS Code	ITEM	IMPORT	Change compared to the last year (%)	Share in total amount (%)
08	Edible fruits and nuts	121.294,30	56	14,2
39	Plastics and plastic products	62.681,00	67,9	7,4
84	Nuclear reactors, cauldrons, machines and mechanic devices and tools	58.484,20	66,2	6,9
87	Motor land vehicles, tractors, bicylces, motorcycles and other land vehicles; components, pieces and accesories of these	46.813,90	75,8	5,5
52	Cotton	40.480,10	119	4,8
73	Iron ware or steel ware	33.026,90	65,3	3,9
12	Oilyseeds and fruits, plants used in industry and medicine	32.436,20	75,2	3,8
85	Electronic machines and devices	30.183,40	71,4	3,5
25	Salt, sulphur, soils and rocks, plasters, cement	28.254,20	75,6	3,3
61	Knitted wear	24.891,90	62,9	2,9
62	Nonwoven wear	23.742,20	61,7	2,8

07	Vegetables	23.732,70	35,7	2,8
54	Synthetic and artificial filaments, tapes and similar synthetic and artificial goods convenient for textiles	19.647,20	106,7	2,3
72	Iron and steel	17.859,90	66,5	2,1
55	Synthetic and artificial discontinuous threads	15.527,40	70,6	1,8
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>851.198,9</b>		<b>100</b>

In addition to level of development and structural accordance, regional politics is also a motivation for enhancing trade and economic relations between the countries. Turkey's desire to develop its relations with Ukraine in all levels stems from the fact that Ukraine has an important position when it comes to the stability of Black Sea Region (Beybulayeva, 2015). Also, Ukraine has a direct link to its Western markets only through Turkish Straits (Matos, 2000). Therefore, the security of Black Sea region is vital for it and the rise of Ukraine as a strong and prosperous state depends largely on stability of the region (Matos, 2000). This means that Ukraine will be able to keep its trade relations smoothly work and reach out new markets in the West as long as it has a safe access to them through Turkish waters. Not only Ukraine needs its relations to be working with Turkey, she is also in need of a stable environment, in which it can safely use international waters and ensure the demand for its market and products and reliability of them. This is actually why Turkey and Ukraine has been into strong cooperation through both its bilateral relations and regional organizations such as Black Sea Cooperation Organization and BLACKSEAFOR.

While all the conditions seem to be in favor of the enhancement of the bilateral relations between Turkey and Ukraine, Matos (2000) suggests that there might be an issue on which Ukraine and Turkey are likely to have divergent interest. The issue is that both countries find the solution for its energy supply cuts in the Caspian oil and gas for the sake of decreasing their energy dependence on Russia (Matos, 2000). However, being on different shores of the Black Sea, establishing transit routes from Caspian Sea to Black Sea on both different shores may not be economic and preferable (Matos, 2000). In other

words, an international cooperation is, of course, required for the establishment of such a project and in case of the project negotiations, Turkey will be likely to be for installing the route on its own geographic advantage while Ukraine will be likely arguing for the reverse. For sure, when Matos proposed the argument, he had in mind Trans-Caspian Gas Pipeline, which would transport Turkmen gas to Europe through Turkey. The idea of Trans-Caspian Gas Pipeline was later on replaced by the Southern Gas Corridor project. Southern Gas Corridor will transport Azerbaijani gas in the Caspian Sea to Europe through Trans-Anatolian Pipeline and Trans-Adriatic Pipeline (Karagöl & Kaya, 2014). Although it can be thought that the project will by-pass Ukraine's transit lines and income since European countries will be supplied by this pipeline in addition to the ones going over Ukrainian soil, the project will lessen Europe's energy dependency on Russia, which might encourage them to take more action in support of Ukraine. Besides, the consequences Ukraine might suffer from this project and Russia's counter-move, Turkish Stream Project, are not products of lack of communication between Turkey and Ukraine. Both parties are cognizant of each other's positions and capabilities in global politics.

### **3.2. Agreements and protocols signed between Turkey and Ukraine in economic and trade area**

The Appendix A provides a list of the agreements and protocols signed by the parties, which is derived by the author from the archive of Official Gazette of Turkey. The list implies that the parties have worked hard in order to settle its relations on a solid foundation. The agreements and protocols revolve around efforts for coordination, infrastructure development, standardization and investor confidence. Commercial and Economic Cooperation Commission, in this, regard is a very important mechanism for ensuring that these efforts are realized. The Commission is gathered by leadership of both countries' responsible ministers and both countries reassure their willingness to cooperate in their meeting. Before each Commission is gathered, suggestions and requests from Turkish exporters are taken to be conveyed to the Commission (see "Türkiye-Ukrayna Ticari ve Ekonomik İşbirliği Komisyonu 11. Dönem Toplantısı", 2017, "Ukrayna TEİK 9. Dönem Toplantısı", 2017, Karacakayalılar, 2017) and technical teams from both countries meet for negotiations of the issues brought by both sides.



Figure 3 is derived from the list of the agreements and protocols signed between the parties in order to demonstrate the distribution of the venues that the countries tried to develop. It is obvious that economic cooperation outweighs all other venues that the

Quantity	Venue
1	Humanitarian
1	Health
1	Diplomatic Representative
2	Environment
3	Scientific Cooperation
3	Cultural and Educational Cooperation
4	Tourism
5	Defense
7	Legal Cooperation
11	Transportation
20	Economic Cooperation (directly)

parties collaborated. A significant portion of the protocols signed in economic cooperation venue are of the abovementioned Commercial and Economic Cooperation Commission. The other agreements in this venue bears the purpose of facilitating trade and making it easier. In fact, the second highest number, agreements on transportation between the countries are very much linked to the economic relations since transportation provides the infrastructure for trade. Additionally, legal cooperation is crucial for economic purposes as well because inventors' reliance on a country also depends on the judicial foundations of the countries. The final venue that is important for the sake of economic relations is tourism. Although they seem low in numbers in the chart, the agreements in tourism venue are big steps for improving the tourist exchange between the countries. For example, the visa-free regime is one of these agreements that paved the way for many Ukrainians to spend some part of their summer in Turkey. All in all, the archival research on the agreements signed between Turkey and Ukraine provides us with an understanding that the practical reality of bilateral relations is based on economic and trade relations. Both parties focus on this venue a great deal and have been working with great effort to have progress, which they have, and these efforts will be awarded with a free trade agreement soon.

### 3.3. Trade volume

The efforts to enhance Turkish-Ukrainian trade is available to trace in trade volume information. The data below about the trade volume between the countries were taken from the 2015 and 2017 reports of Commercial Representative in Embassy of Turkey in Kiev. The trade volume between Ukraine and Turkey was about 1,2 billion dollars in 2000 (Ukrayna'nın Genel Ekonomik Durumu Ve Türkiye ile Ticari-Ekonomik İlişkileri, 2015). This figure significantly rose to 8,3 billion dollars in 2008, however, due to the global crisis in 2009, it shrunk to 4,2 billion dollars (Ukrayna'nın Genel Ekonomik Durumu Ve Türkiye ile Ticari-Ekonomik İlişkileri, 2015). In addition to the global crisis, the decrease in trade volume was also linked to the instability in Ukraine's economic and political realm. Although it was expected that the elections in 2010 would bring about a degree of stability in both realms, the economy was not positively affected by the political developments, leading Ukraine to be a problematic country to do business in (Ukrayna'nın Genel Ekonomik Durumu Ve Türkiye ile Ticari-Ekonomik İlişkileri, 2015). Especially the reforms put forward by the new government caused uncertainties in the business world. Thus, in 2010, the trade volume between the two countries was observed around 5,1 billion dollars (Ukrayna'nın Genel Ekonomik Durumu Ve Türkiye ile Ticari-Ekonomik İlişkileri, 2015). Increasing by 28%, in 2011, the trade volume was 6,5 billion dollars, yet, lost its pace again in 2012 and was observed as 6,2 billion dollars (Ukrayna'nın Genel Ekonomik Durumu Ve Türkiye ile Ticari-Ekonomik İlişkileri, 2015). In 2013, there was a temporary rise in trade volume, increasing to the level of 6,7 billion dollars. However, the political crisis in Ukraine, namely, Euromaidan protests, Yanukovych's resignation, Russian invasion of Crimea and the activities of the separatist organizations in eastern Ukraine, created an economic crisis in Ukraine as well and the trade volume between the two countries went down one more time to the level of 5,97 billion dollars (Ukrayna'nın Genel Ekonomik Durumu Ve Türkiye ile Ticari-Ekonomik İlişkileri, 2015).

According to the Ukraine State Statistics Service, in 2014, Ukraine's import from Turkey was 1,29 billion dollars while Ukraine's export to Turkey was 3,56 billion dollars (Ukrayna'nın Genel Ekonomik Durumu Ve Türkiye ile Ticari-Ekonomik İlişkileri, 2015). The same source indicated that Turkey had the second rank in Ukraine's export while it

had the ninth in the imports (Ukrayna'nın Genel Ekonomik Durumu Ve Türkiye ile Ticari-Ekonomik İlişkileri, 2015). The report of 2016 indicates similar numbers for the trade volume in 2015. Turkey's export to Ukraine was around 1,1 billion dollars while its import was observed around 3,6 dollars. The amount of export slightly decreased in 2016 according to the same report. However, Turkey's import was decreased by a larger portion and observed around 2,4 billion dollars. This was due to the free trade agreement signed between Ukraine and European Union in 2014 and was launched in January 2016 (Ukrayna'nın Genel Ekonomik Durumu Ve Türkiye ile Ticari-Ekonomik İlişkileri, 2017). The agreement enabled European exporters to enter Ukrainian market much more easily with zero customs duty or 90% discount on the tax (Ukrayna'nın Genel Ekonomik Durumu Ve Türkiye ile Ticari-Ekonomik İlişkileri, 2017).

The figure below (Figure 3) is taken from 2016 report (Ukrayna'nın Genel Ekonomik Durumu Ve Türkiye ile Ticari-Ekonomik İlişkileri, 2017) of Commercial Representative in Embassy of Turkey in Kiev and belongs to Ukraine's export-import numbers with Turkey. Observations from the chart can be sorted as such: Firstly, the export-import balance has been always for the benefit of Ukraine. Although it may seem that Turkey closed the gap better in the export-import balance in 2016, there has been no constant decrease in the balance in favor of Turkey. Secondly, the trade volume between the countries was tripled since the establishment of AK Party government in Turkey. This can be interpreted as an indicator of Turkey's new foreign policy and its benefits. Within 15 years, Turkey's export to Ukraine rose by 10 times, while its import from her increased by 2,5 times. In other words, Turkish exporters were positively affected in the process. Finally, it is apparent that the trade volume between the countries is subject to political climate in both within the countries and the world. The peak of the trade volume was 2008 and after the global financial crisis, the numbers could not reach at the level so far. Another conjunctural change that affected the bilateral economic relations was of course 2014 Ukrainian Crisis. It is observable that trade volume significantly decreased in 2014 and 2015.

<b>Figure 3: Foreign Trade Between Ukraine and Turkey (1.000 US Dollars)</b>						
<b>Year</b>	<b>Ukraine's Import</b>	<b>Change in Import %</b>	<b>Ukraine's Export</b>	<b>Change in Export %</b>	<b>Volume</b>	<b>Balance</b>
<b>2000</b>	159.909	12,07	868.515	28,97	1.028.424	708.606
<b>2001</b>	130.951	-18,11	1.008.848	16,16	1.139.799	877.897
<b>2002</b>	183.782	40,34	1.235.187	22,44	1.418.969	1.051.405
<b>2003</b>	298.350	62,30	901.818	-26,90	1.200.168	603.468
<b>2004</b>	351.343	17,70	1.868.288	107,16	2.219.631	1.516.945
<b>2005</b>	574.021	63,37	2.027.513	8,52	2.601.534	1.453.492
<b>2006</b>	737.668	28,50	2.389.591	17,80	3.127.259	1.651.923
<b>2007</b>	972.079	31,70	3.650.005	52,70	4.622.084	2.677.926
<b>2008</b>	1.950.343	100,60	4.633.417	27,10	6.583.760	2.683.074
<b>2009</b>	952.244	-51,20	2.126.526	-54,10	3.078.770	1.174.282
<b>2010</b>	1.298.282	36,30	3.026.668	42,30	4.324.950	1.728.386
<b>2011</b>	1.481.242	14,10	3.748.582	24%	5.229.824	2.267.340
<b>2012</b>	1.951.858	31,80	3.685.113	-1,70	5.636.971	1.733.255
<b>2013</b>	1.852.685	-5,10	3.805.477	3,20	5.658.162	1.952.792
<b>2014*</b>	1.298.157	-29,93	3.561.436	-6,4	4.859.593	2.263.279
<b>2015*</b>	851.199	-34,43	2.771.669	-22,17	3.622.868	1.920.470
<b>2016*</b>	1.099.000	29,11	2.048.691	-26,10	3.148.679	948,703

Although trade volume between Ukraine and Turkey lacks stability and is easily affected by conjunctural changes in the countries' political realm, there is a determination to tackle the constant rise and fall in the numbers and enhance the trade volume to its full potential. Both sides are devoted for this objective and have progressed great deal so far. Speaking in the six meeting of the High Level Strategic Council in Kiev, Turkish President Erdogan stated that they aim to raise the trade volume to 20 billion dollars by 2020 and the free trade agreement that they have been working on will make such improvement possible (Akşam, 2017). It is noteworthy, at this point, to cite a news published in Russian newspaper Sputnik. The aforementioned newspaper is usually referred as having close ties with Russian government and operate as one of Russia's international news propaganda means. In its publication on 11 October 2017, Sputnik quotes a Ukrainian specialist on Erdogan's visit to Kiev. According to the specialist, the aimed trade volume, 20 billion dollars by 2020, is unrealistic and unfeasible even if the free trade agreement

between the parties will be signed (Sputnik, 2017). Although this matter requires an economic analysis to be dealt with, the news published by Sputnik do have a political implication. If we accept Sputnik's ties with Russian government, we can safely conclude that Russia is not very contented with the enhancing trade between Ukraine and Turkey. It is not very likely that Russia will act upon its discontent since Turkey and Russia has been compartmentalizing their relations and Turkey's stance on Crimean issue, for example, has not affected Turkish-Russian partnership, but, it can be expected that Turkey might have to take hard decisions in order to keep the bilateral relations with Ukraine and Russia in balance.

### **3.4. Free Trade Negotiations**

Launching free trade area between Ukraine and Turkey will be a very crucial step towards further cooperation, according to Igor Turyanskj, the first ambassador of Ukraine to Turkey (Kushnir, 2017). The efforts for an agreement that will establish a free trade area between Ukraine and Turkey has been continuing but it has not been very easy for the parties. Although there was substantial effort for a free trade area and increase in trade volume between the parties during Yanukovych's presidency in Ukraine, there was no real progress (Kushnir, 2017). The real progress could be made after the Maidan revolution in Ukraine. Turkish government were able to work more efficiently with the newly established Ukrainian government. Ukrainian President Poroshenko and Erdogan met three times in first two years after the revolution (Kushnir, 2017). These meetings consisted of crucial decisions such as Turkey's granting \$50 million loan and \$10 million humanitarian aid to Ukraine, more efforts for formerly scheduled projects and for the free trade agreement (Kushnir, 2017).

The information about the negotiation agreements in the reports by Commercial Representative of Ministry of Economy do not reveal much. The meeting dates according to the report (Ukrayna'nın Genel Ekonomik Durumu Ve Türkiye ile Ticari-Ekonomik İlişkileri, 2017) are as such:

The first round of exploratory meetings for a Free Trade Agreement between Ukraine and Turkey took place in June 2007. After two more rounds were held in December 2008 and

May 2009, official negotiations finally started in 2011. The first meeting of the negotiations was held in Kiev in December 2011 while the second was in Ankara in March 2012. The third meeting took place in Kiev again in May 2012, the fourth in Ankara in September 2012 and the fifth in Kiev in September 2013. 2014 was the year that Ukraine had too much internal struggle. Therefore, the negotiations did not take place in this year. However, in 2015, the presidents of both sides met in the High Level Strategic Council and decided to continue the process as soon as possible. Thus, the negotiations continued in November 2015 in Kiev and in March 2016 in Ankara in the following year. It is worthy to note that the report mentions Ukraine rearranged the obligations she was ready to take for the sake of the free trade agreement due to the internal struggle and Turkey was not content with the new terms (Ukrayna'nın Genel Ekonomik Durumu Ve Türkiye ile Ticari-Ekonomik İlişkileri, 2017). Therefore, there was more delay on the agreement and the terms have been negotiated again. In July 2017, however, Vice-Minister of Economy of Turkey announced that most of the obstacles for a free trade agreement has gotten over with and they expect to sign it in the end of the year ("Türkiye-Ukrayna Serbest Ticaret Anlaşması Müzakereleri", 2017).

In case it is actualized, the free trade agreement might be the biggest success the AK Party government in Turkey achieved in its Ukraine policy. The benefits of the agreement are recognized in the report (Ukrayna'nın Genel Ekonomik Durumu Ve Türkiye ile Ticari-Ekonomik İlişkileri, 2017) and listed as an acceleration in the trade volume, diversification of the trading good between the countries and attracting the investors into their market. There is no doubt that the agreement will highly contribute in economic prosperity and development of both countries. In fact, Turkish businessmen working in Ukraine might get a better share with the agreement. The President of Union of Turkish Businessmen in Ukraine (TUİD), Burak Pehlivan, asserts that the economic relations between Turkey and Ukraine is in its golden age ("Türkiye-Ukrayna Serbest Ticaret Anlaşması Müzakereleri", 2017). Pehlivan argues that Turkish investors are interested in Ukraine and recent events created an opportunity for them since the Western investors, with a big potential to be competitive (author's note), are hesitant to operate in Ukraine due to the unstable political environment; therefore, a free trade agreement will attract much more Turkish investors ("Türkiye-Ukrayna Serbest Ticaret Anlaşması

Müzakereleri", 2017). The investors that are to be attracted by the free trade agreement have an advantage that they can learn from the experience of the businessmen that have been working in Ukraine and know how to operate within the procedural frameworks. They also own the advantage that Turkey has been working with Ukraine to pave the way for healthier and smoother economic and trade relations. Thus, they are supported and encouraged by the government.

It is possible to conclude that Turkey's willingness to sign the free trade agreement is of great importance and in accordance with the principle of being a trading state. Not only it will be a turn of events in the bilateral agreements, it will also pave the way for more cooperation. Considering along with the visa-free and passport-free travel regimes between the countries, Turkey and Ukraine are likely to be the most crucial partners in Black Sea Regime. These developments will not only bring them politically together, it will also create a real sense of neighborhood, which might even result in sharing the same steps towards European Union.

### **3.5. Turkey's Direct Investments in Ukraine**

Direct investments from Turkish businessmen to Ukraine is another issue that requires attention. As of 2016, in the "business environment" index, Ukraine was placed in the 83<sup>rd</sup> rank. The same index indicated that Ukraine is in the 76<sup>th</sup> rank in terms of business start-up convenience, in the 70<sup>th</sup> rank in terms of visa and permission processes, in the 108<sup>th</sup> rank in terms of tax payments, in the 154<sup>th</sup> rank in terms of foreign trade practices and in the 109<sup>th</sup> rank in terms of protection of the investors (Ukrayna'nın Genel Ekonomik Durumu Ve Türkiye ile Ticari-Ekonomik İlişkileri, 2016). Although Ukraine does not seem to offer great opportunities based on this evaluation, it is noteworthy that there has been a gradual increase in business standards in the country.

Ukraine, in fact, is a great market for Turkish entrepreneurs working in construction services. Construction business' great potential stems from that there are plenty of buildings requiring restoration throughout Ukraine, almost all of the infrastructure is needed to be renewed and there is a continuous agenda for constructing new living spaces (Ukrayna'nın Genel Ekonomik Durumu Ve Türkiye ile Ticari-Ekonomik İlişkileri, 2015).

In line with this, Turkish constructing companies successfully operate in Ukraine. Among the significant large-scale Turkish investments in Ukraine are construction of Kiev International Airport Terminal D, a bridge over Dnipro river by Dogus Grup, the Shakhtar Donetsk Stadium by ENKA and kilometers of highway (Ukrayna'nın Genel Ekonomik Durumu ve Türkiye ile Ticari-Ekonomik İlişkileri, 2015). These investments help Ukraine improve its infrastructure and create a good image of Turkish investors.

In addition to the construction business, two more leading investments are crucial to note here. Turkish GSM operator Turkcell is developing the high-tech communication network in Ukraine with the trademark Life:), the third largest operator in Ukraine (Ukrayna'nın Genel Ekonomik Durumu ve Türkiye ile Ticari-Ekonomik İlişkileri, 2017). It has 18% market share and 12,4 million subscribers. (Ukrayna'nın Genel Ekonomik Durumu ve Türkiye ile Ticari-Ekonomik İlişkileri, 2017). Also, The Turkish chocolate produce Ulker established a factory in Kiev and operates under the brand “KBF”, Kiev Biscuit Factory (Ukrayna'nın Genel Ekonomik Durumu ve Türkiye ile Ticari-Ekonomik İlişkileri, 2015).

According to the Ukraine State Statistics Service, by the end of 2014, Turkish investments in Ukraine make a total of 198,7 billion dollars and Turkey has the 21<sup>st</sup> rank among the 131 countries investing in Ukraine (Ukrayna'nın Genel Ekonomik Durumu ve Türkiye ile Ticari-Ekonomik İlişkileri, 2015). This amount increased to 289, 2 billion dollars by the end of 2016 and Turkey maintained its 21<sup>st</sup> rank among the most investing countries in Ukraine (Ukrayna'nın Genel Ekonomik Durumu ve Türkiye ile Ticari-Ekonomik İlişkileri, 2015). Of course, 50% increase in Turkish direct investment in Ukraine is an important development, however, considering that 2014 was a troubled year for Ukraine and its trade partners, the rise seems to be only expected after Ukraine stabilized its political realm.

### **3.6. Tourism's role in bilateral relations**

Ukraine is a great market for Turkey in terms of tourism. By 2011, the second most popular destination among Ukrainian tourists was Turkey (Ozdal, Demydova, 2011). By 2014, however, for Ukrainians, Turkey was the first tourism destination. In 2014,



excluding Crimea and the areas under the Anti-Terror Operation, 450.000 Ukrainian tourists visited Turkey (Ukrayna'nın Genel Ekonomik Durumu Ve Türkiye ile Ticari-Ekonomik İlişkileri, 2015). This number raised to 510.000 in 2015 (Ukrayna'nın Genel Ekonomik Durumu Ve Türkiye ile Ticari-Ekonomik İlişkileri, 2016). According to the Ukrainian State Statistics Service, in 2016, around 1 million Ukrainian tourists visited Turkey (Ukrayna'nın Genel Ekonomik Durumu Ve Türkiye ile Ticari-Ekonomik İlişkileri, 2017). In the numbers of 2016, Ukrainian tourists are the ninth largest group to visit Turkey. In exchange, around two thousand Turkish tourists traveled to Ukraine (Ukrayna'nın Genel Ekonomik Durumu Ve Türkiye ile Ticari-Ekonomik İlişkileri, 2017). The numbers at this point are revealing yet another success of the bilateral relations, especially Turkey's strategy towards Ukraine. The visa-regime established in 2011 between Ukraine and Turkey drew more Ukrainian tourists' attention to Turkey, providing a significant amount of income to the touristic areas and the country's economy overall. Both sides have paid a great deal of effort for the enhancement of tourist exchange between them and finally agreed on a passport-free regime as well by 2017. It is safe to conclude that both countries aim to contribute in its economic development by strengthening their economic ties and they both find an important rationale in undertaking their relations in such way.

### **3.7. Problems in the bilateral economic relations**

When the new government was established in Turkey by AK Party, there were several problems to be solved in Turkish-Ukrainian trade relations. One of the most important of these problems was stated in a report by Economic Representative of Embassy of Turkey in Kiev written in 2003, that establishing a Turkish bank to operate in Ukraine would encourage Turkish entrepreneurs, although in this way, there would still be some structural obstacles remaining (Tipayev, 2006). Kayaer asserts that there has been no developed banking system in Ukraine, which creates problems in transactions and construction companies faced high rated taxes for the materials they bring from abroad (Kayaer, 2004). The need for a Turkish bank, therefore was of crucial importance for the improvement of Turkish investments in Ukraine. It is also stated in the later reports by Economic Representative of Embassy of Turkey in Kiev that Turkish exporters have repeatedly expressed their difficulty to operate since there have been no Turkish bank

within Ukraine (Ukrayna'nın Genel Ekonomik Durumu Ve Türkiye ile Ticari-Ekonomik İlişkileri, 2015). In April 2006, TEB and Ukrsibbank signed an agreement foreseeing a Ukraine desk in TEB and a Turkey desk in Ukrsibbank. In the following year, Altinbas Holding's initiative Creditwest and Fiba Holding's Credit Europe began to operate in Kiev (Ukrayna'nın Genel Ekonomik Durumu Ve Türkiye ile Ticari-Ekonomik İlişkileri, 2015). Although these developments positively affected the Turkish investor, the 2016 report still includes a warning with regard to the banking issue. The warning is, however, about Ukraine's structural problems, rather than bilateral troubles. The report asserts that there is no well-functioning and strong banking system in Ukraine, therefore, it is suggested to Turkish businessmen/women that they operate carefully (Ukrayna'nın Genel Ekonomik Durumu Ve Türkiye ile Ticari-Ekonomik İlişkileri, 2016). Since 67 of 180 banks were abolished or seized by the state in Ukraine between 2014 and 2016, it should be kept in mind that even the big banks may not be able to make their payments in due time and Turkish investors should carefully make analyses when choosing a bank that they will work together (Ukrayna'nın Genel Ekonomik Durumu Ve Türkiye ile Ticari-Ekonomik İlişkileri, 2016). As the reports highlights, banking is a systemic problem in Ukraine. Thus, there is a limit what Turkey can do in order to solve it. However, it might be expected that Ukraine will strengthen its financial system as it deals with its other structural problems such as corruption and decentralization. As a strategic partner, Turkey will for sure assist Ukraine to be a more reliable country to do business for the sake of mutual gains.

Another structural problem is Ukraine's profile for the business world. Doing business in Ukraine has not been an easy task but the conditions are definitely improving. The annual Doing Business report of World Bank places Ukraine with regard to "business environment" on 83<sup>rd</sup> order, 16 ranks more from the last year, while Turkey is placed on the 55<sup>th</sup> rank. Ukraine is in the 76<sup>th</sup> rank in terms of business start-up convenience, in the 108<sup>th</sup> rank in terms of tax payments, in the 70<sup>th</sup> rank in terms licensing and permission, in the 154<sup>th</sup> rank in terms of foreign trade practices and in the 109<sup>th</sup> rank in terms of protection of investors (Ukrayna'nın Genel Ekonomik Durumu Ve Türkiye ile Ticari-Ekonomik İlişkileri, 2017). Comparing the last three years reports, a gradual increase in Ukraine's profile is observed. There is no doubt, the more Ukraine deals with its internal

problems, the more reliable business profile it will manage. It is important that Turkey has been encouraging its business world to invest in Ukraine for a long time despite the relatively unstable impression she gives away. The rationale behind Turkey's inclination towards Ukraine as stated above lies in its principle of being a trading state and establishing working economic relations with its neighbors so as to broaden its soft power as well as regional stability.

According to Kayaer (2004), standardization of goods has been also a problem. Turkish companies suffered from this problem and the process for its resolution was very slow due to heavy bureaucracy and economic legislations that are not often enough to resolve problems (Kayaer, 2004). In 2006, however, an agreement for the standardization issue between the countries were signed. According to ITO report (2007), the agreement required parties to assembly technical teams to work on the issues of standardization and the process was expected to be a long one. The same report states that high rate of tariffs create a problem for Turkish investors and the regulations require exporters to exchange 50% of their dollars in Ukraine market. Such issues will probably be worked out by the free trade agreement that is to be signed soon. Another problem related to goods is that most of the goods being transported to CIS countries from Turkey, initially arrives at Ukrainian ports and hereby they are transferred via railway or in the container via highway (Ukrayna'nın Genel Ekonomik Durumu Ve Türkiye ile Ticari-Ekonomik İlişkileri, 2016). The containers passing in transit through Ukraine are being examined exclusively by the authorities and the process is sometimes problematic. The delays in the transportation process occur due to these examinations and problems arising out of exporter companies' missing documents (Ukrayna'nın Genel Ekonomik Durumu Ve Türkiye ile Ticari-Ekonomik İlişkileri, 2016). Turkish export companies in Ukraine also face troubles due to the recent crisis in Ukraine. The spending in anti-terror operation and new reforms create a burden for Ukrainian economy. The high rate devaluation and the new monetary and foreign exchange policies of Ukrainian Central Bank negatively affect Turkish companies (Ukrayna'nın Genel Ekonomik Durumu Ve Türkiye ile Ticari-Ekonomik İlişkileri, 2016). Besides, the sales of these companies significantly have decreased due to factors such as uncertain environment in the country, payment delay and price rises (Ukrayna'nın Genel Ekonomik Durumu Ve Türkiye ile Ticari-Ekonomik

İlişkileri, 2016). Considering the recent sanctions and restriction imposed on Ukraine by Russia due to the political crisis they have been going through, Turkish exporters are therefore suggested to conduct their deliveries, if possible, directly to Russia instead of using Ukraine as transit.

The major problem that needs to be tackled is, in fact, the economic potential of the countries that have not been reached so far at all. It is possible to regard recent steps between the countries such as visa-free regime, free trade agreement etc. in this framework. The reports considering this issue by Economic Representative of Embassy of Turkey in Kiev usually refer to Ukraine's economic underdevelopment. According to the reports, there are several reasons why the economic potential between Ukraine and Turkey has not been fulfilled. The lack of a transparent economic structure in Ukraine, underdeveloped investment environment and the drawbacks in the judiciary system can be counted as the reasons of Ukraine's economic underdevelopment (Ukrayna'nın Genel Ekonomik Durumu Ve Türkiye ile Ticari-Ekonomik İlişkileri, 2015). In addition to these structural problems, slow bureaucracy inherited from USSR and lack of competition are also reasons for the delay for a success in realizing the countries' potential. It is expected that this potential will be fulfilled more as Ukraine tackles such obstacles. As a matter of fact, the reformed initiated in 2014 by the new government seems to be the largest reform process the country has ever had (Ukrayna'nın Genel Ekonomik Durumu Ve Türkiye ile Ticari-Ekonomik İlişkileri, 2015). Although such developments are promising, there is still a big challenge before the Ukrainian government as the problems over Crimea and Donbas continues (Ukrayna'nın Genel Ekonomik Durumu Ve Türkiye ile Ticari-Ekonomik İlişkileri, 2015).

## **CHAPTER 4: HISTORICAL LEGACY/HISTORICAL RESPONSIBILITY: CRIMEA IN TURKISH FOREIGN POLICY TOWARDS UKRAINE**

It is doubtless that one of the main determinants of Turkish foreign policy towards Ukraine not only in AK Party era but also in all times has been Crimea and the issues of Crimean Tatars. The reason for Turkey's attachment of importance to the Crimean Tatars and Crimean issue surely is due to the historical and cultural ties shared by Crimean Tatars and Turkish people. Turkey's stand on Crimean Tatars is that they are citizens of Ukraine and therefore live within Ukraine's territorial integrity as loyal citizens (Ozdal, Demydova, 2011). One of the modern Turkish foreign policy's bases is to respect territorial integrity and Turkey's attitude towards Crimean Tatars are in line with this, it does not try to provoke separatist aspirations (Vorotnyuk, 2010), on the contrary, Turkey has put efforts for the integration of Crimean Tatars in the Ukrainian state and has cooperated with the Ukrainian governments to improve Crimean Tatars' life conditions. Thus, Crimean Tatar community is one of the factors that get Turkey and Ukraine closer (Beybulayeva, 2015). This is a view voiced by top officials from Turkey. Abdullah Gul, then the President of Turkey, once stated that Turkey sees Crimean Tatars as the loyal citizens of Ukraine and a bridge between Turkey and Ukraine (Mhitaryan, 2010). In 2012, Consul General of Turkey in Odessa, Huseyin Ergani also stated that "Crimea plays a significant role in the relations between Ukraine and Turkey due to its investment potential, the presence of a well-developed road infrastructure, geographic location. We also consider Crimea as a bridge of friendship between Turkey and Ukraine" (Beybulayeva, 2015).

Turkey's inclination toward a constructive policy with regard to Crimean Tatars have been in favor of Ukraine as well. Ukrainians in Crimea and Tatars have allied against the Russian majority's separatist aspirations (Kiniklioglu, 1996). Thus, Crimean Tatars have been an opportunity for Ukrainian governments to balance Russian majority and draw Turkey's attention to the peninsula in terms of investments (Kiniklioglu, 1996). Although, Turkey views Crimean issue as a domestic problem of Ukraine (Kiniklioglu, 1996), it appreciates Ukraine's efforts to help those who come back from exile to Ukraine despite its limited resources (Mhitaryan, 2010). Also, Turkey is happy to help Crimean Tatars

going back to Crimea (Mhitaryan, 2010) via its public diplomacy tools, which will be dealt with in more detail below. Cooperation in Crimean issue creates an environment of mutual trust and respect between the parties (Matos, 2000). Therefore, the constructive relationship between Ukraine and Turkey is of crucial importance. Such deeds may become an example for other countries in the region on how to deal with the ethnic issues and restoring the past injustices (Matos, 2000). Not only Turkish-Ukrainian cooperation in this matter contributes to the bilateral relations, but also to the regional dynamics overall.

The constructive policy Turkey has pursued in Crimean issue can be linked to two of the main principles of new Turkish foreign policy in AK Party era. Turkey's 'historical legacy' is one of the main factors that give Turkey its strategic depth (Yesiltas, Balci, 2013). In other words, Turkey's strategic depth can be traced into Turkey's history. Turkey's Ottoman legacy, in this sense, prescribes that Turkey is culturally and historically connected to the Middle East, the Balkans, East Asia and Africa (Yesiltas, Balci, 2013). This view bestows Turkey 'historical responsibility' for its strategic depth (Yesiltas, Balci, 2013). As an outcome of historical legacy, historical responsibility provides Turkey with a motivation to develop new policies in its strategic depth (Yesiltas, Balci, 2013). With these lenses, Turkey's policies towards Crimea is subject to its historical responsibility. This does not mean, however, that Turkey is fully obliged to intervene in the matters related to Crimea. As stated above, Turkey maintains that Crimea is a domestic issue of Ukraine. In fact, Turkey's historical responsibility has very little to do with intervention, of which we have seen the examples in Turkey's operations in Iraq and Syria, a matter that comparison would be absurd because there are many other dynamics to consider. Going back to the point, Turkey's historical responsibility is that of pursuing a proactive policy towards the geography to which it is historically linked. Namely, rather than cutting the ties with former Ottoman geography as it was prescribed by the earlier foreign policy visions, Turkey is to establish new ties via economic relations and public diplomacy. In Crimean case, Turkey's role has been investments to the peninsula and rehabilitation of Crimean Tatars who chose to return home after the exile in 1944. The section below deals with the operations of TİKA in Crimea, an important public diplomacy tool of new Turkish foreign policy. Although Turkish foundations such

as Kızılay and Turkish Directorate of Religious Affairs also operates in Crimea with various humanitarian aid activities, TİKA operations have a larger impact and consist of a bigger budget, thus, they are the most relevant to the thesis.

#### **4.1. Operations of TİKA**

Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TİKA) was founded in order to pursue an active foreign policy towards the Turkic countries in the post-Soviet geography. Carrying out economic, social and cultural activities in these countries during the 90s, TİKA established itself within post-Soviet countries with its organizational structure and intergovernmental ties ("About Us-TİKA", 2017). As the effects of globalization has become notably concrete in the beginning of the millennium, TİKA directed its focus on development project due to that the newly established republics of the old Soviet Union were had been going under development processes ("About Us-TİKA", 2017). Thus, TİKA initiated projects on institutional capacity building in these countries ("About Us-TİKA", 2017). The main motivations for TİKA's initiatives in the Turkic-speaking republics of old Soviet Union have been of helping these countries establishing their own social structure, a sustainable identity and tackling the deficiencies of the technical infrastructures ("About Us-TİKA", 2017). In accordance with these aims, the venues in which TİKA has been undertaking projects are education, health, restoration, agricultural development, tourism, finance and industry ("About Us-TİKA", 2017).

Achieving these aims surely required Turkey to take more active steps towards the post-Soviet regions. Thus, the number of the Programme Coordination Offices of TİKA in AK Party period has substantially increased from 12 in 2002 to 25 until 2011 and to 33 by 2012 ("About Us-TİKA", 2017). By 2017, TİKA has 58 Programme Coordination Offices in 56 countries. The same acceleration is observable in the development aid that TİKA has been providing for different countries. While the amount of the developmental aid in 2002 was 85 million US Dollars, it crucially rose up to 3.9 billion US Dollars by 2015 ("About Us-TİKA", 2017). For sure, TİKA's activities are profoundly linked to Turkey's proactive foreign policy vision. These activities function as a cooperative mechanism for the state institutions, universities, NGOs and private sector; and contributed to Turkey's soft power in its neighboring regions in great deal ("About Us-TİKA", 2017). By its own

institutional definition, TİKA's activities are an extension of Turkey's 'fraternal and cooperative hand' ("About Us-TİKA", 2017).

The fraternal and cooperative hand of Turkey has been in action in Ukraine as well. Considering the stress on the peoples with whom Turkey shares historical and cultural ties in TİKA's own description, Crimean Tatars living in Ukraine in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea could not have been overlooked. Let us firstly examine the activities in Crimea that TİKA carried out during AK Party era. The data of TİKA activities in Crimea is derived by the author from the annual activity reports between 2002-2016 and Development Aid Reports between 2004-2016 prepared by TİKA's Reporting and Coordination Unit. The data provided here is not comprised of all the activities but entails the major ones and those with implications for this thesis's purpose.

#### **Annual Activity Report 2005 (TİKA, 2006):**

- In 2000, TİKA signed a "Cost-Sharing Agreement" with UNDP for TİKA's Drinkable Water Supply Project of Crimean Integration and Development Program. Within this framework, drinkable water was provided for Maryino-Ukrainko town in 2002 and Pionerskoye town in 2003. Until 2004, TİKA contributed to this project with 2 million dollars. The completed projects provided 25.000 people with drinkable water in various villages and 2 more projects were to be completed by 2006, which would provide 10.000 more people with water.
- In 1997, TİKA and National Assembly of Crimean Tatars signed a protocol for provision of housing aid. TİKA either has purchased single family houses for Crimean Tatars or helped those who could not finish their housing construction. Except for 1998, the number of the houses purchased, or people helped for construction are very low in comparison with the years of 2004 and 2005.
- A very crucial step by TİKA in this year was the foundation of Crimean News Agency (QHA). The aim of this project was to deliver regional and worldwide news for Crimean Tatars more accurately. At the moment, QHA is perhaps the most important agency reporting news from Crimea under Russian annexation.
- Initiating the renovation projects for Zincirli Madrasah and Hacı Giray Han Mausoleum



**Annual Activity Report 2006 (TİKA, 2007):**

- Renovation of 3 national schools
- Equipment aids to 3 national schools
- Financial support for 4<sup>th</sup> Crimean Tatar Kurultai
- 216 house purchases and 36 construction support
- Educational Infrastructure Project was initiated.
- The establishment of a TV channel in Crimean Tatar language was funded.

**Annual Activity Report 2007 (TİKA, 2008):**

- Drinkable water project with the partnership of UNDP and housing aid for Crimean Tatars were completed by 2006. Therefore, TİKA started to operate in the enhancement of educational infrastructure and cultural cooperation in Crimea.
- By the end of 2007, there were 15 schools in which 5000 students get education in Crimea. The schools, unfortunately, lack the necessary infrastructure and students do not receive education in an appropriate environment. In order to make a contribution to students' learning conditions, TİKA started a large-scale project for the purposes for renovation and equipment aid throughout Crimea. By the end of 2007, 5 schools were renovated and equipped with learning material.
- Donations for various institutions such as Crimean Ministry of Education and Science, Gaspıralı Library, Crimean Tatar Youth Forum
- Support for different symposiums and events with the subjects of Crimean Tatar history and culture, Crimean Tatar exile and Turkish-Ukrainian relations

**Annual Activity Report 2008 (TİKA, 2009):**

- The educational infrastructure project continued. The project aimed at enabling Crimean Tatar students to receive education in their mother-tongue. Therefore, the project's focus is to provide students with qualified teachers and learning environment. Within the framework of this project, 4 schools were renovated and additional buildings for 3 of them were constructed.

- Opening an education center for Turkology.

**Annual Activity Report 2009 (TİKA, 2010a):**

- Natural gas supply for Kuprino village
- Drinkable water supply for Crimea Highly Talented Children Boarding School
- Equipment aid for Crimean News Agency
- Donations for Crimean Tatar language schools, Union of Crimean Tatar Women etc.

**Development Aids Report 2009 (TİKA, 2010b):**

- Construction of a national school

**Annual Activity Report 2010 (TİKA, 2011):**

- Construction of Crimean Tatar Culture Center

**Annual Activity Report 2011 (TİKA, 2012a):**

- Renovation of 3 school and construction of additional buildings to 2 of them
- Drinkable water supply to a village

**Development Aids Report 2011 (TİKA, 2012b):**

- Renovation of a school and construction of an additional building to another one

**Annual Activity Report 2012 (TİKA, 2013a):**

- Renovation of 2 kindergartens. The need for kindergartens is very important for receiving education in mother-tongue is the first priority for Crimean Tatars. TİKA has been construction, renovation kindergartens or transforming some old buildings into kindergartens throughout Crimea.
- Renovation of a health center and equipment aid for it
- Roof renovation of the İsmail Gaspıralı Library
- Recycling Solid and Package Waste Project in Belogorsk

**Development Aids Report 2012 (TİKA, 2013b):**

- Cash assistance and humanitarian aid for 18.000 people. The humanitarian aid included food packages and clothing items

**Annual Activity Report 2013 (TİKA, 2014a):**

- Renovation of 3 schools
- Training for ATR television personnel, the only channel broadcasting in Crimean Tatar language in the peninsula.

**Development Aids Report 2013 (TİKA, 2014b):**

- Renovation and repair services for various schools and equipment aid for preschools

TİKA's activities are not bounded with Turkic nations or minorities around world, however, in Crimean case, cultural and historical ties in addition to a Crimean Tatar diaspora in Turkey, which is consisted of millions of Crimean Tatars fled to Turkey in 1944 exile, create another motivation for Turkey's humanitarian aid in the peninsula. So, Turkey is in the position of a donor country aiding Crimean Tatars return home (Mhitaryan, 2010) and those who are in the process of settlement.

Examining the TİKA activities in Crimea listed above, a few deductions can be made. First of all, cultural existence of Crimean Tatars within Ukrainian borders is of crucial importance for Turkey. The assistance distributed by TİKA invests in Crimean Tatar future in Crimea by providing the appropriate conditions for education of Crimean Tatar children. The assistance also entails culture centers, libraries and culturally important sites. By keeping these cultural entities alive, TİKA helps Crimean Tatars restore their imprints in the peninsula, which was under threat since the 1944 exile. In line with these activities, preservation and dissemination of Crimean Tatar language are also in the scope of TİKA activities in Crimea. As stated in its objective, TİKA aims to be a part of the identity making and preservation of Turkic people after the collapse of the Soviet Union. It is, therefore, important for Turkey to help Crimean Tatars rejuvenate their identity in their indigenous land.

Secondly, not only these children will be a guarantee of Crimean Tatar existence in the peninsula by their educational qualifications and visions, they will also feel gratitude and

intimacy towards Turkey. Because the main objective of public diplomacy tools such as TİKA is to broaden Turkey's soft power, such a result is, of course, already expected. In this regard, the activities of TİKA are also an investment for future Turkish-Ukrainian relations. The future generations of Crimean Tatars are expected to be cooperative and peaceful with Turkey when they will be in decision making positions. This is, yet, another point that should be highlighted considering Turkish-Ukrainian relations. The new government established in 2002 in Turkey had a new foreign policy direction that would spare more resources for public diplomacy tools and broadening of Turkey's soft power. This is apparent in TİKA annual activity reports explicitly. Since 2002, projects and the density of the activities under projects increased in great deal. It is observable in the activity reports, however, that the annexation of Crimea caused TİKA activities in Crimea to be frozen. The reports for the years after 2014, the date when Russia annexed Crimea, do not include any projects or activities in Crimea. However, TİKA still operates in Ukraine, especially in Kiev Oblast', to which many Crimean Tatars immigrated.

The last point to be made on TİKA reports is the vital importance of the establishment of Crimean News Agency. As the famous saying goes: "the first victim of war is truth". The atmosphere created in Crimea after Russian annexation is very vulnerable to disinformation and lack many reliable sources to verify the news broadcasted by Russian news agencies. Crimean News Agency has been actively engaged in what has been happening in Crimea after the annexation and has become a very strong voice of Crimean Tatars in that matter. Broadcasting from Kiev, Crimean News Agency expresses the grievances of Crimean Tatars living in Crimea and being forced out of the peninsula. In addition, it is also one of the few news agencies to report the violations of human rights in Crimea. Crimean News Agency, at the moment, is one of the few sources that Turkey can be aware of the position of Crimea and Crimean Tatars. All things considered, TİKA's contribution to establishment of Crimean News Agency in 2005 in order to make the news heard from the peninsula and its assistance for the agency's performance later on seem to be very expedient.

## 4.2. Annexation of Crimea and Turkish Foreign Policy

Crimea and issues of Crimean Tatars have been one of the pillars of Turkish foreign policy towards Ukraine. As noted above, especially humanitarian and cultural services for Crimean Tatars returning home from exile have been a bridge between Ukraine and Turkey. Turkey was happy to aid Crimean Tatars in their rehabilitation and Ukraine was contended with Turkey's efforts for the integration of Crimean Tatars within the Ukrainian state. Between 2002 and 2016, there were two times that Ukraine was mentioned in Turkish Grand National Assembly with a gratitude on the Crimean Tatar issue. In 2005, in his speech on the commemoration of Crimean Tatars exile from Crimea in 18 May 1945, AK Party Deputy Nevzat Yalçıntaş stated that the conditions of the Crimean Tatars had been turning back to normal and had been getting better thanks to the establishment of the Ukrainian state ("Dönem 22, Yasama Yılı 3, 100 üncü Birleşim", 2005). Expressing his gratitude for Ukraine, Yalçıntaş pointed out that conditions of Crimean Tatars are bounded with the progress of democratization in Ukraine ("Dönem 22, Yasama Yılı 3, 100 üncü Birleşim", 2005). As important as these points, Yalçıntaş also proposed that its Turkey's duty to help Crimean Tatars return their homeland from exile ("Dönem 22, Yasama Yılı 3, 100 üncü Birleşim", 2005). On an interesting note, he reminded that there were 300.000 Crimean Tatars in Uzbekistan wishing to return Crimea but, being in the influence of others (most certainly he meant Russia, author's note) Uzbek administration did not permit this process to start ("Dönem 22, Yasama Yılı 3, 100 üncü Birleşim", 2005). Such statements from a deputy of the ruling party indeed have implications. Not only Yalçıntaş's speech demonstrates the attention that Turkey's ruling party gives to the problems of Crimean Tatars, it also shows Turkey's inclination to cooperate with Ukraine and other countries in which exiled Crimean Tatars live.

Crimean issue was also in the agenda of the opposition. Just after AK Party was elected as the ruling party, in 2003, Republican People's Party deputy Şükrü Elekdağ, who is also the mastermind of the foundation of Black Sea Cooperation Organization, urged the government to complete the housing project for Crimean Tatars, which were promised back in 1994 by the President of time, Süleyman Demirel, as soon as possible ("Dönem 22, Yasama Yılı 1, 104 üncü Birleşim", 2003). Considering that Nationalist Movement Party deputy Reşat Doğru also stated in 2008 that Ukrainian state helped Crimean Tatars

return their homeland and TİKA provided for them 5000 houses. (“Dönem 23, Yasama Yılı 2, 100 üncü Birleşim”, 2008), Turkish governments’ policies of Crimea show the characteristics of a state policy, rather than governmental projects. Surely, the pace of the activities in the framework of this state policy has depended on the governments’ attention and one of the main points of this work is to highlight the acceleration of projects towards Crimea and Ukraine in AK Party governments.

The Crimean pillar of bilateral relations was undermined by the Russian annexation of Crimea in February 2014. There was no Crimea to convey aid with the cooperation of Ukrainian state anymore and Crimean matter was not much more complicated than it was already. The rest of this chapter deals with Turkish foreign policy towards Ukraine with regard to the Russian annexation of Crimea.

#### **4.2.1. The Annexation**

Euromaidan revolution in 2014 can be said to provoke the annexation of Crimea by Russia. Holding EU and US responsible for the events happened in Ukraine, Russia reacted harsher than expected and made a move for territorial gain for the first time (Sarıkaya, 2017). When Euromaidan protests resonated in favor of Russia in Crimea, Ukrainians and Crimean Tatars in Crimea supported Ukraine’s territorial integrity, Russians in Crimea favored integration with Russia rather than having a pro-EU government (Sarıkaya, 2017). Pro-Russian politicians and activists organized rallies, asking help from Russia, thus, on 27<sup>th</sup> February, armed men took control of the parliament and governmental buildings, raising the Russian flags in the buildings they are in control of (Sarıkaya, 2017). The parliament under the control of armed men decided to hold a referendum in May (Sarıkaya, 2017). However, in a proceeding where only Russian delegates were present, the referendum date was updated as 30<sup>th</sup> March (Sarıkaya, 2017). The decision taken then was to ask people in referendum whether Crimea is an autonomous republic under Ukrainian rule or not (Sarıkaya, 2017) but this was also changed by the parliament along with re-updating the referendum date as 16<sup>th</sup> March (Sarıkaya, 2017). The questions to be asked in the referendum now were “Do you support joining the Russian Federation as Russian citizens?” and “Do you support restoring Crimea’s former status as in the 1992 Constitution?” (Sarıkaya, 2017). Obviously,

without a Western intervention, a Crimea under Ukrainian rule was not an option anymore.

As a reaction to these developments, Ukrainian parliament made a series of decisions (Sarıkaya, 2017). The first of these reactions was a declaration calling the obligatory parties of Budapest Memorandum, 1994 to act in line with the agreement (Sarıkaya, 2017). Budapest Memorandum acknowledged Ukraine's current borders and territorial integrity and was signed by USA, United Kingdom, Russia, Northern Ireland and Ukraine. The second was a note to the Crimean Parliament to apply changes to the decisions taken in line with the Constitution of Ukraine (Sarıkaya, 2017). Finally, the third was to abolish the authority of Crimean Parliament when the warnings were unanswered (Sarıkaya, 2017). Ukraine could not get the expected reactions from international community and Crimean Parliament. Paramilitary forces were taking action in the peninsula, blockading the military bases, the parliament and there was substantial evidence that these were in fact Russian soldiers operating under cover, which later on was allegedly confirmed by Russian President Vladimir Putin (Khomami, 2015).

Turkey also reacted to the developments diplomatically. In March 2nd, 2014, the foreign minister Ahmet Davutoglu stated that Turkey will do everything for Crimea to stay as a part of Ukraine ("Türkiye, Kırım'ın Ukrayna'da kalması için her şey yapacak", 2014). In March 6<sup>th</sup>, 2014, when the referendum decision was declared from the occupied Crimea, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkey issued a press release regarding the events occurring. The press release provides Turkey's stance on the issue very clearly. Turkey defended that the crisis in Ukraine should be resolved according to international law and democratic principles ("No: 77, 6 Mart 2014, Kırım'daki Son Gelişmeler Hk.", 2014). In addition to that, Turkey expressed that the problem in Crimea concerns him due to the national ties with Crimean Tatars and warned the parties that the problems would not be solved by the referendum ("No: 77, 6 Mart 2014, Kırım'daki Son Gelişmeler Hk.", 2014). On the contrary, Turkey was of the opinion that the referendum would destabilize not only Crimea and Ukraine but the region itself ("No: 77, 6 Mart 2014, Kırım'daki Son Gelişmeler Hk.", 2014).

No matter the efforts, a referendum under the shadows of guns was held in Crimea in 16 March 2014. The final decision on the referendum was allegedly 96.6% in favor of joining Russia. Just after the referendum, in Georgiyevski Hall, where tsars would give victorious speeches back in time, Putin signed an agreement with the head of Crimean Parliament, Crimean prime-minister and mayor of Akyar declaring the joining of Crimea in Russia as a new federal territory (Sarıkaya, 2017). It is doubtless that this was a turning point in history of Turkish foreign policy towards Crimea/Ukraine.

#### **4.2.2. Turkish Foreign Policy towards Ukraine after the Annexation of Crimea**

##### **4.2.2.1. Turkish Foreign Policy with regard to International Law**

Examining the Crimean issue in line with international law, Sohret (2017) concludes that it is possible to observe almost of kind types of state establishment. What is most appealing to the eye in the Crimean issue is the velocity of the events considering that within a month, a state was formed out of nowhere and dissolved five days after its foundation. (Sohret, 2017). Although Crimea's unilateral declaration of separation is against domestic and international law, it can be assessed in terms of the principle of self-determination (Sohret, 2017). Turkey, on the other hand, is against the use the concept of self-determination's realization carelessly, especially when it has destabilizing effect (Basturk, 2017). Besides, it is apparent that Turkey regards the referendum held in Crimea as having a destabilizing effect not only in Crimea but also in the region. Therefore, Turkey stresses the protection of territorial integrity of Ukraine.

Secondly, separating and declaring independence, Crimea violated Ukraine's territorial integrity and in conclusion, another state was formed from within a state (Sohret, 2017). Turkey's reaction, at this point, is a natural consequence of looking for the answers for the international problems within the framework of international law and norms (Basturk, 2017). Being integrated in the international system through various international organizations and alliances, Turkey's stance on international problems has always been in line with international law and multilateral solutions. However, Crimea's status for Sohret is yet more complicated than that and the situation also has the characteristic of voluntary absorption (Sohret, 2017). This second state formed from within Ukraine



demanded to be a part of Russia one day after its independence and five days after, Russia accepted the request (Sohret, 2017). Thus, a state whose establishment and status before international law is controversial voluntarily dissolved itself five days after its foundation (Sohret, 2017). In case the concept of voluntary absorption is accepted when evaluating the Crimean issue, the questions arise. It might be argued that such rapid transformations in a state structure implicates foreign intervention, if not manipulation. The first stage of the chain of events, Crimea's unilateral independence from Ukraine, might be regarded as only a move for sounding the international community's reaction. The second stage, on the other hand, is acknowledged as a *fait accompli* by many countries and rejected (Christakis, 2015). These assessments complicate the situation for Turkey even more. In case of an acceptance of a foreign manipulation, Turkey is forced to act more concretely due to its foreign policy principles and the existence of Crimean Tatar diaspora. If not in this direction, such possibility only strengthens Turkey's stance on Ukraine's territorial integrity and disproving of the developments.

It is also possible to assess the situation as rejoining the main land since Crimea was a part of Russian Empire and USSR and it was a part of Ukraine only in the last 60 years (Sohret, 2017). Accepting this view, however, would start an unending debate because of the vagueness of where the main land is for peoples living in Crimea. Besides, there is a great deal of grievance against Russia among Ukrainians and Crimean Tatars in Crimea due to the forced relocations and oppressive policies they have been subjected to during the Soviet regime. Therefore, this view is the most rigid one among others since it is more likely to create tensions and former hostilities into the daylight. Although this is the case, unfortunately, the view that Crimea has always been Russia is the most appealing view voiced by Russian state (Kendall, 2014) and Russian people (Suslov, 2015). This is yet another factor that contributes in Turkey's view on Crimea. Let alone accepting that Crimea has always been Russia, since the foundation of the Republic, Turkey has not pursued a foreign policy that is in favor of irredentism. In fact, Turkey viewed rejecting irredentism as one of the basics of its foreign policy, which ensures the stability at home and in the world. Therefore, Russia's opinion does not provide a ground for Turkey to recognize Crimea as part of Russia or compromise in this issue whatsoever.

#### **4.2.2.2. Turkish Foreign Policy with regard to its Relations with Other Actors**

Crimean peninsula's location has an effect on Black Sea regional security and stability, requiring Russia, Ukraine and Turkey to cooperate (Beybulayeva, 2015). Therefore, Crimean crisis should be analyzed with regional lenses (Beybulayeva, 2015). In terms of regional politics, then, it is noteworthy that Russia acquired a very strategic location in Black Sea, which increased its military bases and continental shelf, namely, its influence in the region. Turkey's proactive foreign policy of the last years did not turn out to be expected in Crimean issue (Sarıkaya, 2017). Although the official declarations are in favor of Ukraine's territorial integrity and protection of the rights of Crimean Tatars, it is observed that Turkey positioned itself in line with its energy dependency on Russia by not joining the sanctions (Sarıkaya, 2017). When repeatedly inquired about the Crimean crisis in TGNA by the opposition parties ("Dönem 24, Yasama Yılı 4, 69 uncu Birleşim", 2014, "Dönem 24, Yasama Yılı 4, 70 inci Birleşim", 2014, "Dönem 24, Yasama Yılı 4, 71 inci Birleşim", 2014) the government replied via the vice-prime minister of the AK Party government Emrullah İşler that Turkey had been doing everything the conjuncture allows it in order to protect the rights of the Crimean Tatars. Reminding that Turkey had very good relations with Russia at the moment, he stated that Turkey would continue to put efforts for this purpose ("Dönem 24, Yasama Yılı 4, 74 üncü Birleşim", 2014). The prime-minister of the time Ahmet Davutoğlu also spoke on the issue in TGNA stating that Turkey hoped that the problem would be solved within the principle of Ukraine's territorial integrity, however, Turkey's priority was ensuring that the indigenous people of Crimean Peninsula, Crimean Tatars would maintain their safety, prosperity and rights ("Dönem 24, Yasama Yılı 4, 134 üncü Birleşim", 2014). At this point, the emphasis that the government puts on the conjuncture and its priorities have implications. It can be argued that the asymmetrical economic interdependence in favor of Russia in Russian-Turkish relations crucially limited Turkey's capacity to act in Crimean matter. As noted above, Turkey's attitude to the annexation of Crimea is based on principle of territorial integrity of Ukraine. Although, Russia's aggressive behavior violates this principle, Turkey opposes such policy without directly condemning Russia (Kohen, 2014). Turkey's incapacity was not limited to not condemning Russia directly, it also did not join the sanctions embarked upon Russia. Along with these drawbacks, however, Turkey continued to support Kiev's position in discourse. In his meeting with his counterpart in

Kiev, President Erdogan stated that he and Poroshenko had agreed to work together in finalizing the occupation of Crimea ("Erdoğan: Rusya'nın Ukrayna'ya girmesi 'Güçlüyüm, öyleyse haklıyım' mantığıdır", 2016).

In fact, for Turkey, Crimean issue is a matter of foreign policy that goes beyond Crimean Tatars (Sarıkaya, 2017). The good relations with Ukraine, aligning with NATO's and the West's expectations, the rivalry between Turkey and Russia in Black Sea, Russia's expansionist moves towards its neighbors are the issue that are noteworthy (Sarıkaya, 2017). Let us examine these issues in more depth. As explained in Chapter 1, the economic relations between Turkey and Ukraine are having its golden age and trade volume between the parties is aimed to be increased drastically in the years ahead. Although this can provide Turkey a motivation to align with Ukraine, and indeed it does, Turkey's economic relations significantly entails the trade and energy dependence with Russia as well. Especially the new projects of Akkuyu nuclear plant and Turkish Stream in cooperation with Russia are highly important for Turkey's prospect in terms of both its energy policies and economy. Therefore, Turkey is not able to make maneuvers that might endanger its economic relations with Russia, as it happened in the downing of Russian jet within Turkish border. Despite that this is the case, it does not mean that Turkey is totally bounded by its relations with Russia. Turkey still improves its economic relations with Ukraine in a great extent and it is likely that both parties will benefit from maintaining their cooperation without resentments over policy choices in near future.

Secondly, Turkey's policy on Crimean crisis is related to that Turkey is a NATO member. In other words, it is unlikely that Turkey would have a radically different view from its NATO allies on an important regional problem (Basturk, 2017). However, Basturk (2017) argues that, although Turkey has sided with Ukraine's territorial integrity and refused the referendum held in Crimea that paved the way for Russian annexation, it cannot be concluded that Turkey's foreign policy towards Ukraine is a pro-Western one. Such proposition can be justified on two grounds (Basturk, 2017): Firstly, Turkey's reaction to the crisis that began in Yanukovich's administration was not aligned with its Western allies; and secondly, Russia's move on Crimea was regarded by Turkey with an attention to Russian interests in Ukraine. Basturk's analysis, at this point, disregards that Turkey

cannot be indifferent to acquirement of a very strategic location by its rival that might change whole Black Sea politics and destabilize the whole world, let alone the region. Besides, Turkey has always had reflexive reactions towards Russia's expansionist maneuvers. Turkish foreign policy has always tended to be cautious towards Russia, especially expansionist moves of Russia, due to the traumas of the last two centuries in the minds of the founders. Although Soviet Russia cooperated with the founders of the Republic of Turkey, the perceptions changed in the Cold War era and one of the major reasons for Turkey to become a part of NATO was fear of a possible Soviet invasion. Therefore, if Turkey puts up with an expansionist Russia, the answer lies in realpolitik. In other words, its Turkey's incapacity to countermove due to economic ties that are of vital importance, rather than its lack of commitment to the Western alliance. If Turkey did not follow a multilateral foreign policy and cut off the ties with Russia and join the sanctions, it would still not generate the desired consequence on the Crimean issue because of that the crisis was too global for Turkey to affect by itself. Compartmentalizing its relations with Russia, however, Turkey at least benefits from its economic cooperation with Russia and still can hold its rightful position in Crimean crisis.

Annexation of Crimea, however, surely troubles, Turkish foreign policy (Kuscu, 2014). On the one hand, strong economic and trade relations and energy dependence with Russia, and on the other hand, trying to have a more active policy about Crimean Tatars and having solid steps towards Russia as a NATO member (Kuscu, 2014) place a strain on Turkey's choices. For example, along with stressing Ukraine's territorial integrity and the role of international law, Turkish foreign minister Davutoglu and prime-minister Erdogan stated that the solution for the crisis is, before anything else, an obligation of Ukrainians (Basturk, 2017). They also emphasized that there must be created a ground on which Russians, Ukrainians and Tatars in Crimea peacefully coexist (Basturk, 2017). Despite the fact that restoring Crimean Tatars status within Ukraine would be preferable for both Ankara and Crimean Tatars, considering that it might be unlikely to happen, Turkey might have a role in ensuring Tatars status within Russia (Kohen, 2014). This is, actually, a point voiced by one of the representatives of the Crimean diaspora in Turkey in the interview the author conducted with relevance to this study.

#### **4.2.2.3. Crimean Tatar Diaspora in Turkey and Turkish Foreign Policy towards Ukraine after the Annexation of Crimea**

Diasporas play a role in bridging two countries politically and culturally (Diamanti-Karanou, 2015). Being de facto cultural ambassadors of their homeland country in the host country, they have a potential to influence foreign policy decision making as well as they have a voice in civil society (Diamanti-Karanou, 2015). It is doubtless that Crimean Tatars living in Turkey, with a population of 3-5 million, which coincides around 4% of the whole population, do have a potential to affect Turkey's foreign policy choices regarding themselves. Regarding them as an actor in foreign policy decision making, two semi-structured interviews with two major diaspora unions were conducted by the author. Two unions differ in their opinion on Crimea's future, therefore, it is not possible to talk about a united diaspora, although there is no data on the level of their effectiveness. However, bringing views of the both groups would provide a healthier analysis. The questions of the semi-structured interviews are provided in the appendix at the end of the work.

The first interview was conducted with Mükremin Şahin, head of Crimean Association. Crimean Association was established in 1993 and owns 25 offices throughout Turkey and 2 representatives abroad ("Hakkımızda", 2017). Şahin stated that the association and Crimean Tatar diaspora in Turkey rejected Russian 'invasion' (Şahin, 2017). Working in coordination with Crimean News Agency, Crimean Tatar National Assembly and World Crimean Tatar Kurultai, Crimean Association reaches out the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Turkey's main public diplomacy institutions such as TİKA and Administration for Turks Living Abroad and Relative Communities (Şahin, 2017). The main policy of the association is very clear. They reject that Crimea is a part of Russia and prefer Ukrainian rule over Russian rule (Şahin, 2017). The preference stems from not hatred towards a whole nation but historical grievances and a choice over civilization, democracy and human rights (Şahin, 2017). Şahin points out that Soviet Russia's policies of de-Tatarization of Crimea and assimilation remains in Crimean Tatar collective memory (Şahin, 2017). Witnessing that Russian Federation continues with these policies, Crimean Tatars are convinced that they do not desire a future within Russian state (Şahin, 2017).

It is crucial here to note the events occurred in Crimea since the Russian annexation. After the annexation of Crimea, Putin signed a decree on Crimean Tatars to come back home and that Russia will provide the minority rights of them (Kuscu, 2014). Besides, the law appointing Crimea as a part of Russia suggests the official language of Crimea as Russian, Ukrainian and Crimean Tatar language (Sarıkaya, 2017). Although these steps were at first sight looked like a positive development, shortly after the decree it was apparent that optimistic expectations were false (Sarıkaya, 2017).

After the referendum in Crimea, Crimean Tatar National Library in the name of Ismail Gaspirali was closed, Crimean Tatar National Assembly was raided by FSB members and personal belongings of Mustafa Kirimoglu was seized, Crimean Tatar National Assembly was forcibly moved out of the building it had been using for 15 years and all the assets and accounts of Crimea Foundation, the owner of the building, were frozen (Sarıkaya, 2017). It should be remembered that Ismail Gaspirali Library and Crimean Tatar National Assembly were among the projects to which TİKA contributed. In addition, Mustafa Kirimoglu and the President of the Crimean Tatar National Assembly Refat Chubarov were prohibited to enter Crimea (Sarıkaya, 2017). The prohibition later on was extended to Crimean News Agency and other important political figures (Sarıkaya, 2017). Russia is forcing Crimean Tatars either to abandon their land or bow their authority (Sarıkaya, 2017). Facing suppression, many Crimean Tatars worried about their future and moved to Kiev and Kherson (Sarıkaya, 2017). Kirimoglu stated that 17000 Crimean Tatars left Crimea since the occupation (Sarıkaya, 2017).

In fact, these developments grants Şahin legitimacy on his ideas that they are not in a position to make a choice over two countries under which they will live but they have to choose between on the one hand democracy, human rights, international law and on the other hand, an imperialist and offensive dictatorship (Şahin, 2017). Despite its capacity to act, for now, Turkey appears to be on pro-Ukrainian Crimean Tatar diaspora's side. The Russian annexation of Crimea not only violates the principles and norms that Turkey believes in, it also invalidates years of efforts Turkey put in rehabilitation of Crimean Tatars. If not for the substantial economic benefits at the stake, a counter move from Turkey could have been very much likely. Once the asymmetry in the economic

interdependence with Russia is tackled, with Crimean Tatar diaspora's pressure, more concrete steps from Turkey on the Crimean issue might still be expected.

The second interview conducted by the author was with Ünver Sel, the head of Crimean Development Foundation and Federation of Crimean Tatar Culture Associations (KTDF). KTDF was established in 2007 and had been conducting cultural activities until the Ukrainian crisis (Sel, 2017). Sel proposes that Crimea was going through a historical process during the Ukrainian crisis and somebody had to take an initiative. Because the leaders of the Crimean Tatar community in Crimea chose to align with Kiev, there was a need for a Crimean Tatar politics to negotiate with Russians at the table (Sel, 2017). Thus, KTDF took an initiative to start a relative dialogue with Russian state (Sel, 2017). In 2014, in a press conference held in Akmescit, KTDF recognized annexation of Crimea by Russia with a reservation on the openings towards Crimean Tatars that will be implemented by the Russian state (Sel, 2017). Sel claims that the decree signed by Putin for the rehabilitation of Crimean Tatars was a move that was expected by Crimean Tatars from the Ukrainian state for so long (Sel, 2017). In case Ukraine provided such decree for Crimean Tatars, perhaps, the process of joining Russia would not even be realized (Sel, 2017). Ukraine found Crimea within its borders without putting any effort for it and did not appreciate its value (Sel, 2017).

A similar view is voiced by some academics as well. Turan (2010) highlights that Ukraine had been dragging its feet since its foundation to recognize the Crimean Tatars as the indigenous people of Crimea and grant them the rights they are entitled to according to international treaties. At this point, Sel argues that Ukrainian state did not care for the rights of Crimean Tatars when they applied for openings and Ukraine replied the applications that it was Russia's obligation to provide rehabilitative services for Crimean Tatars as the successor of the Soviet Union (Sel, 2017). Now that Crimean Tatars found an interlocutor to their demands, they choose to negotiate with Russia (Sel, 2017). It is also noteworthy that, in 2010, President Yanukovich unilaterally made crucial changes in the mechanisms of dialogue between Crimean Tatars and the Ukrainian state, transferring most of the initiative to the president himself (Yılmaz, 2015).

In addition, Sarikaya draws attention to Crimean Tatars' loyalty for Ukrainian state. Although Crimean Tatar National Assembly put effort not to go against the principle of territorial integrity of Ukraine since Ukraine's independence, it could not save itself from being exposed to the negative effects of the identity-based and geopolitical rivalry between Ukraine and Russia (Sarikaya, 2017). Furthermore, Crimean Tatars did not support the separatist aspirations of Russians in Crimea, in effect, they acted against them (Sarikaya, 2017). Despite this fact, Ukraine disregarded the issues of restoring the political rights and living conditions of Crimean Tatars until the occupation (Sarikaya, 2017). Until 20 March 2014, Crimean Tatars were of a minority status within Ukrainian law. In March 20<sup>th</sup>, 2014, Ukrainian Parliament declared Crimean Tatars as autochthonous people of Crime (Sarikaya, 2017). It is noteworthy that Ukraine did not make a move towards this direction until it practically lost Crimea despite the continuous demand over the years (Sarikaya, 2017).

The views of Sel, Turan and Sarikaya seem to be valid and grant them rightfulness. However, Ukraine's disregard for Crimean Tatars' rights over the years does not guarantee that Russia will provide those rights. After all, there has been many reports of violation of human rights and oppression, no matter that Sel argues that Russia does not suppress Crimean Tatars at the moment; on the contrary, it works for their rehabilitation (Sel, 2017). These violations are also documented by a committee conveyed by Turkey to Crimea in order to report the situation of the peninsula after the annexation (Yılmaz, 2015). If any opposition to Russian rule in Crimea will be crushed and excluded from the civil rights entitled on them by the state, then, there cannot be a discussion of improvement of their conditions. Ukraine's attitude, in this regard, was more moderate and even though there were limitations for its contribution to the situation of Crimean Tatars, with Turkey's help, there was a substantial progress.

Nevertheless, it seems that KTDF still puts efforts for the rehabilitation of Crimean Tatars under Russian state. Almost for four years, KTDF has been in coordination with Russian Federal Government and the government of Crimean Republic in order to increase the activities of developing the conditions of Crimean Tatars in Crimea (Sel, 2017). These activities are comprised of accommodation for homeless Crimean Tatars, employment,



opening quotas for Crimean Tatars in bureaucracy and politics (Sel, 2017). Sel has been voicing requests of the Crimean Tatars from the Russian state in many platforms (Sel, 2017). The last time, in a public diplomacy meeting in Yalta, he listed their requests in three terms: The national language, housing and representations issues (Sel, 2017). Firstly, Crimean Tatars demand the dissemination of Crimean Tatar language (Sel, 2017). There should be more media instruments broadcasting in Crimean Tatar language and all the names of the locations throughout Crimea should be used together with its Russian counterpart (Sel, 2017). Secondly, Crimean Tatars historically have lived in separate houses. They demand that their homes and lands are returned to them and even to those who are in exile at the moment and will return to homeland one day (Sel, 2017). Finally, they demand that Crimean Tatars are represented within the Republic of Crimea and Russian Federation with regard to their proportion in the population (Sel, 2017). Once these urgent problems are resolved, it will open the door for other solutions as well (Sel, 2017).

In addition to these efforts, Sel established Crimea Development Foundation. In 2015, there was a need for an organization that would work between Turkey and Russia regarding the Crimean issue (Sel, 2017). So, Sel applied for Crimea Development Foundation to Turkey's related authorities (Sel, 2017). The process was lingered due to the jet crisis between Turkey and Russia, however, Sel took an initiative for reconciliation and got Ankara and Moscow in contact (Sel, 2017). Sel considers the authorization of the establishment of Crimean Development Foundation in 2016 as an acknowledgement of their efforts and at the moment KTDF and Crimean Development Foundation operates together (Sel, 2017).

The part of the Crimean Tatar that Sel represents regrets that Turkey withdrew all its attention from Crimea after 2014 (Sel, 2017). They hope that Turkey will talk their problems with Russia and when Crimean Tatars negotiate with them, they do it by Turkey's support (Sel, 2017). Sel argues that their problems will not be solved by negotiating with Kiev (Sel, 2017). Although they do not expect that Turkey will recognize Crimea as Russia, they offer that it can continue its trade relations with Crimea and keep its aid for cultural issues (Sel, 2017).

Sel is optimistic that Turkey will change its stance on the Crimean issue. They are of course in contact with Turkish officials and they inform decision makers on the issues that can be beneficial for Turkey (Sel, 2017). There is a positive feedback to KTDF and Crimean Development Foundation's lobbying activities and this implies that Turkey's stance on Crimea will change (Sel, 2017). Just like Turkey negotiates Iraq crisis with Baghdad, it will discuss Crimean issue with Moscow too (Sel, 2017).

The views of the Crimean Tatar diaspora in Turkey appear to be confrontational. This case makes the odds for the influence that Crimean Tatar diaspora will make on Turkish foreign policy towards Crimean crisis more complicated. On the one hand, Turkey's principles guiding its current stance, such as international law, territorial integrity and dialogue, coincide with the views of Crimean Association. On the other hand, Turkey had been somewhat the guarantor of the conditions of Crimean Tatars living in Crimea for long (Guler, 2016). Therefore, Turkey tries to continue its support for Crimean Tatars and it does it via Kiev. In case it does not collaborate with Russia, this might limit the desired outcome of Turkey's Crimean Tatar policies and turn into a project of rehabilitation for internally displaced Crimean Tatars rather than restoring the consequences of the 1944 exile.

It is also important to point out that Turkey's changing its attitude towards the annexation of Crimea would be a total renouncement of its former policies. Turkey for long worked with Crimean Tatar National Assembly and contributed in its capacity building such as in the establishment Crimean News Agency. Even after the annexation of Crimea, Turkey convinced Russia to release some of the important political figures of Crimean Tatars from Russian prisons (Vynokurov, 2017). Therefore, abandoning its policy aligned with Crimean Tatar National Assembly should be regarded as not a matter of a government choice but a state policy.

Turkey also supports the leader of Crimean Tatar community and member of Ukrainian Parliament, Mustafa Kirimoglu. In August 20<sup>th</sup>, 2014, Mustafa Kirimoglu was appointed as the authority responsible for Crimean matters by the President Petro Poroshenko

(Sarıkaya, 2017). The duties of Kirimoglu was specified as to monitor the constitutional rights of Crimean Tatars, to propose suggestions in order to prevent violations on that matter and contributing in the preparation of regulations and decrees about protecting the ethnic, cultural, religious and lingual authenticity of Crimean Tatars and improving their rights (Sarıkaya, 2017). In addition, in October 15<sup>th</sup>, 2015, Kirimoglu was granted with the medal of “National Hero of Ukraine” (Sarıkaya, 2017).

Turan (2010) makes an interesting observation about Kirimoglu’s leadership before the Crimean crisis and proposes that no matter Crimean Tatars are led by the pacifist charismatic leader Mustafa Kirimoglu, the Crimean Tatar issue is a fragile one and requires careful treatment (Turan, 2010). This is because of that Kirimoglu is old and in case of a less moderate leadership, Crimean Tatars might be another source of instability for Ukraine and this would jeopardize Turkish-Ukrainian relations (Turan, 2010). Now that Crimea is de facto Russian soil, the possibility for a less moderate leadership might be considered as more than ever. In fact, a Crimean Tatar Battalion is already established in the border between Ukraine and occupied Crimea ("Noman Çelebicihan taburunun ilk fotoğrafları", 2016). Although Kirimoglu expressed that they did not consider military solutions for Crimea’s emancipation ("Kırım’ın kurtuluşu için askeri yöntemler düşünmüyoruz...", 2016), there is still a risk of a conflict in the region and this time it will have a possibility to jeopardize Turkish-Russian relations.

All things considered, an abrupt change in Turkey’s stance on Crimean issue does not seem to be likely no matter the diaspora effect considered. This is firstly, because that diaspora within itself has diverging views, although Şahin (2017) argues that it is only 1% of Crimean Tatar diaspora in Turkey who recognize Russian rule over Crimea, and secondly, Turkey has invested in its current stance for so long that abandoning it will be a major overleap of its efforts. However, Turkey, at least, might try to prevent the crisis to become a hot conflict via balancing between Russia, Ukraine and Crimean Tatar community.

## **CHAPTER 5: RUSSIA AS AN INFLUENCING ACTOR IN TURKEY'S FOREIGN POLICY TOWARDS UKRAINE**

Examining Turkish foreign policy towards Ukraine without considering Russia as a determining factor would not provide the whole picture. Such a conclusion stems from three proposals. First, Russia owns an outweighing power in the Black Sea region, which Turkey has been putting efforts to balance. Second, Russia has always been attentive to Ukraine's foreign relations and tried to maintain Ukraine in its area of influence. Third, the economic interdependence between Turkey and Russia is an asymmetrical one and in favor of Russian economy. This situation constraints Turkey's ability to maneuver in issues involving both parties in Ukrainian case as exemplified in Crimean crisis. The rest of this chapter analyzes Russia as a considerable actor in shaping Turkey's foreign policy towards Ukraine on the grounds above.

### **5.1. Russia's regional politics**

Russia aims to broad its influence on post-Soviet countries as much as possible and prepares a foreign policy to keep other countries out of this area of influence, so that it is going to provide its security, and use the resources happened to be here for itself only (Yıldırım, 2010). This would explain Russia's attention on Ukraine's foreign relations, as well as its opposition to Ukraine's inclination towards the West. The best examples of Russia's attempts to put Ukraine in line with its grand strategy might be the gas crisis in 2008, undermining the free trade agreement between Ukraine and EU in 2013 and the annexation of Crimea. With regard to Ukraine, Kushnir (2017) proposes that Russian interests in Black Sea region are as such:

- Establishing a buffer security zone on Russian's southern border
- Keeping post-Soviet countries in line with Russian influence and interests, especially blocking the way for them to engage in NATO and EU
- Increasing its leadership in the region and in the world in general

In Ukrainian case, a possible joining of Ukraine to NATO seems to the red line for Russia. While in 2008, when Russia was resisting against the US domination in the international system in a less extend, Russian deputy prime minister had warned that if Ukraine joined NATO, Russia would cut off all the defense industrial ties with Ukraine ("Russia: No defense industry ties if Ukraine joins NATO", 2008). After some years, however,

especially when the annexation of Crimea was appeased by the West and Russia proved itself to be a key player in the resolution of Syrian civil war, Russia's warnings increased its sharpness and implied that Russia would consider such a move from Ukraine as an act of war (Mansfield, 2017). All these demonstrate Russia's level of seriousness when it comes to Ukraine.

However, Ukraine's westernization is not only a matter of geopolitics for Russia. Ongoing Russian policies are related to current identity transformation of Russia. The report issued by Kremlin on Russia's National Identity Transformation and New Foreign Policy Doctrine clearly states that Russia's policies are not shaped around solely politics or economics but restoring the so-called Great Russian Civilization (Kushnir, 2017). This is an issue that has been raised very often in the last years in order to make sense of Russian moves in the international arena. Even Putin himself called the eastern part of Ukraine as Novorossiia (New Russia) in a speech he gave on TV (Robins-Early, 2014). The same speech is comprised of implications not only of Russia's irredentist tendencies towards Ukraine, but also Putin's idealization of tsarist times of Russia.

## **5.2. Turkish-Russian relations**

There have been a lot of ups and downs in the history of Turkish-Russian relations. Therefore, it is possible to say that nature of these relations is adversarial (Suchkov, 2017). However, both parties also deal with issues effectively and their crisis management is good (Suchkov, 2017). The effectiveness of the crisis management of the parties, in fact, stems from the compartmentalization of their bilateral relations. In other words, they isolate the issues on which they agree and the issues they are in conflict with each other. This is, perhaps, the most influential strategy that keeps the Turkish-Russian relations work on a fine basis. For example, the crisis of Russian jet shootdown, which was one of the moments where Russian-Turkish relations got most tense, was resolved on these terms. Both parties were able to find the solution in isolating the economic relations and bilateral trade issues from matters of Syrian war (Hume, 2016).

Although this is the case, Cornell questions the effectiveness of compartmentalization with regard to the relations between the West and Russia. Immensely important question that Cornell raises concerning compartmentalization is the possibility of

compartmentalization when the issues are very crucial for both parties and the compatibility of the parties' will to separate the issues (Cornell, 2016). Indeed, the economic relations and trade issues between Russia and Turkey are vital for both parties. Thus, this constitutes the major motivation for the parties to isolate their agreements and disagreements. However, when a disagreement on more crucial issues for one of the parties occur, the matters of national security, for example, it might not be likely to maintain the status of compartmentalization without a compromise from one of the parties.

In the case of Turkish-Russian relations, it can be argued that compartmentalization has not been constrained by the conflict of parties' interests over Ukraine. Regarding Russian reactions towards Ukraine's convergence with the West, Ukraine sometimes appears to be a matter of national security for Russia. However, Turkey has not made a step towards Ukraine, which would jeopardize its relations with Russia. The most demonstrative events within the scope of Turkish-Russian-Ukrainian triangle would be the Ukrainian crisis and the annexation of Crimea in 2014. In fact, Basturk argues that the Turkish government's approach to its relations with Ukraine is separate from its relations with Russia but Turkey's reaction to the annexation of Crimea was not regardless of Russian interests in Ukraine (Basturk, 2017). Since Turkey attaches importance to its strategic relations with Russia, it acknowledges Russia's interests in the region and thus did not officially and directly condemn the Russian annexation of Crimea (Basturk, 2017). This is something of a crucial importance when analyzing Turkey's attitude towards the Ukrainian crisis (Basturk, 2017). In addition to that, Turkey did not follow the sanctions imposed on Russia by EU and the US. Davutoglu even stated that they would not let another power-most probably referring to the Western powers, to create a Turkish-Russian conflict over Crimea (Basturk, 2017). Davutoglu also was of the opinion that the Western powers along with Ukraine should try to meet on a mutually acceptable compromise with Russia rather than trying to isolate it (Basturk, 2017).

The relatively softer attitude that Turkey took in Crimean crisis is demonstrative of not only the asymmetrical economic interdependence in favor of Russia between the parties but also Turkey's careful approach in regional issues, without which Black Sea politics

could have turned out to be more conflicting. This approach can also be interpreted within the concept of multidimensional/multilayered foreign policy. Multidimensional-Multilayered foreign policy is one of the main principles of AK Party foreign policy (Yesiltas, Balci, 2013). It is the most salient discourse and practice that can be observable in AK Party's foreign policy activities and refers to having simultaneous and harmonious relations with different international actors (Yesiltas, Balci, 2013). Thus, being a part of the Western alliance did not mean for Turkey to follow the exact same steps with the West in the Ukrainian crisis. Such an understanding provides Turkey with a more space to maneuver in the international arena as it enabled Turkey to maintain its working relations with Russia while allying in the Ukrainian crisis with the West. Turkey's relations with regional and global actors are not alternative to each other but they are complementary (Yesiltas, Balci, 2013). In other words, Turkish foreign policy is not restrained to one country or region regarding actors (Yesiltas, Balci, 2013).

The principle of multidimensional/multilayered foreign policy resonates in the objective of making Turkey a center state in the international system. It is a necessary outcome of Turkey's active foreign policy that is to make it a center state (Yesiltas, Balci, 2013). The concept of center state is used as opposed to the bridge metaphor, which was widely used in the former understanding of foreign policy (Yesiltas, Balci, 2013). The bridge metaphor presupposed that Turkey was a connection point between the West and the East. The concept of center state was coined on the grounds that this metaphor did not explain Turkey's role as an actor with independent existence in the international system (Yesiltas, Balci, 2013). Thus, acting multilaterally, Turkey is not an object of transmission between the East and the West but an actor with an ability to transform the international system and become one of the centers of it (Yesiltas, Balci, 2013).

This approach is applied to various issues (Yesiltas, Balci, 2013) and Turkey's relations with Russia can be perceived with these lenses as well. After all, Turkey defines its military, economic and political relations with Russia as multidimensional enlarged partnership (Yesiltas, Balci, 2013). The implications that multidimensional enlarged partnership between Russia and Turkey provides for the understanding of Turkey's foreign policy towards Ukraine are firstly, that Turkey's relations with Ukraine is not an

alternative for its relations with Russia, secondly, for Turkey, enhancing its relations with both Russia and Ukraine serves for similar purposes; making Turkey a center state, and lastly, Turkey's orientation towards the West is not relevant in this case because Turkey's foreign policy moves are towards itself, rather than between the West and the East.

### **5.3. Energy politics among Turkey, Ukraine and Russia**

Russia depends on transit lines for its gas reserves to reach markets. Very important for Russia is the Druzhba pipeline, the longest pipeline with 4000 km length and the southern part of this pipeline goes to Europe through Ukraine (Yıldırım, 2010). It has been one of the aims of Russian energy politics to put an end to its dependency. However, it failed in its main energy policy goals, which were either to break off its dependency on transit lines or create enduring relations so that minimizing it (Proedrou, 2017). Creating enduring problems with Ukraine, the major transit country for Russia since %85 of Russian export to Europe and Turkey passed through Ukraine in 2000s, has been an unreachable issue for Russia. Therefore, since the Orange Revolution, there has been proposals to create alternatives to Ukrainian transit (Proedrou, 2017). Thus, Turkey as a potential transit country turned out to be on the agenda.

In fact, for Russia, Turkey and Ukraine are not very stable, reliable or profitable trade partners (Proedrou, 2017). However, they consist of an important portion of Russian exported gas (Proedrou, 2017). Such dependence on transit states makes demand for Russian gas less secure in terms of actual flows and reliability (Proedrou, 2017). Still, the project of Turkish stream was supposed to help Russia cut this risk off and EU's non-accommodating stance (Proedrou, 2017). However, freezing of Russian-Turkish relations since 2015 ended this project and left Russia with no alternative but Ukraine again (Proedrou, 2017). Thus, Russia's security of demand has two blows; unending transit risk and potential harm in profits due to the problems among Russia, Ukraine and Turkey (Proedrou, 2017).

European Union, in fact, has been trying to tackle the demand for Russian gas and this objective is about to be reached via Southern Gas Corridor project. Turkish Stream project, on the other hand, is under construction again after the Turkish-Russian



rapprochement. The project of Turkish stream, actually, was a convergence of commercial interests and strategic goals for Russia (Proedrou, 2017). In other words, Russia aimed at reaching out the expanding Turkish market and at the same time, cut off the ties with contending Ukraine and ending gas trade by 2019 (Proedrou, 2017). Considering the realization of the Southern Gas Corridor project, there is, yet, another motivation for Russia to complete the Turkish Stream; to counter the Southern Gas Corridor project and maintain its profits in the European market by reaching out the southern Europe.

Yet, it will be costly for Russia to actualize these goals. In case Turkish Stream project takes place, Russia would be giving Turkey a great opportunity to be a significant energy hub and acquire much more influence (Proedrou, 2017). Therefore, the project which originally aimed at breaking off the dependence on Ukrainian transit might be counted as not very well calculated by Russian side (Proedrou, 2017). Losing Ukraine as a transit line to Europe, Russia still needs to transport its gas to Europe because the less Russia sells its gas to Europe, the more it will get dependent on China in terms of market (Özalp, 2015). Therefore, Turkey might make use of the Ukrainian crisis and replace Ukraine's transit role (Özalp, 2015). The same is valid for European Union as well. If European Union wants to continue with its development, it should support such a role for Turkey (Özalp, 2015).

It can be concluded that the problems between Russia and Ukraine created opportunities for Turkey. Surely, it is expected that Ukraine will be negatively affected by losing its position as a transit country if Russia reaches its objective. However, the enhancing economic and trade relations with Turkey might play a significant role in Ukraine's balancing its loss of income. At least, it is safe to expect that Turkey will not make a move that would economically damage Ukraine; on the contrary, it will act according to the principle of good neighborhood, which was exemplified when Turkey loaned 50 million dollars for the protection of Crimean Tatars and 10 million dollars for Ukraine to cover its budget deficit in 2015 (Zinets, 2015).

Apart from natural gas, nuclear technology transfer is another issue affecting the economic interdependence between Russia and Turkey. The Akkuyu Nuclear Central will be Russia's biggest direct investment in Turkey. Considering this with Turkish Stream project created instead of South Stream, Turkey's position as Russian partner was to be improved as such (Kushnir, 2017). However, unexpected developments such as Turkey's downing of Russian jet in November 2015, a delay on completing Akkuyu nuclear plant by responsible Russian state company Rosatom hindered such prospect (Kushnir, 2017). The rapprochement between the parties positively affected this project as well and the nuclear plant in Akkuyu is expected to be finalized by 2022. The nuclear plant agreement between Turkey and Russia, of course, does not have a direct effect on Turkey's foreign policy towards Ukraine. However, it is one of the main contributions of Turkish-Russian relations on the interdependence between them. The project is of crucial importance for Turkey since it will be the first nuclear plant of the country and will provide a substantial portion of the country's energy need. Therefore, the nuclear plant project is one of the ties between Russia and Turkey that motivate them not to let another possible breakdown of the relations. Although a breakdown in Turkish-Russian relations does not necessarily mean a better prospect for Turkish-Ukrainian relations, it can be proposed that, as long as Russian-Ukrainian relations are at today's level, Turkey's space of maneuver in its relations with Ukraine will be restrained.

#### **5.4. Turkish-Ukrainian Relations vis-à-vis Turkish-Russian Relations**

So far, Russia was examined in the scope of the influence that its relations with Turkey makes on Turkey's relations with Ukraine. This section treats Turkey's relations with Ukraine compared to its relations with Russia. Although Russian-Turkish relations significantly have advanced in the last decade, the two parties often find themselves in opposing camps, which limits the potential of their relations (Proedrou, 2017). Accordingly, Akturk finds the latest rapprochement between Russian and Turkey and that they have working relations surprising and describes Russia and Turkey as "friends in times of weakness and foes in times of strength" (Akturk, 2014). There are two grounds for Akturk for such a proposition.

The first of these grounds is that Turkey's strategic significance stems from that it is one of the few states who can prevent or slow down expansion of Russian influence in the south (Akturk, 2014). The second ground touches upon the conflicts that have deteriorated Turkish-Russian relations, namely, conflicts of Georgia, Syria and Crimea. It is important for Turkey to keep Georgia as an ally because of that it is the only buffer state between itself and Russia, Georgia is the linchpin of Turkey's strategy in the Caucasus and Turkey needs Georgia to lessen its energy dependence on Russia via reaching out to Azerbaijan alternatively (Akturk, 2014). As of Syrian civil war, Akturk (2017) considers it as a typical example of a proxy war between Turkey and Russia. Finally, Crimean conflict distinguishes Turkey and Russia because, let alone it is estimated that there are more Crimean Tatars in Turkey than there are in Crimea at the moment, Crimea is a crucial symbol and culturally significant for Turkey (Akturk, 2014). All in all, considering centuries of conflictual relations in addition to these three essential conflicts, Russia's position has been that of against Turkey's position and strategies, it is surprising that the bilateral relations between the parties are going through a working stage (Akturk, 2014).

In 2010, Dubovik argued that Turkey's ties with Euro-Atlantic alliance were observably getting weaker and weaker. Turkey regards itself as not NATO's team member but a free agent; on the other hand, it was getting closer with Russia (Dubovik, 2010). One reason for this can be found in the nature of Turkey's relations with the West; they are opportunist and conditioned (Dubovik, 2010). Turkey stresses that it is aligned with the West as long as the West is with Turkey in its hard times (Dubovik, 2010). Turkey did not have the support it hoped in its accession to EU and it was even stated by the West that it would never happen (Dubovik, 2010). Accordingly, Suchkov (2017) proposes that the closeness between Russia and Turkey at the time is encouraged by being rejected by the West and as long as they are excluded from transatlantic security framework, they are going to engage in more cooperation.

While one of the reasons for Turkish-Russian closeness is their position vis-à-vis the West, interestingly, Turkey's relations with Ukraine are based on Western values. A Ukraine with Western inclination and stable democracy is what Turkey would prefer to a

Ukraine ideologically and politically alongside Russia (Olcara, 2007). While the first strengthens Turkey's hand in balancing Russian expansionist policies in post-Soviet countries (Black Sea and Caucasus matters the most for Turkey), the latter means an instable Black Sea (Olcara, 2007). This issue was voiced in the Turkish Grand National Assembly by CHP deputy Şükrü Elekdağ in 2003. Elekdağ stated that Europe perceived Ukraine as a European nation and it would not be mistaken to expect that Ukraine will be a candidate for EU membership one day (“Dönem 22, Yasama Yılı 1, 104 üncü Birleşim”, 2003). Accordingly, it is crucial for Turkey that Ukraine will develop solid democratic institutions, tackle its problems with free market economy and become integrated with EU and NATO (“Dönem 22, Yasama Yılı 1, 104 üncü Birleşim”, 2003). Not only Turkey's experiences are likely to be a guide for Ukraine's integration with Euro-Atlantic organizations in this regard (Oncu, 2014b), Turkey would also transfer its experience based on counterbalancing the fears and influence of the alleged Soviet threat (Olcara, 2007). In other words, Ukraine's concerns about Russian interference would be soothed at some point by Turkish alliance (Olcara, 2007). In addition, in case Ukraine and Turkey are fully integrated in European structures, they will become involved in region policy making and might have autonomous roles in Black Sea (Matos, 2000). But, if they will be isolated, they will become objects in the geopolitical power play between Russia and the US (Matos, 2000).

It can be deduced, thus, that Turkey's relations with Ukraine consist of a base that is in line with civilizational choices and grand strategies, while Turkish-Russian partnership is conjunctural and stems from short or middle term interests. In fact, although a continuous share of interests in the bilateral relations does imply strategic partnership, Turkish-Russian relations have not reached that level yet (Çopuroğlu & Karpuzcu, 2017). Two states with serious differences in their foreign policies and clash of interests can become strategic partners only in case of crucial shift of balance in the international system (Çopuroğlu & Karpuzcu, 2017).

Therefore, Turkey and Ukraine have more advantage to enhance its bilateral relations as opposed to Russia (Oncu, 2014b). Russia and Ukraine also have been in a continuous struggle because Russia has always tried to control Ukraine and it is interpreted by

Ukraine as a violation of its sovereignty (Oncu, 2014b). Ukraine's independence, on the other hand, is crucial for Turkey since it is a useful buffer state on the north (Basturk, 2017). Turkey and Ukraine stand with more chance for enhanced cooperation not only compared to their bilateral relations with Russia but their integration with the West as well. Every step towards the West raises attention in Ukraine among Russian supporters and Western supporters cannot fully trust Europe (Oncu, 2014b). On the other hand, there is practically no reason why Turkish-Ukrainian relations will not enhance (Oncu, 2014b). The only potential problem is the Crimean issue, but they so far handled it very cooperatively (Oncu, 2014b). Besides, it might be argued that the annexation of Crimea by Russia brought Ukraine and Turkey closer. In a meeting held in Kiev on April 2017, former Ambassador of Ukraine in Ankara Mr. Korsunskiy made a speech that was of crucial importance considering the insight that it gave about Ukraine's view on Turkish-Russian relation with regard to Turkish-Ukrainian relations. Stating that Turkish-Russian relations should not be examined with a Ukraine factor, he expressed that Turkey is in a stressed position and has difficult decisions to make about which it can act only pragmatically ("Ukrayna-Türkiye ilişkilerinde hiçbir ikilem yok", 2017). While Korsunskiy admits that Ukraine would wish Turkey's participation in sanctions on Russia, he voices Ukraine's empathetic approach and that Ukraine embraces Turkey's effort for the preparation and admittance of UN decree to declare Russia as an aggressor in Crimea ("Ukrayna-Türkiye ilişkilerinde hiçbir ikilem yok", 2017). Kushnir (2017) also proposes that problems in Turkish-Russian relations created an opportunity in Turkey's relations with Ukraine. Ukraine backed Turkey after the jet crisis with Russia stating that Ukraine will provide the stability of agricultural supplies in time of need. In return, Turkey stated its support towards Ukraine on Russian annexation of Crimea and the separatist activities in Donbass region (Kushnir, 2017).

It is safe to state that there is an understanding between Turkey and Ukraine with regard to their position vis-à-vis Russia. Not only Ukraine and Turkey have maintained their level of cooperation, if not increased it, since the Euromaidan and Crimean crises, they developed a sense of acknowledgment in their capabilities. This leads the parties to feel safe considering their relations and it would not be surprise for Ukraine, for example, if Turkey and Russia will enhance their relations as well. After all, the differences of

positions of Moscow and Ankara does not necessarily mean that their relations will worsen (Kohen, 2014). Both parties already had their differences in Syrian crisis anyway and it did not prevent them from developing strong relations (Kohen, 2014). Thus, the differences that Turkey and Russia have in the Ukraine case are unlikely to be an obstacle for further improvement of their relations, nor is it likely that partnership between Turkey and Russia to affect Turkish-Ukrainian relations negatively.

Although this is the case, it is obvious that any development between Turkey and Ukraine, especially that of EU and NATO framework, will disturb Russia and such improvement might trigger offensive Russian response, creating more instability in the region (Kushnir, 2017). However, considering the sanctions Russia is under, it is less likely that it will consider such response viable (Kushnir, 2017). In addition to the sanctions that are imposed on Russia, Russia's economic ties with Turkey, in other words, the complex interdependence between them, also limits Russia's capacity to develop an offensive reaction to Turkey. Turkey is the second largest buyer of Russian gas after Germany (Köstem, 2017) and will decrease its dependence on Russian gas through Southern Gas Corridor project. This leads to that the project of Turkish Stream is crucial for Russia. Turkish Stream will enable Russia to maintain its energy ties with Turkey and its profits. This view resonated in Russian media during the 2015 crisis as well. When Russia embarked sanctions on Turkish tomato trade, *Nezavisimaya Gazeta* stated that Russia needs Turkish Stream, rather than Turkish tomato (Köstem, 2017).

Examining Russia's regional politics, energy politics between Turkey, Russia and Ukraine and the convergence of the bilateral relations of these parties, let us now take a look at the 2014 Ukrainian crisis in more depth, on which implications for all these areas are present and ready to be analyzed.

## **5.5. Ukrainian Crisis and Turkish Foreign Policy towards Ukraine**

### **5.5.1. The Course and Complexity of the Ukrainian Crisis**

Ukrainian people resisted against the administration of Viktor Yanukovich from November 2013 and until February 2014 when Yanukovich had to flee the capital after a massacre of around 70 protesters and such a resistance was remarkable in the sense that

the movement lacked a real leadership and it was not represented by a single political party, rather it can be argued to be a people's movement. The unrest had started in the country when the president declared that he could not sign the Association Agreement with the European Union, which would take off the trade barriers between them, for national security reasons (Gratz, 2014). As people started to protest in the streets with Ukrainian and European Union flags and asked the president to resign, in December, Yanukovich and Putin signed an agreement that Russia bought 15 billion dollars Ukrainian bonds and slashed the price of natural gas by a third (Diuk, 2014). As a reaction to this development, the administrative buildings were captured by the protesters as well as barricades in Kiev's main square was set up in fight against the riot police, the berkut. An anti-protest law passed by the parliament with Yanukovich's demand was literally declaring the protesters as terrorists. The riot police took orders to clean the squares repeatedly. Many human rights violations took place during the clashes as well as numbers of deaths from both the protesters and the security forces.

When the opposition leaders Yatseniuk and Klitchko were invited by Yanukovich for negotiation by the efforts of EU, Yanukovich dealt on abolishing the former anti-protest law but it was not enough for protesters to leave the maidan. Finally, on 22nd, February, when the protests were at its peak, the president fled the capital and a harder process for Ukraine started. Just after the Revolution overthrew Yanukovich, already existing anti-Maidan/anti-Revolution movements consisted of ethnic Russians in Crimea seized the Crimean Verkhovna Rada and captured the parliament. In the following days, the self-appointed and armed parliament in Crimea held a referendum to join or be stay in Ukraine. According to the result in favor of joining to Russia, Russian armies took control of the peninsula. Annexation of Crimea was inspiring for Russian-speaking separatists in Donbass region. The governmental buildings were captured in the region by the separatist groups and two republics were declared: Donetsk People's Republic and Lugansk People's Republic. Newly established Ukrainian government reacted in military terms to the declarations, yet, the battles between two camps did not yield a conclusive outcome. There have been many initiatives for ceasefire, all of which was breached after a short period of time of their initiation. At the moment, the conflict is classified as a frozen one and regarded as very difficult to resolve.

What is more is that the unrest within Ukraine's borders proves to be an interesting case for scholars since it has the characteristics of both civil war and inter-state war, which makes the case even more challenging than it is to understand. It is a civil war considering the anti-state rebellions in the Donbass region, namely, the *oblasts*<sup>1</sup> of Donetsk and Lugansk, on the other hand, it is an inter-state war considering Russian Federation's annexation of Crimea by a fait accompli and her allegedly direct interference in the conflicts between the Ukrainian government and the separatist self-declared republics of Donetsk and Lugansk. Above all this, what makes the case most interesting is that it might be the "ignition" of a new Cold War as Vladimir Putin pointed out after his troops captured Crimean Peninsula responding "the request" of the Crimean Verkhovna Rada<sup>2</sup>. Therefore, the case also has some characteristics of somewhat a systemic struggle.

Building on above, it should be noted that one of the new trends in analyzing the latest developments in warfare is to conceptualize some of the current conflicts such as the clashes in Ukraine as hybrid war. Hybrid war, in essence, refers to the use of non-military instruments along with the military ones in order to reach a political aim. Therefore, in hybrid war, it is observable that a state combines its regular forces and irregular ones, which include both insurgency, guerrillas, terrorists etc. and non-military instruments such as media (information warfare), cyberwarfare, organized crime and economic warfare. All these instruments are together used in order to reach a political aim rather than a simple territorial gain. Throughout history, the elements of hybrid warfare are quite observable such as in American Civil War, the Anglo-Boer War, Vietnam War as well as espionage activities conducted by both CIA and KGB during the Cold War (Pyung-Kyun, 2015). Therefore, rather than a new concept, hybrid war is the developed version of earlier tactics of irregular warfare. They are adapted to the technology and improved upon the vulnerabilities and strengths of the post-Cold War society. The conflict in Ukraine has elements of both a proxy war and a civil war as well as Crimean conflict might be

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<sup>1</sup> An oblast is an administrative territory in some of the post-Soviet countries, which might be translated as province.

<sup>2</sup> Verkhovna Rada is the parliament. Since Crimea was an autonomous republic, it had its own Verkhovna Rada in the Ukrainian legislative system. Therefore it should not be confused with Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, which is the parliament of the whole country.



considered as a direct war of invasion. Thus, the case of Ukraine is applicable to the concept of hybrid warfare as we observe a combination of different warfare conducted by regular and irregular armies.

### **5.5.2. Turkey's Approach to the Ukrainian Crisis**

Level of complexity, regional proximity and bilateral relations compel the conclusion that the Ukrainian crisis concerns Turkey in several ways. Turkish prime minister of the time, Ahmet Davutoglu, had stated that the priority of Turkey in the Ukrainian crisis is to make sure Crimean Tatars' security and prosperity as well as enhancement of their rights and interests ("Dönem 24, Yasama Yılı 4, 134 üncü Birleşim, 2014). Thus, the first and perhaps the most important is the situation of Crimean Tatars whom the course of the crisis made an influence in the most direct way. Since Turkey's attitude on the issue of Crimean Tatars have always been about restoring their rights in Crimea peninsula and providing them with a more prosperous life conditions, the destiny of Crimean Tatars in light with the recent events is of crucial importance for Turkey. The second, stability of Ukraine matters for Turkey due to its economic and trade relations. Ukraine has emerged as an important trade partner for Turkey in the last decades and Turkey aims to give these relations more depth by reaching a free trade agreement. A politically unstable Ukraine will not be economically stable either and thus the potential of Turkish-Ukrainian economic and trade relations will be unlikely to be actualized. The third, Turkey's stance on Ukrainian crisis might be considered along with its relations with Russia as well. Obviously, Turkey's dependency on Russia in terms of natural gas supply is a determinant factor on Turkey's attitude towards an issue to which Russia is inextricably linked. The last, the situation in Ukraine is in the scope of Turkey's Black Sea policy. Aiming a leading role in establishing regional security in Black Sea, Turkey is interested in the stability of every country in the region. It is also important to note that Turkey is not in favor of an overwhelming Russian influence on post-Soviet countries.

The first point that is worth pointing out in this matter is that, for Turkey, Ukrainian crisis, in fact, was one of the indirect consequences of not responding the breached international norms in Syria properly (Kardaş, 2014). Appeasing Assad showed the vacuum in enforcing the international norms and paved the way for Russia to breach the norm of

non-intervention and territorial integrity (Kardaş, 2014). Despite this, Turkey repeatedly stated that it would seek to maintain the pace of the improvement of relations with Russia and continue to do so (“Dönem 24, Yasama Yılı 4, 134 üncü Birleşim, 2014). It was even implied that the working relations with Russia would help Turkey protect the rights and living conditions of Crimean Tatars (“Dönem 24, Yasama Yılı 4, 74 üncü Birleşim”, 2014). Thus, just like in how they did in Syrian crisis, Turkey and Russia compartmentalized their relations in Ukrainian crisis as well (Kardaş, 2014). Such an attitude later on was criticized in the Turkish Grand National Assembly by the opposition on the grounds that Turkey was indecisive to get involved in the Crimean crisis and got more active in this matter when the relations between Russia was tensioned in 2015 (“Dönem 26, Yasama Yılı 1, 74 üncü Birleşim”, 2016). However, considering that it was Davutoglu, who visited Kiev the first after the overthrowing of Yanukovych (Kohen, 2014), the care that Turkey attaches to this topic was demonstrated in the first place (Kohen, 2014). Davutoglu’s move also showed that Turkey saw the new government legitimate and Yanukovych overthrown (Kohen, 2014). Therefore, it is possible to conclude that Ukrainian crisis did not negatively affected Turkey’s foreign policy neither towards Ukraine nor Russia. On the contrary, no matter its capacity to act, Turkey clearly showed its support for Ukraine and continued its strong ties with Russia.

The second issue that requires attentions is the effect of the crisis on the Black Sea regional politics. It is expected that Ukrainian crisis will make the efforts Turkey has paid so far to create regional cooperation in Black Sea less effective (Çomak, Sandıklı, Kaya & Ismayilov, 2014). In other words, organizations like BSCO and BLACKSEAFOR will be negatively affected (Çomak, Sandıklı, Kaya & Ismayilov, 2014). Therefore, the settlement of the conflict is not only in Turkey’s benefit, but in favor of regional stability. Besides, Turkey and Ukraine have viewed Organization of Black Sea Cooperation as a ground in which they can direct Russia in a more bilateral ground, creating mechanism for cooperation (Kiniklioglu, 1996). In fact, given the geographical data, natural resources and economic statistics about not only Ukraine, Turkey and Russia but also about the world, the three countries can be argued as having a great potential for regional prosperity based on cooperation (Turan, 2000). However, Russia’s grand strategy might create an obstacle in achieving this objective. Turkey and Ukraine share their interest in adjusting

Russia to its new role (Turan, 2000). They both should resist the attempts by Russia to reestablish the old system, that is, a reincarnation of the Soviet Union in new clothes (Turan, 2000). To achieve this, first, a solidarity between Ukraine and Turkey should be reached (Turan, 2000). Solidarity through comprehensive economic relations and military cooperation and of course, cultural exchange (Turan, 2000).

The current situation of Turkish-Ukrainian relations, however, is not capable of prescribing a role for Russia no matter their level of cooperation. Ukraine faces many challenges in order to provide stability within the country including corruption, separatist movements in the eastern Ukraine and major economic issues. After resolving these issues and integrating with the West in a more extent, Ukraine can be capable of having a regional role. For Ukraine to have a better role in the region, it should tackle its most urgent problems (Kushnir, 2017). Besides, Turkey still has a way to complete its transformation to be a regional power and without decreasing its economic dependence on Russia, this process will not be over. Therefore, a Turkish-Ukrainian alliance to transform Russian political behavior into their framework requires so much effort that it might not even be within the scope of their capabilities.

Thirdly, as it can be expected, Ukrainian crisis create a burden on Turkish-Ukrainian economic and trade relations. Ukraine is a fine market for Turkish fruit and vegetable exporters (Gursoy, 2014). Since Ukrainian production does not meet with the demand, high quality Turkish products enter the market (Gursoy, 2014). Half of Ukraine's citrus import is from Turkey; thus, Turkey is the largest fruit and vegetable provider to Ukraine and other countries in the region (Gursoy, 2014). With this in mind, it is expected that Ukrainian crisis will have a negative influence on this trade as well (Gursoy, 2014). Political instability in Ukraine resulted in that Turkish traders could not enter the market and thus import products were undersold (Gursoy, 2014). In addition, Ukrainian crisis affected agriculture in Ukraine, which resulted in a break in agricultural trade between Turkey and Ukraine (Gursoy, 2014). The crisis slowed down the modernization processes and purchase of agricultural equipment (Gursoy, 2014). Such a vague and unstable position is likely to decrease food export of Ukraine (Gursoy, 2014).

It is also possible to think that this crisis might create opportunities (Gursoy, 2014). As a response to Western sanctions, Russian President Vladimir Putin banned the food import from the US and EU countries (Gursoy, 2014). Considering that EU had a large share in Russia's food import, this created an opportunity for Turkey (Gursoy, 2014). However, the crisis in 2015 between Russia and Turkey deteriorated bilateral relations and nullified this opportunity. The trade between Turkey and Russia could only be restored by 2017 due to the rapprochement between the parties ("Rusya'ya ihracat artışı yüzde 50'yi geçti", 2017). Thus, Turkish-Ukrainian trade and Turkish-Russian trade seem to be improving simultaneously without conflicting with each other. Turkey's multidimensional/multilayered foreign policy pays off as strong economic relations and considerable income as a result of these relations.

To conclude, Turkey's relations with Russia can be acknowledged as one of the dynamics of Turkey's relations with Ukraine. This is because first, Ukraine occupies a special place in Russia's grand strategy, that is, it is indispensable that Ukraine will stay under Russian influence rather than integrating with the West. Second, Turkey pursues a multidimensional/multilayered foreign policy, which prescribes that Turkey will develop strong ties with all actors in its neighborhood and Russia is not an exception to this principle. Third, Turkey is Russia's alternative transit route to Ukraine for its gas export. Therefore, Russia's policies of cutting off its dependence on Ukrainian transit brings Turkey into equation, along with considerations that Turkey will have to make vis-à-vis its relations with Ukraine. Fourth, Turkey's relations with Ukraine and Russia are somewhat inextricable because of their origins and motivations. Finally, Euromaidan Revolution and the annexation of Crimea by Russia put a burden for Turkey to consider all the options related to Ukraine and Russia when making a move on this issue towards any of these parties.

## CONCLUSION

This study is based upon the observation that Turkey's foreign policy towards Ukraine in AK Party era acquired a new vision. This new vision has been relevant to Turkey's new foreign policy in this era overall. Seeking a new role for Turkey in the international system, AK Party governments put efforts to pursue an active foreign policy, that is to say, that generating its own policies in its region, rather than playing the role given to it by the international power structure. It was among the principles of foreign policy of AK Party governments so far that Turkey's foreign policy consists of multidimensional ties established by powers that are different in size and orientation. Accordingly, Turkey strived for establishing strong ties with Ukraine since 2002. Along with increasing the pace of the state policy of assisting the rehabilitation of Crimean Tatars' living conditions, Turkey remarkably improved its economic and trade relations with Ukraine. Although the last few years tested the commitment of both parties for the sake of their relations with the effect of the political crisis in Ukraine and the annexation of Crimea by Russia, it can be argued that direction of Turkey's foreign policy towards Ukraine was not negatively affected especially considering the developments such as the forthcoming free trade agreement and Turkey's support for Ukraine in the Crimean crisis. Based on these observations, this study sought to describe the main dynamics in which Turkish foreign policy towards Ukraine in the AK Party era until 2016 occurs.

First and foremost, it can be argued that the archive research on Turkey's Official Gazette is original to this study. The research provided all the agreements and protocols signed between the parties and the distribution to these agreements according to the cooperation areas in which they belong was tabled. The table showing the distribution of the areas in which Turkey and Ukraine signed agreements and protocols have three implications listed below:

- A great portion of agreements that were signed are directly linked to the improvement of economic relations between the parties. This demonstrates the parties' will and commitment in this regard.
- The second largest amount of the agreements were in transportation area, which lays out the infrastructure for the enhancement of trade relations.

- Although amount of the agreements signed in the area of tourism is relatively low, the practices that these agreements presupposed are of crucial importance. The visa-free regime between the countries can be an example of these important developments that were actualized by the agreements.

The motivations for establishment of such strong ties between Turkey and Ukraine in a short period of time can be counted as both parties' need for trade for their economy keep boosting, the great potential of both countries in terms of production and investment, and regional politics that prescribes that Turkey provides regional security via establishing strong economic ties with its neighbors. Although structural and political problems in Ukraine hinders that the economic potential of bilateral relations are fulfilled, both parties put a great deal effort for this potentials realization and visa-free, passport-free regimes and the forthcoming free trade agreement can be expected to pay off these efforts.

The second dynamic that this study perceives as fundamental to Turkey's foreign policy towards Ukraine is the restoring the living conditions of Crimean Tatars and the annexation of Crimea by Russia in 2014. The Crimean Tatar issue has long been a contributing factor to Turkish-Ukrainian relations since Turkey pursued a constructive foreign policy towards this issue and regarded it as a national matter of Ukraine without stopping its assistances for the betterment of the living conditions and cultural existence of Crimean Tatars. What is new in AK Party era regarding Turkey's Crimean Tatar policy within the framework of its foreign policy towards Ukraine is the increase in the pace of the assistance activities that are conducted by Turkey's most important public diplomacy tool TİKA. This study provides an overview of the TİKA activities in Crimea based on the annual activity reports and development aid reports of this institution. An analysis of these activities during AK Party era provides the conclusion below:

- Cultural existence of Crimean Tatars matters for Turkey the most. A great portion of activities conducted by TİKA is for the purpose of protection of Crimean Tatar culture.
- Turkey has invested in the future generations of Crimean Tatars so much that it can be expected that it will have a positive influence on Turkey's soft power.

- The annexation of Crimea by Russia put a full stop for these activities at the moment.

The annexation of Crimea by Russia brought a huge burden for Turkey's foreign policy towards Ukraine. There are too many actors to which Turkey is required to refer when calculating its moves towards this issue. Let alone its economic relations with Ukraine and especially with Russia, the transatlantic security framework of which Turkey is an ally and the substantial amount of Crimean Tatar diaspora in Turkey with their potential to make an effect only make the decisions making process harder for Turkey. However, an abrupt change in Turkey's stance in the Crimean issue, which is in favor of Ukraine's territorial integrity but interestingly is not directly opposed to Russian interests in Crimea, should not be expected.

The final dynamic that this study sought to explore is the role of Russia as a great power in Turkey's foreign policy towards Ukraine. The rationale for considering Russia in this framework is threefold. First, Russia's regional politics prescribes a role for Russia to be the leading actor in the post-Soviet era and thus, Ukraine is counted as a matter of national security for Russia. Second, Turkey's Black Sea politics has been on the basis of balancing Russia in its objectives. Third, there is considerable level of economic interdependence between Russia and Turkey, which forces Turkey to calculate its relations with Russia when making a decision on Ukraine.

Turkey defines its relations with Russia as a multidimensional enlarged partnership. This principle guiding Turkey's moves towards Russia prescribes that Turkey's relations with Ukraine or any other state are not alternatives to each other, rather they are complementary. This is because Turkey's multidimensional policy is directed at the same aim that is expected to occur as a result of different relations, and that is making a Turkey center state, a peace and stability provider to its region. In addition to that, energy politics among Turkey, Russia and Ukraine matter as well. Russia has been trying to by-pass the transit gas pipeline passing over Ukraine and alternate it with Turkey. Therefore, it can be said that Russian-Ukrainian disagreements have created opportunities for Turkey.

It is also worth pointing out that Turkey's relations with Ukraine has a basis that is in line with civilizational choices and grand strategies, while Turkish-Russian partnership is more conjunctural and stems from short or middle term interests. Accordingly, Turkey has a large space to improve its relations with Ukraine no matter the reaction from Russia because a possible reaction from Russia will have to consider its economic interdependence with Turkey.

All in all, this thesis sought to provide an understanding of Turkish foreign policy towards Ukraine in AKP era. While the study stresses the historical foundations and up-to-date determinants of these relations, it also put effort to deal with the new questions arose especially from Russian occupation of Crimea.



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Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Hükümeti ile Ukrayna Bakanlar Kurulu Arasında İmzalanan “Kanun Uygulayıcı Birimlerin İşbirliği Anlaşması”nın Onaylanması Hakkında Karar (2010, July 3rd). Resmî Gazete (Issue: 27630). Retrieved from <http://www.resmigazete.gov.tr/eskiler/2010/07/20100703.htm>

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Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Hükümeti ile Ukrayna Bakanlar Kurulu Arasında Vatandaşların Karşılıklı Seyahatlerine İlişkin Usullere Dair Anlaşma'nın Onaylanması Hakkında Karar (2012, March 24th). Resmî Gazete (Issue: 28243). Retrieved from <http://www.resmigazete.gov.tr/eskiler/2012/03/20120324.htm>

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Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Hükümeti ve Ukrayna Bakanlar Kurulu Arasında Hava Ulaştırma Anlaşmasının Onaylanmasının Uygun Bulduğuna Dair Kanun (2013, April 18th). Resmî Gazete (Issue: 28622). Retrieved from <http://www.resmigazete.gov.tr/eskiler/2013/04/20130418.htm>

Umuma Mahsus Pasaport Hamili Ukrayna Vatandaşlarının Türkiye'ye Yapacakları Seyahatlerinde, 180 Gün İçinde Toplamda 90 Günü Aşmamak Kaydıyla 30 Gün Olan Vizesiz Kalış Sürelerinin 60 Güne Çıkarılması Hakkında Karar (2013, August 31st). Resmî Gazete (Issue: 28751). Retrieved from <http://www.resmigazete.gov.tr/eskiler/2013/08/20130831.htm>

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### **Personal Semi-Structured Interviews**

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## **Appendix A:**

The list of agreements and protocols signed between Turkey and Ukraine as it is declared in Turkey's Official Gazette is below:

- Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Turkey and the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine Concerning Technical and Financial Cooperation (8 January 2003)
- Protocol of the Turkish-Ukrainian Land Transportation Joint Commission Meeting (11 January 2003)
- Protocol of the Turkish-Ukrainian Second Term Tourism Joint Commission (23 February 2003)
- Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Turkey and the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine Concerning Judicial Cooperation on Legal Issues (12 July 2003)
- Protocol between the Government of the Republic of Turkey and the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine Concerning Changing of the Commercial Maritime Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Turkey and the Government of Ukraine (17 February 2004)
- Protocol between the Government of the Republic of Turkey and the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine Concerning the Mutual Estate Assignment for Construction of Diplomatic Representative Buildings (1 March 2004)
- Cooperation Program of the Years between 2003 and 2007 between the Ministry of Culture and Tourism of the Republic of Turkey and Ministry of Culture and Art of Ukraine (18 April 2004)
- Protocol of Turkish-Ukrainian Commercial and Economic Cooperation Commission Meeting (16 May 2004)
- Agreement Concerning the Establishment of International Organization of Development of Fisheries and Aquaculture in Central and Eastern Europe (EUROFISH) (30 June 2004)
- Black Sea Cooperation Organization (BSCO) Agreement Memorandum Concerning the Facilitation of Land Transportation of Goods within BSCO Region (9 March 2005)

- Protocol of the Turkish-Ukrainian Land Transportation Joint Commission (2 June 2005)
- Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Turkey and the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine Concerning Bilateral Cooperation on Environment Protection (6 November 2005)
- Protocol of 4th Meeting of Turkish-Ukrainian Commercial and Economic Cooperation Commission (6 June 2005-signature date)
- Additional Protocol on the Application of the First Article of the Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Turkey and the Government of Ukraine Concerning Cooperation against Crime (17 November 2005)
- Agreement among the Governments of the Black Sea Cooperation Organization Countries Concerning Immediate Aid and Emergency Action in Natural and Man-made Disasters (11 December 2005)
- Memorandum of Intent Concerning Technical Regulations, Standardization, Metrology, Conformity Assessment and Protection of Consumer Rights between the Government of the Republic of Turkey and the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine (10 May 2006)
- Protocol of the 5th Meeting of Turkish-Ukrainian Commercial and Economic Cooperation Commission (15 May 2006)
- Memorandum of Ukraine's Participation to the Agreement Concerning the Establishment of Southeastern European Ministries of Defense Process Coordination Committee (1 October 2006)
- Additional Counterterrorism Protocol among the Black Sea Cooperation Organization Countries to the Agreement Concerning Cooperation on Fight against Crime, Especially Varieties of Organized Crime (8 October 2006)
- Additional Protocol Concerning the Application of the First Article of the Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Turkey and the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine Concerning Cooperation against Crime (8 March 2007)
- Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Turkey and the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine Concerning Cooperation on Issues of Exploration and Use of Space (8 June 2007)

- Protocol of 3<sup>rd</sup> Meeting of Turkish-Ukrainian Tourism Joint Commission (8 August 2007)
- Tourism Cooperation Program for 2007-2008 between Turkey and Ukraine (8 August 2007)
- Protocol of the Turkish-Ukrainian Land Transportation Joint Commission Meeting (11 February 2008)
- Protocol Concerning the Privileges of the Parliamentary Assembly of Black Sea Cooperation Organization (10 April 2008)
- Protocol of 6th Meeting of Turkish-Ukrainian Commercial and Economic Cooperation Commission (20 April 2008)
- Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Turkey and the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine Concerning Cooperation on Railway Transportation (4 July 2008)
- Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Turkey and the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine Concerning Cooperation on Defense Industry (4 July 2008)
- Protocol between Gendarmerie General Command of the Republic of Turkey and the Internal Corps Main Department of Ministry of Domestic Affairs of Ukraine Concerning Cooperation on Personnel Training on Security (4 July 2008)
- Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Turkey and the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine Concerning Readmission of Persons (4 July 2008)
- Agreement Memorandum between Turkish Atomic Energy Authority and Ukrainian State Committee of Nuclear Regulation Concerning Technical Cooperation on Issues of Nuclear Regulations and Information Exchange (9 July 2008)
- Agreement Concerning Simplification of Visa Processes of the Businessmen that are Citizens of Black Sea Cooperation Organization Countries (18 March 2009)
- Agreement Concerning Simplification of Visa Processes of the Professional Truck Drivers that are Citizens of Black Sea Cooperation Organization Countries (18 March 2009)

- Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Turkey and the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine Concerning Scientific and Technological Cooperation (14 April 2009)
- Protocol of the 7th Meeting of Turkish-Ukrainian Commercial and Economic Cooperation Commission (25 May 2010-signature date)
- Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Turkey and the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine Concerning Cooperation between Law Enforcement Units (3 July 2010)
- Agreement Memorandum between the the Republic of Turkey, Ministry of Finances, Financial Crimes Investigation Board (MASAK) and Ukrainian Committee of Financial Regulation Concerning Exchange of Financial Intelligence about Money Laundering and Financing Terrorism (27 July 2010)
- Agreement Memorandum between Turkish General Staff and Ministry of Defense of Ukraine and Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe Concerning Weather Information Exchange between Erzurum, Control and Reporting Center of Turkey and “South” Odessa, Ukrainian Air Force Command (3 November 2010)
- Agreement Memorandum Concerning Coordinated Improvement of Black Sea Belt Highway (3 February 2011)
- Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Turkey and the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine Concerning Cooperation on Energy Area (23 December 2011)
- Agreement Memorandum Concerning Improvement of Sea Highways within Black Sea Cooperation Organization Area (12 March 2011)
- Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Turkey and the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine Concerning Organization of International Express Cargo Railway-Ferry Service between Turkey and Ukraine (20 March 2012)
- Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Turkey and the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine Concerning Bilateral Travel Regime for Citizens (24 March 2012)
- Agreement Memorandum between the Government of the Republic of Turkey and the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine Concerning the Confirmation of Projects to be Implemented in 2011 within the Framework of the Second Article of the



Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Turkey and the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine Concerning Technical and Financial Cooperation, signed in 14 November 2002 (24 March 2012)

- Protocol of 8th Meeting of Turkish-Ukrainian Commercial and Economic Cooperation Commission (4 May 2012-signature date)
- Program between the Government of the Republic of Turkey and the Government of Ukraine Concerning Cultural Cooperation (10 May 2012)
- Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Turkey and the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine Concerning Organization of International Express Cargo Railway-Ferry Service between Turkey and Ukraine (28 June 2012)
- Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Turkey and the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine Concerning Cooperation on Plant Protection and Plant Quarantine (24 January 2013)
- Protocol of the Turkish-Ukrainian International Land Transportation Commission Meeting (26 January 2013)
- Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Turkey and the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine Concerning Air Transportation (18 April 2013)
- Protocol of 9th Meeting of Turkish-Ukrainian Commercial and Economic Cooperation Commission (25 June 2013-signature date)
- The Decree of the Cabinet of Ministers of Turkey Concerning the Increasing of Visa-free Stay of Ukrainian Citizens Traveling to Turkey (31 August 2013)
- Program between the Government of the Republic of Turkey and the Government of Ukraine Concerning the Educational Application between the years of 2013 and 2015 (6 February 2014)
- Protocol of the Turkish-Ukrainian Land Transportation Joint Commission Meeting (22 May 2014)
- Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Turkey and the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine Concerning Granting in Health Area (23 June 2016)

## **Appendix B: Semi-Structured Interview Questions**

- 1) Could you briefly tell about the activities of your organization?
- 2) What is your stance on Crimean issue?
- 3) Are you in contact with Turkish policy makers? In what ways?
- 4) Do you take initiative to express your opinion to Turkish policy makers?
- 5) What kind of feedbacks do you take?
- 6) Do you think Turkey's stance on Crimean issue will change?

