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TURKEY IN 2010

SETA POLICY REPORT TURKEY IN 2010

EDITORS

TAHA ÖZHAN | HATEM ETE | SELİN M. BÖLME

AUTHORS AND CONTRIBUTORS

TAHA ÖZHAN | YILMAZ ENSAROĞLU | HATEM ETE
HÜSEYİN YAYMAN | SELİN M. BÖLME | NUH YILMAZ
MURAT ÖZOĞLU | UFUK ULUTAŞ | ERDAL KARAGÖL
HAKAN ÇOPUR | BÜLENT ARAS | TALİP KÜÇÜKCAN
CEMAL HAŞİMİ | MÜJGE KÜÇÜKKELEŞ | KADİR ÜSTÜN
DOĞA ULAŞ ERALP | MÜCAHİT KÜÇÜKYILMAZ | BEKİR S.GÜR
EDA BEKTAŞ | İPEK COŞKUN | HAVVA CEBECİ



SETA

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SETA | Siyaset, Ekonomi ve Toplum Arařtırmaları Vakfı
Nenehatun Caddesi No: 66 GOP Çankaya 06700 Ankara TÜRKİYE
Tel:+90 312.551 21 00 | Faks :+90 312.551 21 90 | www.setav.org | info@setav.org

SETA | Washington D.C. Office
1025 Connecticut Avenue, N.W., Suite 1106 Washington, D.C., 20036
Tel: 202-223-9885 | Faks: 202-223-6099 | www.setadc.org | info@setadc.org

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PREFACE

TURKEY IN 2010

The constitutional referendum of the 12th of September 2010 was potentially the most important political development of last year in Turkey. The referendum process itself and the proposed amendments to the constitution were marked by significant political events that helped plant the seeds in the minds of Turkey's citizens that the "Old Turkey" was gone. However, certain political practices and the legacy of the, "Old Turkey" still linger. Nevertheless, the constitutional referendum strengthened the transformation of a "New Turkey" based on a healthy democratic process. During the referendum process, historical and political actors of Turkey's establishment were either replaced or transformed. In this context, the CHP (Republican's People Party) lost its leader, Deniz Baykal, who was the symbol of the party; the MHP (Nationalist Action Party) lost its conservative political base, which was its backbone; the BDP (Peace and Democracy Party) lost its democratic voice; the army lost its dominant position among Turkey's political establishment; and the judiciary lost the privilege to overstep its judicial bounds.

In the midst of the debate on the constitutional amendments, the leader of the CHP was forced to resign due to a scandal, and was replaced by the new leader of the CHP, Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu. This new leadership attempted to re-enter the political scene by presenting a "new CHP" in sink with a "New Turkey." However, the CHP did not question its past nor develop a radically different or new

political platform. In fact, the only significant change was in the leadership of the party. Kılıcdaroglu is still trying to find the CHP's place in Turkish politics by balancing the CHP's rigid ideological base, its image in the media, the weakening of the established order under the "Old Turkey's" military and judiciary tutelage, and compete with the AK Party's dynamic government. In the process leading up to the June General Elections of 2011, Kılıcdaroglu runs the risk of continuing on a path without direction and being mired in an effort to get his political establishment and his base constituency to approve of a new CHP construction.

Another significant issue of the last year was the Kurdish question and the issue of terrorism in the context of the Democratic Opening. The Democratic Opening, which was launched in 2009, maintained its experimental learning process for all sides during 2010. Political, bureaucratic, and civilian actors began a discussion on this issue that was unprecedented in the "Old Turkey." However, during this same period, the PKK continued its operations. The position of the MHP by supporting such activities caused Turkish society to question the peaceful outcome of the Democratic Opening and ran the risk of putting the blame on and even discrediting the AK Party for proposing and implementing such a policy. However, the opposite took place. The Turkish people responded to the constitutional referendum with a resounding "YES" to the construction of a "new Turkey." The implications of the referendum are far reaching, going well beyond the approval of the constitutional amendments or a mere vote of confidence for the AK Party. This "YES" vote laid down the basis and asked the hard questions of what this "new Turkey" would look like. .

Turkey was thrown into an international crisis with the Mavi Marmara incident of May 2010, which became one of the most significant events for Turkey's foreign policy. Israeli commandos stormed the Mavi Marmara ship carrying humanitarian aid to the blockaded Gaza Strip in international waters, killing nine people. This incident was traumatic for Turkey because for the first time since its War for Independence Turkish citizens were killed during a time of peace. Turkey's reaction to this attack was harsh. Highlighting the violation of international law by Israel, Turkey launched a significant diplomatic effort on the international scene in general and in particular in international organizations and forums condemning Israel. Turkey stood by its positions and demands vis-à-vis Israel although this caused a major strain in relations with Israel and the United

States, Turkey's longtime ally. This incident showed that the visionary and principled foreign policy of Turkey that began following the 1 March Parliamentary decision brought results.

Another important development of the previous year was the signing of the Tehran Declaration with Iran - brokered by Turkey and Brazil. The agreement was based on the uranium exchange proposal of the IAEA of October 2009. The declaration outlined the exchange of a portion of Iran's uranium to Turkey for fuel to be used in a Tehran research reactor. However, Turkey's initiatives were sidelined by the UN and the decision to impose new sanctions against Iran was adopted. Turkey, despite significant pressure, voted against these new sanctions and held to its position of a third way in dealing with Iran. The Iranian crisis also marked this year's NATO summit within the context of ballistic missile discussions. Another key development in foreign policy was the further strain on Turkish-American relations due to the activities of the Israeli and Armenian lobbies. Given these differences, relations between the US and Turkey were expected to continue to be tense. However, the Wikileaks documents brought some respite. Subsequently, Turkish-American relations gave the first signs of progress.

The world's economics in 2010 were still struggling to overcome the financial crisis, which began in 2008 in the United States and became global in 2009. Many of the world's leading capitalist countries developed similar measures to fight the economic crisis. Accordingly, central banks issued the money, economic stimulus packages were adopted. However, developed countries still reached unsustainable levels of public debt stock and budget deficits. 2010 saw certain countries, like Greece and Ireland, be on the brink of a de facto bankruptcy. The aftermath of the 2008-2009 crises will bring about a reshuffling of the economic cards in the next 10 years. The tangible outcome will be a new distribution of the ranking of the world's leading economies. Already Turkey came out of this financial crisis intact and is the 16th largest economy in the world. It is poised to continue to ascend the ranking of economic world powers.

Turkey's success in overcoming the global economic crisis of 2008-09 was due to a number of factors. First, Turkey had put in place since its economic crisis of 2001 strict economic policies under the guidelines of the IMG. Second, it kept public debt stocks low and maintained balanced budgets. Third, it has a

dynamic economy with a stable financial system. Fourth, Turkey's economic recovery in 2010 saw growth rates jump from 3% to 8%. It is anticipated that 2011 will see the economy remain stable and even continue to thrive despite the upcoming general elections. In addition, the developments in interest rates and expected growth rates increase the likelihood of taking more structural steps to overcome the employment problem.

The outcome of the constitutional referendum of the 12th of September opened a new phase in creating a new political system in Turkey. This "new Turkey" will hopefully kick off a dynamic debate among all different political segments and be an inclusive process. Irrespective if all parties agree or not on the form this new Turkey will take. Partaking in this process would already be a victory for the strengthening of Turkish democracy.

1. DOMESTIC POLITICS

1.1 MILITARY-POLITICAL RELATIONS

In 2010, the Turkish military has retreated from political power. Its role of absolute tutelage over Turkish politics obtained through judicial, sociological, and administrative concessions was largely questioned.

During 2010, the military's presence in the media was not about Turkey's primary security issues such as the developments in security sector and the modernization of the army, but about its intervention in politics. In a period that missile defense systems and cyber-terror issues dominated the global security agenda, the Turkish Armed Forces (TAF) is only mentioned with regards to its attempts to intervene in domestic politics and issues of negligence in the fight against terrorism.

The most striking event affecting the military-politics relations in 2010 was the disclosure of the Balyoz (Sledgehammer) Coup Plan. On January 20th, 2010 the daily newspaper Taraf published a news alleging that Balyoz (Sledgehammer) Security Operation Plan seminar prepared in 2003 was actually a coup plan scenario to overthrow the ruling AK Party. The administrative, military, and political spill over effects of the alleged coup plan continued throughout the year. For the first time in Turkish history, an alleged attempted coup was brought to court. On December 16th 2010, 195 defendants stood trial.

Regarding these issues, the military was compelled to justify its excessive overreach of power and its breach of duty. In particular, the military had to explain why it failed to respect new civil legal regulations and why it attempted to interfere

in civil administrative politics. The loss of legitimacy for Turkish military as a result of its outlawed actions is shaped by three major dynamics such as Balyoz coup plan trials, PKK attacks and the suspension of three generals which are briefly outlined in the timeline below.

Table 1	THE MILITARY-POLITICS RELATIONS IN 2010
<p>20 January 2010: The daily newspaper Taraf published supporting documents for the Balyoz Coup Plan.</p>	
<p>4 February 2010: The Protocol on Cooperation for Security and Public Order (EMASYA) is annulled.</p>	
<p>4 May 2010: The newspaper Taraf claimed there was negligence in Sariyayla guard-house attack carried out by PKK based on a letter of an ex-soldier who had done his short-term military service in this guardhouse.</p>	
<p>6 July 2010: The newspaper Taraf alleged that six months before the PKK's attack in Iskenderun base, an intelligence report stating that there would be a possible PKK attack against the weak point of the military base was submitted to all military units.</p>	
<p>24 July 2010: On the Balyoz coup plan trial against 196 military officers, Istanbul 10th High Criminal Court decided to arrest 102 defendants including 28 generals and admirals on the grounds of strong suspicion.</p>	
<p>1–4 August 2010: Supreme Military Council meeting is held.</p>	
<p>2 August 2010: The newspaper Taraf alleged that while the guardhouse attack in Hantepe launched by PKK, Herons (unmanned aerial vehicles) were monitoring the guardhouse for 20 minutes and when the attack is started, the images were watched live by 30 military units including the General Staff.</p>	
<p>24 August 2010: The three generals who were not promoted in the last meeting of Supreme Military Council due to arrest warrant issued for them applied to the Supreme Military Administrative Court to repeal the decision barring their promotion.</p>	
<p>27 September 2010: The Supreme Military Administrative Court decided to suspend the execution of the decision barring the promotion of these three generals.</p>	
<p>22 November 2010: The three generals are suspended by the Ministry of Defense and Ministry of Internal Affairs.</p>	
<p>22 November 2010: The National Security Policy Document is rewritten.</p>	
<p>23 November 2010: The three generals appealed to the Supreme Military Administrative Court requesting the annulment of their suspension.</p>	
<p>4 December 2010: The Supreme Military Administrative Court rejected the annulment of the suspension of three generals.</p>	
<p>16 December 2010: The first trial on the Balyoz Coup Plan case is held.</p>	
<p>24 December 2010: The Supreme Military Administrative Court decided to uphold the suspension of the execution of the decision barring the promotion of these three generals.</p>	

1.1.1 Action Plans for Staging a Coup

The strongest blow to the military's reputation causing its delegitimization was the disclosure of action plans to carry out a potential coup against the civilian

government from 2002 to 2009. It is alleged that several circles within the military were planning either to launch a coup and/or create environments which would lead to a coup. The exposure of several coup plans including “Balyoz” (the Sledgehammer), “Kafes” (the Cage), and “İrtica ile Mücadele Eylem Planı” (the Action Plan to Fight Reactionaryism) were brought to court. The content of these plans revealed that these circles would not hesitate to sacrifice the safety of their fellow Turkish citizens, societal peace, and political stability in order to preserve their political privileges and continue to interfere in politics by triggering religious, ethnic, and sectarian tensions and even violence. The disclosure of the alleged plans caused the deterioration of the military’s image, whose symbolic power and legitimacy were derived from its mission of “guardianship.”

Turkish public opinion was shocked with the content of these plans pushing the limits of rationality and began to rethink the role of the military in all aspects of Turkish life, in particular political life. Turkish society is now looking back to past events which are used by the military to justify launching a coup to ensure security and stability, and reevaluating the sincerity and legitimacy of the military’s involvement in civilian politics. The old style in which Turkish society accepted military coups as a necessary evil to counter a worse evil of societal chaos and political instability no longer holds water in light of these recent revelations.

1.1.2 Negligence in Important Military Issues

The second major cause behind the delegitimization of the military is the negligence in key military issues of the day. While the military devoted a great deal of time to interfering in civilian democratic politics, it turned its attention away from one of its key duties, fighting against terrorism. Several documents and inquiries revealing that the military was negligent in its fight against terrorism published in the media.

Since 2007, while the military was preoccupied with planning coups against the democratically elected Turkish government, scores of attacks were carried out against military bases and dozens of Turkish soldiers died. These operations included the attacks on Dağlıca, Aktutun, and Resadiye guard houses in 2009; the attacks in 2010 on the Sarıyayla, Gediktepe, and Hantepe guardhouses as well as the attack on the Iskenderun Navy Supply Support Command. Almost after every attack, the documents indicating negligence of the military despite unmanned aerial vehicles investigating the region immediately shares intelligence with the General Staff and related military units released in the media. These documents

caused serious assertions arguing that the military has been reckless in its fight against terrorism.

The threat of terrorism, which is an issue monopolized by the military to use it as a pretext to interfere in civilian politics, led the deterioration of the military's legitimacy. Thus, the alleged negligence in the fight against terrorism coupled with the disclosure of the coup plans showed the public that the military spent too much time on redesigning politics instead of fulfilling its duties. These revelations followed by the loss of legitimacy eroded the strength of the army's institutional image.

1.1.3 The Military's Defense against the Accusations

The third cause of delegitimization is the defensive attitude of the General Staff and the military judiciary towards the accusations that the military overreached its power and breached its duty. To avoid the military's delegitimization, the General Staff should have allowed military trials and led the civil judiciary carry out its functions without impediment or interference. And it should not have masked the activities of an undisciplined group within the military that did not respect the democratically elected and legitimate Turkish government.

However, the Chief of General Staff General Ilker Basbug refused to accept that some circles in the military might have engaged in planning a coup and breaching the democratic process. However, he did emphasize the loyalty of the military to the democracy. But he chose to stall the investigations for the accusations against the military. He did so most likely out of fear that the claims would be substantiated, leading to further social discontent with the military. Basbug's position increased Turkish society's wariness of the military and even led to the belief that the General Staff may have been involved in planning the coup. As a result of the position of the military's top brass, the loss of legitimacy of the military is deepened.

1.1.4 The Position of the Government: The retreat of the Military behind Democratic Lines

The delegitimization of the military caused it to cede its position of power in Turkish politics. This incident left a space for the government to enact necessary legal and administrative regulations to keep the military contained within the standards of modern democratic rule of law.

The legal regulations that redesign the military-political relations

The 1961 Constitution established for the military an independent institutional identity and a jurisdiction over certain areas of government and politics. Thus, it gained its own autonomous legal structure parallel to the judiciary branch of government (adli yargı)¹ and this power increased with every coup. The military also possesses an independent judiciary system through its military courts. This system addresses the judgment of civilians in military courts and the judgment of military personnel for non-military crimes as well as the military crimes of its own as a primary function. Certain cases, such as the Ergenekon investigation, cause a conflict of jurisdiction between the military and the civilian judiciary branches due to this overlapping legal structure.

This is a key legal issue that the constitutional referendum of 12 September 2010 was trying to address through the amendment of certain articles of the Constitution. In particular, these amendments modified certain aspects of the military's jurisdiction. Examples of these amendments are: (1) the recourse to the judiciary for the decisions of the Supreme Military Council; (2) maintaining an independent judiciary system for the military, which would apply to the members of the military under bench warrants and include the offenses of the Commanders-in-Chief of the armed forces tried in the Supreme Court; (3) and the most important amendment is the general rearrangement of the spheres of duties and areas of jurisdiction for both the military and the civilian judiciary branches.

The amendment of Article 145 narrowed the characterization of “military space” (askeri mahal). The amendment to this article now limits the military jurisdiction to the “cases concerning military crimes committed by military personnel and against military personnel or against their military duties and services.” The amended article also now states that “the crimes committed against state security, constitutional order, and its process will be prosecuted in civil courts in every situation” and “except in situations of war, non-military persons cannot be prosecuted in military courts.”

This amendment clearly demarcates the duties of the military and civilian judicial bodies and avoids jurisdictional overlap, and therefore conflict. The goal of such an amendment is to stop the attempts of the military courts from obfuscating the charges and proceedings against military personnel in cases such as attempted

1. For a detailed analysis on the development of the military judiciary and objections to the military judiciary having a parallel structure to the civilian judiciary, see: Fazıl Hüsnü Erdem and Vahap Coşkun, *Askeri Yargı ve Askeri Vesayet*, SETA Analiz, July 2009.

coups. Going forward, planning to carry out a coup, creating an environment conducive to the justification of a coup, and perpetrating any crimes against the due process of law, democracy and the constitutional order in Turkey will be prosecuted in civilian courts instead of military courts.

De facto applications that redesign the military-political relations

The Annulment of the EMASYA Protocol

In 2010, the most significant administrative change in redesigning military-political civilian relations was the abolishment of the Protocol on Cooperation for Security and Public Order (EMASYA). This Protocol was issued in the unstable political environment of July 7th 1997,-in the aftermath of the fall of the Refah-Yol government.

The EMASYA Protocol allowed for the mobilization of military troops in the case of social unrest. However, it bypassed the approval of the local civilian administration and did not require that local civilian administrators give the go ahead based on security considerations to military troops, the local police, and the regional gendarmerie. This Protocol placed much of the authority in the hands of military commanders to conduct intelligence work for the military in civilian areas with the goal to quell any civilian or social unrest.²

This Protocol became an important item in the political agenda when the prosecution argued that the speeches of retired First Army Commander General Cetin Dogan during Balyoz Security Operation Plan seminar were tantamount to approving the coup based on EMASYA Protocol. As a result, this Protocol was abolished on February 4th 2010.

The 2010 August Supreme Military Council Decisions

In 2010, at the Supreme Military Council meeting, civilian political power took the front seat over the military in deciding the appointments of top military positions. This was a first example of political civilian power exerting its will to use its legal authority instead of merely complying with military custom. Here, the Minister of National Defense, the Prime Minister and the President made the final decision in selecting the military's top command echelon by preventing the promotion of military officials who had been accused of being involved in the alleged Balyoz Coup Plan.

2. For the whole text of the Protocol, see daily newspaper Bugün, "İşte darbecilerin güvendiği o protokol" 25.01.2010. <http://www.bugun.com.tr/haber-detay/90914-darbecilerin-guvendigi-protokol-haberi.aspx> (accessed on 30.12.2010).

The first initiative of the government at the Supreme Military Council meeting was to change military custom by using the civilian government's legal authority in agreeing or not to the promotion of the commands. For example, First Army Commander Hasan Igsiz was expected to be appointed as the Land Forces Commander. But he was not promoted, as his name was mentioned in two coup plans³ targeting the AK Party government. Although Basbug has sent the decree offering to Igsiz - the Land Forces Command and ignoring the government's expressed position against it, the decree was not signed by Prime Minister Erdogan and Minister of National Defense Vecdi Gonul, and thus could not be sent to the President for final approval. As mentioned above, the military custom that was formed over decades in Turkey left it to the military to select who would be promoted among them – and the civilian governments did not interfere in this process. So, Basbug, who had no legal authority over these promotions acted according to military custom and insisted on the appointment of Igsiz. However, Basbug's insistence cost the promotion of Gendarmerie General Commander Atilla Isik, who had to retire after his promotion not to contradict with the established military custom. Within this context, the Supreme Military Council meeting of August 2010 became an important illustration of how civilian political power could exert its legal authority over the military for the first time since 1961. In this instance, the government refused to let the military promote military officials that were allegedly involved in a coup attempt against it and therefore, reduced the autonomous status of the military. The government's action was a step in the direction to undermine military practices that ignore civilian political authority.

At this same meeting, in addition to changing the military custom which authorized the promotion of the commands, the government also refused to promote three generals who had arrest warrants. A week before the meeting, the Istanbul's 10th High Criminal Court - based on Article 65 of the TAF's Personnel Law- issued arrest warrants for 102 regular and retired military officers, including 28 generals and admirals due to the allegations of trying on a coup in Balyoz Security Operation Plan seminar. Hence in the Supreme Military Council meeting, despite the military tried to argue the case for the promotion of three generals, the government refused to promote them as they were involved in the alleged coup. Therefore, a process began which will eventually alter the future of military-political relations and is expected to bring about a new political tradition of civil rule over the past weight of military customs.

3. First, Iğsız is claimed to be the person who prepared the internet diary, which was used as evidence against the AK Party in its closure case. Second, he is accused of ordering the "the Action Plan to Fight Reactionaryism".

After failing to be promoted, these three generals appealed to the Supreme Military Administrative Court to “repeal the decision of being declined their promotion to a higher rank” on August 24th, 2010. The Court cancelled the execution of “declining their promotion to a higher rank” on September 27th, 2010, and rejected the government’s two objections to the cancellation decision on October 15th and November 5th. Then, the generals were relieved of their duties by the Ministry of Defense and the Ministry of Internal Affairs on November 22nd, 2010. So, on November 23rd, these generals also appealed to the Supreme Military Administrative Court requesting the annulment of the suspension from their positions. On December 4th, the Court rejected the request of the three generals to relieve their suspension from their positions and on December 24th the Court decided to stay the suspension of the execution of the government’s decision barring the promotion to a higher rank of the generals.⁴

The legal contention between the Supreme Military Administrative Court decisions taken in favor of the military and the government’s decisions is currently being hotly debated. The details of these debates will not be further explained in this section because the focus is on political-military relations. The Court disregarded the government’s decision and the expression of the political-civilian will by transforming a military practice and the demands of the generals into a legal issue, under the jurisdiction of the Courts. The meaning of the Court decision is obvious. The military, through the Courts, is sending a message that the decisions of the Supreme Military Council are the realm of the military and that the civilian political power should not interfere in this process. This position would condemn the civilian political power to a limited authority over the final say in the decision making process of top military officials. It would, however, let the Supreme Military Council act as a supra-governmental decision-making authority instead of a decision-making body in which the government has political authority over. The military would, therefore, pursue its institutional and political autonomy, protected by the Court. This ‘absolute autonomy’ of the military from the democratically elected civilian political power runs counter to the rational of Turkey being a democratic, constitutional state. This recent outcome should only strengthen the objections over the past years against the legal and democratic legitimacy of the Supreme Military Administrative Court.

4. The trial process is explained according to the note BN - 129 / 10 of the General Staff on 25 November 2010. For the online version of the note, see: http://www.tsk.tr/10_ARSIV/10_1_Basin_Yayin_Faaliyetleri/10_3_Bilgi_Notlari/2010/BN_129.htm (accessed on 30.12.2010)

Redrafting of the National Security Policy Document

A significant indicator of the government's current efforts to democratize military-political relations is the redrafting of the National Security Policy Document (NSPD) on November 22nd 2010. The NSPD is considered a guideline, which encompasses the major points of Turkey's national security policies. It is a document that lays out Turkey's most important policymakers' views on the country itself and the world. The document is nicknamed the "red book" or the "secret constitution" because of the nature of the information it contains. In particular, it underlines the security perspective of the military and what it considers internal and external threats to Turkey. The nature of the security threats that Turkey faces domestically and internationally is the source of frequent debates among the Turkish public. And this threat perception has been the justification for military intervention into politics. Within the context of these very debates, on November 22nd 2010, the AK Party government redrafted the NSPD by examining priorities in the areas of domestic politics and foreign policy. The government subsequently chose to exclude from the document certain aspects previously considered as 'internal threats.' The exclusion of these internal threats from the NSPD can be anal

1.1.5 Perspective for 2011

Turkey is becoming a regional power through its dynamic, proactive foreign policy and its strong developing economy. This position of Turkey requires that it possess a modern and strong military. Hence, the military has a definite role to play in this "new Turkey." However, the year 2011 will mostly likely have a similar agenda as 2010 from the standpoint of the military. The involvement of military personnel in the continuing Ergenekon trial and alleged coup plans will make the military become more of a political actor rather than a security sector actor also in 2011. But the military should stand by the democratically elected Turkish government rather than undermining Turkey's democratization process.

The TAF, through its new command echelon, has two major options to choose from: (1) it can risk bringing Turkey to a lose-lose position because of its reflexes of trying to preserve the status quo or, (2) it can become an indispensable component of the "new Turkey" set to be a global actor by choosing the road for a dynamic of change. Recent developments show a mixed picture, the military still seems caught between the old and the new Turkey. As an institution of the Turkish state, the TAF should be significantly feeling the pressure of Turkey becoming

a regional power, especially compared to other Turkish institutions. With a new military command echelon, loyal to the democratic process, the TAF will have policies and actions that are consistent with the “new Turkey” and its potential as a regional and economic leader.

1.2 THE KURDISH QUESTION

In 2010, the Kurdish Question continued to dominate Turkish politics as it has for the past 25 years. However, debates intensified throughout the year with the “Democratic Initiative (Demokratik Açılım)” process instituted by the Justice and Development Party (AK Party). In December 2009, a third wave of the police operations against the members of Kurdish Communities Union (KCK) were launched, which had an impact on the issue. In fact, the detentions made in the last week of 2009 dominated the whole agenda of 2010 and the related KCK trial marked the new year. In the beginning of the January 2010, the images of handcuffed defendants in Diyarbakir streets determined the agenda for Kurdish politicians. “First Halepçe, now handcuffs (Önce Halepçe, sonra Kelepçe),” was the slogan written on billboards and prepared by the Peace and Democracy Party (BDP) to mobilize Kurdish people.

During the BDP’s Congress on February 1st 2010, Selahattin Demirtas and Gulten Kisanak were elected as co-leaders. This election led analyst to question whether there would be a policy change in the BDP. While a possible policy change in BDP was being debated, the introduction of the Democratic Society Congress (DTK) in Kurdish Politics changed the agenda of Kurdish politics. This initiative which launched under the co-presidencies of Ahmet Turk and Aysel Tugluk started a debate in its last meeting of December 18th -19th 2010 with the “Democratic Autonomy Proposal (Demokratik Özerklik Taslağı).”

Therefore, 2010 saw a dual trend: one of normalization and opening the debate and another of continuing violence and status quo. Unfortunately, the PKK used ceasefire as political tactic of manipulating Kurdish public opinion and continued to launch bloody attacks in periods that it declared ceasefire. In June 2010, when it finalized a ceasefire, NGOs in the heavily Kurdish populated regions mobilized to pressure PKK to declare ceasefire again. Finally, PKK declared that it extended the ceasefire period until the General Elections scheduled for June 2011 with the condition that the ceasefire would be revised in March 2011. Given the PKK’s history, it remains unclear whether the ceasefire is a temporary hold on violence or if it is a strategy or a commitment.

In addition to the ceasefire discussions, the KCK operations represented another series of crises that marked the year of 2010. The detentions of Kurdish activists began at the end of the 2009 and continued throughout 2010 in order to stop street demonstrations and prevent a parallel structure of PKK in the region. Kurdish public discontent was further triggered because of the method of detention and the images leaked to the press of the defendants in handcuffs. Moreover, at outset of the trial in October 2010, the demand by the Kurdish defendants to testify in Kurdish set off a new crisis. The operations against the KCK and the detentions became, in a short time, new sources of political tension.

Table 2

TIMELINE IN KURDISH QUESTION IN 2010

- 1 February 2010:** Selahattin Demirtas and Gulten Kışanak were elected as co-leaders at the Peace and Democracy Party (BDP) Congress.
- 30 April 2010:** When the PKK attacked the Saryayla Gendarmerie guardhouse in Nazimiye and Tunceli, 5 soldiers were killed and 6 soldiers are wounded.
- 31 May 2010:** 6 soldiers were killed and 9 soldiers were wounded in the PKK attack against the Iskenderun Navy Supply Support Command in Hatay.
- 19 June 2010:** 9 soldiers were killed and 15 soldiers were wounded in the PKK attack against the military unit in Gediktepe in the town of Semdinli in Hakkari. During the operations against the PKK, 2 more soldiers were killed by a PKK planted mine and the number of soldiers killed reached 11.
- July 2010:** The PKK attacked the Hantepe military unit in Cukurca, 7 soldiers were killed and 8 soldiers were wounded.
- 13 August 2010:** The PKK declared a ceasefire until 20 September.
- 24 August 2010:** PKK murdered Imam Aziz Tan in a mosque in Hakkari.
- 9 September 2010:** 9 PKK militants were killed in the cave where they were hiding in Hakkari.
- 17 September 2010:** The bomb exploded on the road in the village of Gecitli in the town of Durankaya - killing 10 civilian people.
- 30 September 2010:** The PKK declared the extension of the cease fire for one month.
- 19 October 2010:** The trial of the Kurdish Communities Union (KCK) activists is held.
- 31 October 2010:** The PKK declared the extension of the cease fire until the General Elections of June 2011.
- 31 October 2010:** A suicide bomb exploded in Taksim, Istanbul.
- 18-19 December 2010:** The "Democratic Autonomy Proposal" is discussed by the Democratic Society Congress.

Another fundamental issue in resolving the Kurdish question is determining who the key interlocutors are in establishing negotiations. The AK Party and the

CHP considered talks with the head of the PKK, Abdullah Ocalan, as a plausible course of action to disarm PKK. At this juncture, several groups are vying to be the true representatives of the Kurdish voice in resolving the Kurdish Question. They include the following movements and organizations: BDP, KCK, DTK, PKK and Ocalan. Although they may all have a role to play as actors in the resolution process of Kurdish Question, the leadership of Ocalan has a clear advantage over these other actors. There are pros and cons to having multiple actors in such discussions. On the one hand, they can represent a greater pool of Kurdish people and their different positions. But on the other hand, multiple actors can further complicate progress and create crisis in the resolution of the Kurdish Question.

The current civil disobedience actions brought a new dimension to the problem while the resolution process is still in the works. Although civil disobedience is not the usual method used by Kurdish political movements, there has been a recent tendency towards this type of resistance. For example, the boycott on schools for a week at the beginning of the first semester was the first instance of civil disobedience. The civil disobedience in different types as a method of protest will likely continue during the new year.

At the end of 2010, the Kurdish Question entered into a new phase. The “the Democratic Autonomy Proposal,” which was formulated at the Democratic Society Congress of December 18-19, 2010, had the effect of a time bomb. The demands of this proposal, such as “the formation of a native defense unit, the right to fly the Kurdish flag, Kurdish as the official language in certain Kurdish regions, and the election of local parliaments” caused a significant reaction among the Turkish public. Hence, the year 2010 began with discussions on the Kurdish Question and ended with the same discussions.

The ceasefire discussions, the civil disobedience protests and the declaration of the democratic autonomy proposal reveals that the strategy of the Kurdish political movement is centered on increasing its potential votes and regaining votes that went to the AK Party’s among Kurdish voters. Proposing radical demands like the formation of a native defensive unit or the right to fly the Kurdish flag during the ceasefire period is a part of this strategy. This new tactic of BDP is to escalate the competition with the AK Party to regain its electorate and strengthen its control over the Kurdish population. Because the BDP suffered a loss of votes in favor of the AK Party in the regions where it usually predominates, it seeks to be the only actor representing the Kurdish electorate after the general election of 2011.

One of the salient issues for the upcoming general elections of June 2011 is the Kurdish Question. Therefore, there will be much debate surrounding two key

topics within the Kurdish question: “the demands for democratic autonomy and education in Kurdish in certain Kurdish regions”. It is likely that the debates over the Kurdish question will intensify and heat up prior to the general elections of 2011.

1.2.1 The Violence Continued in 2010

As highlighted above, despite the “Democratic Opening” project and periods of ceasefires, PKK led violence continued in Turkey. Even when Prime Minister Erdogan and DTP Co-leader Ahmet Turk planned to meet, the meeting was cancelled because of the PKK attack in July 2010 on the Hantepe military unit in the town of Cukurca in Hakkari, where 7 soldiers were killed. Similar incidents occurred throughout 2010 as outlined in the Table 2 above in order to manipulate the stable political environment.

Although 2010 ended with PKK’s ceasefire, it will not be a surprise if a period of renewed violence begins again in 2011 when the PKK’s decision of ceasefire ends in March. The modus operandi of the PKK has always been to employ weapons and violence as its key tool in its fight against the Turkish state. Furthermore, the PKK’s establishment aims to trap the Turkish Government in a perpetual state of violence – by carrying out attacks which will trigger reprisals against PKK strongholds. Thus, if the state perpetrates any cross-border operations or continues to carry out its low-intensive war against the PKK, the PKK will condemn the Turkish State by claiming that Turkish Armed Forces continue to commit violations of the Kurdish people’s human rights.

The PKK may relaunch attacks as a way to influence the results of the 2011 general elections. The PKK would be looking to discredit the ruling AK Party for its counter operations against these attacks, thus losing part of the Kurdish electorate it had gained. In addition, the AK Party would also lose ground among Turkish voters. The image of a more funerals of killed Turkish soldiers could cause of the AKP’s electorate to vote for other parties, as they would consider the AKP to be soft on terrorism. Given that several hard-line groups within the PKK are against negotiations with the Turkish government, they may continue to sabotage the “Democratic Opening” process. Therefore, once again, it will not be a surprise if a period of renewed violence restarts.

However, Ocalan’s leadership is a key determinant to draw the path that the PKK and legal Kurdish movement (BDP) will adopt. The greatest challenge remains

bringing PKK militants “down from the mountains” and disarming them. Current negotiations appear to postpone this necessary outcome because of the reactions to the ‘Habur Greetings’⁵. However, the solution to the ongoing Kurdish issue requires a demilitarized and integrated PKK into the political process as part of the new balance of power in the region. To this end, the BDP has a fundamental responsibility, as it needs to develop new policies that would facilitate the disarmament of the PKK. Part of the BDP’s political objective should be to allay the Turkish public’s fear of the risk of renewed violence.

1.2.2 Bringing the PKK “Down from the Mountains” or Propping up the KCK: The KCK’s Political Future?

The other major incident that marked 2010 was the police operations against the Kurdish Communities Union (KCK- Koma Ciwakene Kürdistan) and the ensuing detentions which date back to 2009. The first police operation against the KCK members accused of being a PKK formation in cities to control civilian politics was launched on April 14th 2009. During these operations, 52 KCK members were detained for their involvement as the top echelon of the KCK. Among them, there were three vice-presidents of DTP⁶ (Democratic Society Party) including Kamuran Yuksel, Bayram Altun, and Selma Irmak.

The second police operation to arrest KCK members who has arrest warrants was conducted on June 17th 2009. Eighteen members were detained, including mostly DTP members as well as members of the provincial assembly. During the third operation on September 11th 2009, 35 members, including the members of trade unions, were detained. The simultaneous detentions held throughout 11 cities in Turkey, including Diyarbakir, on December 24th 2009 attracted public attention towards these operations. However the most striking detentions were conducted at the end of the December 2009 because significant Kurdish political figures were arrested. The detention of several elected mayors and politicians from the DTP provoked shock, especially when the media broadcasted images of handcuffed KCK members. In fact, the KCK was a buffer mechanism organized by Kurdish

5. Disarmament of the PKK is one of the initial goals of the “democratic opening”. For this end, around thirty members of the PKK came from the mountains in Northern Iraq and surrendered to the police at the Habur border gate. After their quick interrogation with the officials in the border gate, the militants are released. The tension is increased when these militants are greeted in cheers by Kurdish people in the region while Turkish public is quite disturbed.

6. DTP is the former political party of legal Kurdish political movement before the BDP and closed down in December 2009 by the Constitutional Court verdict because of its relations with illegal PKK. Right after the closure of DTP, the legal Kurdish political movement established BDP and all units of DTP transformed to BDP.

activists and politicians to bring the PKK “down from the mountains.” It is also an organization set up by the militants of the mountain to have a presence in urban centers.

The indictments were prepared by the Diyarbakir General Attorney’s Office and accepted on May 28th 2009 by 6th High Criminal Court claimed that the KCK takes orders from Murat Karayilan, the head of the PKK in the Kandil Mountains of Northern Iraq. In the indictment, it is claimed that Karayilan instructed the KCK to “ensure that Kurdish children demand their rights in street demonstrations.” The GA’s Office also alleged that the KCK was trying to orient the mayors with their movement and align mayors’ positions with their political ideology, so in turn they could use the local administrative resources of the principalities for the activities of PKK.

Diyarbakir entered the new year with “First Halepce, now handcuffs (once Halepçe, sonra kelepçe)” written billboards. Even these posters demonstrate the anger of the Kurdish people because of KCK operations and detentions besides the evaluation of cause and effect relation. The PKK, which could not manipulate the Kurdish people during the democratic opening process, has gained the advantage of mobilizing people through KCK trials.

Besides these developments, the defendants in KCK trials that began on 19 October 2010 in Diyarbakir triggered a new crisis with the demand of testifying in Kurdish. The trial of 151 defendants with 100 arrested accelerated the tension in the region. KCK trial previously was a simple case of public order problem but the emergence of the testimony crisis turned the trial into a political case. The tension escalated with the attitude of the judges who prevented the defendants to testify in Kurdish and recorded the Kurdish language as an “unknown language”.

The KCK trial that marked the year of 2010 will continue to set the agenda of 2011. Kurdish politics is now creating new tools to drive the masses, as their demands such as having Kurdish television channel, Kurdish language courses and Kurdish institute are compensated. Now Kurdish politicians try to mobilize the masses through the exploitation of KCK trial. On the other hand, the KCK trial, besides its all cause and effect relations, contradicts with the “democratic initiative” process as it manipulated the peaceful resolution of Kurdish issue through democratic opening project.

While there is a democratic opening process pursued for the resolution of the Kurdish Question, the detentions of several elected majors and politicians con-

tradict with the nature of this initiative and cause serious questions. The top rated question is “are the detentions in KCK operations conducted in contrast to government or with its approval?” While the Kurdish perspective evaluates the detentions as the maneuver to prevent the resolution, Ankara thinks differently about this process.

1.2.3 The Obstacle before the Solution: The Struggle for Becoming a Key Actor

The struggle to become a key factor in the resolution of the Kurdish Question is another dimension of the ongoing crisis that triggered heated discussions in 2010 and it will likely continue in 2011. This problem goes beyond the Kurdish Question itself and it has become the major source of the current deadlock. This struggle plays itself out for both the State and the Kurdish movements and their respective politicians. The major power brokers on the State side have come to an agreement on the need to resolve the Kurdish question. Therefore, the likelihood that the State will provoke another crisis is low and their best efforts appear to be geared towards moving the process forward. However, the situation on the Kurdish side remains more problematic and complex. There are six major actors representing the various Kurdish political movements, which further complicate the resolution of the Kurdish Question. Because these key Kurdish interlocutors are not in agreement, have competing and even sometimes starkly contradictory positions and methods of resolving the Kurdish question.

The Kurdish Opening project is an integral part of a process started with constitutional amendment package drafted in March 2010 that “settles accounts with the coups.” This process was strengthened with the decisions taken in the 2010 August Supreme Military Council Meeting and reinforced by the approval of constitutional amendment package with 58% of the vote in 2010 September referendum. In addition, the EU accession process placed a great amount of pressure over the past years on the Turkish Government to resolve the Kurdish Question. Since the election of the AK Party in 2002, civilian power, democracy, and the rule of law have been strengthened, while the effects of military tutelage were reduced. A significant consequence of this democratic evolution is that all of the state institutions, which are supposed to represent the “common purpose” of the state, finally reached a consensus to agree on the “basics” that need to be achieved to resolve the Turkish issue. The key state actors, which are: the ruling party (AK Party), the major opposition parties (CHP, MHP and BDP), the Turkish Armed Forces

(TSK), the National Intelligence Organization (MIT), the Police, the Judiciary, the Media, and even what is understood as the “deep state” structures – came together around this “common purpose,” which gave rise to a real opportunity for the resolution of the Kurdish Question.

The Kurdish political wing, however, has not shown a similar transformation in the face of these recent developments in traditional Turkish state politics as well as the positive and conciliatory attitude of the AK Party. The necessity to persuade multiple Kurdish actors - such as PKK (Kurdish guerillas in the Northern Iraq Mountains), Abdullah Ocalan’s movements, the Peace and Democracy Party (BDP, the legal representative of Kurdish political Movement), Kurdish Communities Union (KCK), the Democratic Society Congress (DTK), and European Politicians who support the Kurdish movement– has slowed down the resolution process. Especially, it is clear that the political differences and strategies between the PKK and the BDP cannot be easily unified. Even if we put aside the divergence of opinions and their respective method of operations between these groups, their final political demands at the negotiating table still diverge, posing a serious problem in finding a common ground for a solution. The Kurdish actors hold conflicting positions and have entered into different alliances in determining their political behavior during watershed events like the Resadiye attack, the boycott of the constitutional amendments vote in the parliament, the massacre of civilians in Gecitli, and the boycott of the 12 September 2010 referendum.

In addition to the diversity of actors on the part of the BDP and the PKK, the fact that these groups are comparable in strength and in their following (number of members) represents another difficulty for the resolution process. No one movement seems to have the majority of the Kurdish people on their side nor do they have an overwhelming number of members. Since these movements all possess a legitimate and comparable power base, their competing claims to leadership of the Kurdish cause renders it difficult to establish a centralized political entity that can produce a clear policy for negotiations with the Turkish state. Because of this fractioning of political power, among the major Kurdish movements and minor Kurdish movements, alliances change very rapidly. Contrary to common public opinion, even the ‘Imrali’ movement is caught up in this shuffling and reshuffling of the balance of power among the Kurdish movements. International involvement further complicates these alliances. Hence, there is little continuity in their political aims.

At this point, the struggle of which group will become the key interlocutor for the Turkish State directly affects the resolution process of the Kurdish Question.

Just as the development of the resolution process impacts the struggle among the actors, the constantly changing balance between the actors influence the solution in return. It is clear that this problem has become a serious obstacle for the resolution process. To start the negotiations for the resolution of the Kurdish question in earnest, the Kurdish side needs to find a common ground and choose their key interlocutors, representing the views of the Kurdish people as a whole. As it stands now, it is impossible for the solution process to move forward when there are multiple influential actors. If the Kurdish movements do not come to terms with the fractioning of their movement and continue to have a confrontational position towards each other and the Turkish State will react to any further provocations. The Turkish State is trying to prevent the renewing the cycle of endless violence. Also, if the Kurdish actors cannot remedy their problem of leadership and the process continues to be stalled because of it, the Kurdish Question itself will be put on a back burner.

1.2.4 2011's Agenda on the Kurdish Question?

Even before the results of the next general elections of June 2011, Turkish politicians must address the key issues salient to the Kurdish Question. The top topics of discussion are - bilingualism, democratic autonomy, and who are the main Kurdish interlocutors in the subsequent negotiations. The democratic initiative process facilitated an unprecedented “coming to terms” with the Kurdish Question in 2010. Indeed 2010 symbolized a watershed year, in the context of Kurdish Question, as many taboos were taken down, including the acceptance on the Turkish side of Ocalan as a de facto actor in the process.

Abdullah Ocalan's political position will be the corner stone of the course of future developments on the Kurdish question. What is known as the - “Ocalan factor” is pivotal for the process of finding answers to the Kurdish question. This is an enormous step forward, because the Turkish Government now speaks of Ocalan as a counterpart. This is light years away from the days of denying the existence of the Kurds as an ethnic community. In 2011, it is still not clear whether Ocalan will assume the position of a “negotiator.” But it is certain that during the negotiations of the state with Ocalan, his position as an “actor” will be legitimized and reinforces his power over PKK and Kurdish politics.

Overall, the developments in the year 2010 clearly show that the Kurdish Question moved onto a new phase that we can hope that the period of armed struggle is de facto over. Yet, there is still no guarantee because there has been no official denunciation of violence by the armed actors within the Kurdish political move-

ment. Recently, Ankara feels more intensely the pressure for a resolution of the Kurdish Question. In this context, “the democratic autonomy and education in Kurdish” issues will continue to be debated. While the discussion of these two issues as a package carries the risk of slowing down the resolution process, the separation of the two issues would help the management of the process.

If talks with Ocalan continue in this liberal and more positive environment, it will be less likely that violence will erupt in the short term. However, it is possible that a fringe group of the PKK launches a violent attack to end the ceasefire. While the process continues with both pessimism and optimism, 2011 will be a year where important steps will be taken to resolve the Kurdish Question.

1.3 REFERENDUM

The voting of the constitutional amendment package in September 2010 referendum was the most significant event in 2010’s political agenda. The content of the constitutional amendments will have far reaching legal consequences on Turkey’s political system. In order to understand the effects of the referendum on the future of Turkey’s political system, the meaning of the constitutional amendments package should be assessed.

1.3.1 The Referendum’s Political Impact

In the first years of Turkey’s Republic, much of the former political elite were eliminated and new elite transpired based upon the relations between the CHP, the “Regime,” and the State bureaucracy. In 1950, the first general elections with secret ballots and open counting were held. The CHP, which ruled the country by single-party system for 27 years, finally ceded the government to the DP (Democrat Party).⁷ Public will for the first time determined the political power and continued to exercise this right over the political process throughout Turkey’s Republican history except the interventions of the military.⁸ This trend during 1950s was about to eliminate the CHP-bureaucracy coalition while on 27 May 1960 the military staged a coup and dismissed the parliament in order to prevent the erosion of this coalition.

7. For a detailed analysis of DP’s relations with the CHP, bureaucracy and society, see: Kemal Karpat, *Türk Demokrasi Tarihi*, Timaş Publications, 2010.

8. For a detailed analysis on the influence of free elections over the history of the Republic of Turkey, see: Hasan Bülent Kahraman, *Türkiye’nin Yapısal Analizi-II (1920-1960)*, Agora Library, 2010.

Table 3

TIME LINE OF REFERENDUM

- 22 March 2010:** The AK Party prepared the Constitutional Amendment Package.
- 22 March 2010:** The AK Party presented the package to the opposition parties and NGOs.
- 30 March 2010:** The Constitutional Amendment Package is submitted to the parliament for debate and vote.
- 7 May 2010:** The Constitutional Amendment Package is adopted in the parliament and submitted to a referendum.
- 12 May 2010:** President Gul approved the amendment package.
- 14 May 2010:** The CHP applied to the Constitutional Court to repeal the amendments.
- 7 July 2010:** The Constitutional Court accepted to submit the amendments to the referendum with the partial cancellation of three articles among 26.
- 12 September 2010:** The results of the referendum were in favor of the Constitutional Amendment Package.

The Coup of May 27th (1960) and the 1961 Constitution constructed the basis of political equation that is still in place. To summarize, this system engendered an institutional bureaucracy that controls the elected government and separates the spheres of the government from the state and also the society from the regime. Subsequently, new institutions were created and they had the authority and the mission to guarantee and guard the established ideology. The CHP was the political party behind this is institutionalization of this political system. However, it became the role of the military and civil bureaucracy to guard these institutions, for example: the MGK (National Security Council), the AYM (Constitutional Court), the DPT (State Planning Organization), and the Senate, etc... The bureaucracy was able to control legislation via these institutions through this political tutelage system. This system continued well into the 1990s through 12 March 1971 memorandum and 12 September 1980 military coup.

Furthermore, the end of the Cold War in early the 1990s undermined the established perspective based on security concerns. This perspective had been neglecting the social diversity and cultural differences for the sake of secure stable political environment. Hence through the 1990s, social movements and identity demands of ethnic groups set the political agenda. But neither the bureaucracy nor the major political parties understood the content and the extent of this transformation. As the bureaucratic power resisted revising the existing system by ignoring the demands of social identities, the cracks in the political system

expanded. The bureaucracy and the major political parties supporting the bureaucracy are weakened as they continued to suppress the growth of the new parties sensitive to these demands.

The AK Party government, established in 2001, enacted various legal regulations that enabled the inclusion of social dynamics into the political system. Moreover, the push towards the EU accession process fostered many social and political reforms. At first, the bureaucracy strongly resisted this new AKP government, which was striving to implement new regulations that went beyond simply following the format in regards to EU process. The bureaucracy met resistance on behalf of the AKP government representing Turkish societal demands that wanted to see substantive reforms put in place. Under this changing political and legal framework, the old tutelage system where the weight of the military bureaucracy was preponderant began to lose ground.⁹ The legal regulations enacted in the context of the EU process also changed the internal-external dynamics in regards to the judicial bureaucracy control power over Turkey's political system. The high judiciary branch would often act beyond its theoretical scope of power to influence legislative and the executive functions, thus interfering in the separation of powers of a supposedly democratic system. When the members of high judiciary perceived that the new environment was weakening the military bureaucracy and the opposition parties to the AKP Government were not able to garner enough political and social support among Turkish citizens, they took it upon themselves to be the guardians of the old Republican Regime. They acted in a way to restrain and undercut the democratically elected government taking the risk of undermining the legitimacy and the prestige of the judiciary, as an institution.

A number of legal cases brought to High Courts or legal decisions of these courts were made only to ensure the continuity of Turkey's bureaucratic establishment and old social order. These cases include, the very polemic and controversial head scarf ban (after 28 February 1997 post-modern coup), the invention of "367 rule" (the quorum of presidential elections which is never applied before 2007 Presidential elections under AK Party government), the party closure cases, and the CMK regulation (Criminal Procedure Law) used as a tool of Bureaucracy to sustain its power over the government policies.

In response to this abuse of power by the judiciary, the AK Party Government decided to restructure the judiciary so it would fulfill its rightful role and could not interfere in the legislative and executive democratically elected branches of power.

9. For an analysis on military-political relations under the AK Party government, see: Tanel Demirel, *2000'li Yıllarda Asker ve Siyaset: Kontrollü Değişim ile Statüko arasında Türk Ordusu*, SETA ANALİZ, February 2010.

This is the reason behind the Constitutional amendment package. In this context, the Constitutional amendment package adopted by the referendum in September 2010 is a substantial step altering the political equation formulated by the previous Constitutions of 1961 and 1982. The key components among the amendments are regulations that would eliminate the bureaucratic oligarchy by removing the immunity of the military and the judiciary and their closed circuit mechanisms.

The amendments also transform the existing system from one - which allows the high judiciary to block or limit social demands on behalf of the bureaucracy - to a judicial system that truly reflects the plurality of Turkish society and that is more in sink with new social and political trends. With the exception of the MHP (National Movement Party) and BDP (Peace and Democracy Party), who had another political agenda in mind during this Referendum, most political parties took a position for or against the amendment package. This position was based on their vision of how these amendments would impact their respective roles in the future of the political-bureaucratic structure.

1.3.2 The Political Consequences of the Referendum

The September 12th 2010 referendum will critically influence Turkey's political system, its judicial structure, the future of its political actors and parties, as well as the upcoming political agenda.

The underlying ideology behind the referendum campaign was to determine the core principles to guide the consolidation of democracy in Turkey. It allowed the ethnic, sectarian, ideological and political tensions to be reduced but it also caused the formation of new alliances as well as the disintegration of former ones. By disregarding the importance of democracy for Turkey, the nationalist actors, who represent the old political values, tried to use the referendum process as a political tool to express a vote of no confidence against the AKP Government, but failed.

The AK Party and the CHP (Republican People's Party), proponents of the 'Yes' and 'No' sides respectively acted in accordance with the two options. The AK Party developed a campaign based on a democracy versus coup opposition - offering the Constitution amendment package as a solution and guarantee against future coups. This message found profound support in the minds of the Turkish public to the extent that many overcame their traditional political camps and loyalties. However, the CHP also pursued a campaign that emphasized its opposition to AK Party and Prime Minister Erdogan instead of focusing the campaign on the principles of democracy.

The adoption of the Constitutional amendment package with 58% votes strengthened the political actors aiming to eliminate the old tutelage system. Therefore, the institutions within the Turkish state that were part of this old system were weakened. First, the judiciary branch, which since 2002 had become an obstacle to democratic practices in Turkey, was reigned in. Second, there was a leadership change at the helm of the CHP and consequently a pursuit of new policies in the CHP. Third, because the power of the State bureaucracy and its alliance with the CHP was reduced – the CHP needed to become a political party again and find support among its constituencies. To do this, the CHP also had to adopt the language of by democracy and freedom.

Other point that should be emphasized in the context of the referendum is the agenda of the new constitution. The new constitutional debates that will dominate the agenda of the 2011 general elections are an integral part of the discussion of the “new political system” and the “new Turkey”.

1.4 POLITICAL PARTIES

2010 was a politically intense and active year in Turkish politics and for its political parties. The Constitutional amendment package and the Referendum of September 12th 2010 further heated the political atmosphere. There were changes in the leadership of several political parties in 2010, including the BDP (state the name if full), the CHP (Republican People’s Party), and the SP (Felicity Party). The CHP held two party conventions congresses throughout the 2010. In addition to and for now ended the discussions inside the party. Besides changes in the leadership of Turkey’s major political parties, a number of them dissolved, reformed or made new alliances. On January 5th, 2010, the Motherland Party and the DP (Democrat Party) merged under the DP roof and Husamettin Cindoruk was elected as the party’s chairman. After some turmoil, on September 26th 2010, Chairman Numan Kurtulmus left the SP declared that he is going to establish a new party.

Table 4

TURKISH POLITICAL PARTIES IN 2010

February 1st 2010: Selahattin Demirtas and Gulten Kişanak are elected as co-leaders at the congress of Peace and Democracy Party (BDP).

March 1st 2010: The CHP (Republican People’s Party) deputy Hakki Suha Okay declared in parliament that they were not going to support the Constitutional amendment package. March 22nd 2010: The AK Party prepared the Constitutional amendment package.

May 7th 2010: The secret video of Deniz Baykal leader of the CHP is leaked to the internet.

May 10th 2010: Deniz Baykal resigned from the leadership of CHP because of the scandal subsequent to the release of the secret video.

May 22nd 2010: Kemal Kılıcdaroglu is elected at the CHP’s the 33rd congress, as the new leader.

July 8th 2010: The CHP leader, Kemal Kılıcdaroglu, declared that they were not satisfied with the decision of Constitutional Court on the constitutional amendment package and would vote for ‘No’ in the referendum.

July 13th 2010: The MHP leader, Devlet Bahceli, started a ‘No’ campaign for the referendum.

July 22nd 2010: The BDP declared in their meeting in Sisli, Istanbul on 1st August that they did not support the constitutional amendment package and started a boycott campaign for the referendum

November 5th 2010: Secretary General of the CHP Onder Sav is dismissed from duty.

December 18th 2010: In the 15th extraordinary congress, new party assembly members of the CHP are elected.

December 18th – 19th 2010: At the Democratic Society Congress the “Democratic Autonomy Proposal” is discussed.

2010 was a successful year for the AK Party compared to other political parties. The opposition parties failed to formulate an alternative political strategy to Turkish voters during the referendum process. However, the AK Party has now set expectations high, as the Turkish voters approach the June 2011 general elections. Nevertheless, unless there is an extraordinary upset or crisis, the AK Party is poised to for its third government. The central issue for these upcoming general elections is voter percentage turn out and allocation.

The change in the CHP’s leadership created an excitement at the grassroots level of the party. Kemal Kılıcdaroglu’s CHP is not the same party as Baykal’s. 2011 will reveal if a real change within the CHP is on the table. In fact, Kılıcdaroglu may be the CHP’s last chance to transform itself. Although the CHP under Kılıcdaroglu’s leadership emerged as the main opposition to the AKP during the referendum process, Kılıcdaroglu has a populist style and his messages until now are a bit devoid of political substance.

2010 was a turbulent year for the MHP and the referendum process placed further pressure on the party at the grassroots level. To re-energize the party, the party's leaders called on the party's old ideologues. The MHP may run the risk for the general elections of not meeting the election threshold. This may exacerbate tensions within this nationalist political movement.

The BDP was another party that saw a leadership change. At the BDP's Congress on February 1st 2010, Selahattin Demirtas and Gulden Kisanak were elected as co-presidents. Also the BDP was struggling to determine its political stance in Kurdish issue. It swayed between a more hardline approach of PKK and the statements of Ocalan in Imrali and other Kurdish movement in Europe.

The opposition parties, which were not represented in parliament also, had an active year. The Motherland Party and the DP merged. The DP will hold its Congress and a great deal of issues remain on the agenda. The party advocated for the "NO" vote during the referendum. However, this disturbed some circles supporting the democratic agenda of the referendum in the party. As a result of this disagreement, a shift from the DP to the MHP and the CHP in the Aegean and Thrace regions occurred. These electoral regions can make all the difference if the MHP want to reach its election threshold and for the CHP to prove that Kilicdaroglu can successfully lead the party.

1.4.1 The Test of AK Party with Itself

In 2010, the AK Party re-energized itself successfully. In the local elections, held on March 29th 2009, the AKP saw its votes drop from 46.7% to 38.6%. As a result, at its Congress it made changes and it also moved around its Cabinet. The AK Party re-engaged and renewed its contract with society in its fight against the old political tutelage system through the September 2010 referendum process. In this context, the referendum consolidated the AK Party's political power before the 2011 general elections.

The forte of the AK Party has much to do with its strong leadership, the personality of Prime Minister Erdogan and the party's reformist character. As it prepares for 2011 general elections, there are truly no rivals on Turkey's political scene to challenge and match with the advantage the AKP has gained.

The AK Party has thus far avoided the common trap in which many Turkish political parties have fallen victim to political erosion after holding office and leading the government for several terms. The AKP is still the lead political party and

garners strong social support after eight years in power, two local and two general elections, and a referendum. AK Party will prevail over all the records in the 60 years multi-party and Adnan Menderes era if it establishes its third government. Although it is likely that the AK Party will win the upcoming elections, it may still not obtain enough seats to legislate a new constitution without a governmental coalition.

Throughout Turkish Republican political history, when a referendum was held - and it was successful - the incumbent party also won the following general elections. The local elections of 1973, 1977, 1989 and 1994 illustrate this point. The September 12th referendum is a good omen and is a definite sign that the 2011 June general elections will be favorable to the AKP.

The AK Party submitted the constitutional amendment package to Parliament in April 2010. However, the parliament did not approve the amendment package with the required number of votes. Erdogan took a risk in bringing the package to the public for referendum. If the referendum resulted in a “NO,” it could have turned into a vote of no confidence for the AK Party Government. But Erdogan’s bet played off and he took home a victory.

Erdogan led a referendum campaign based on the following platform: (1) denouncing the recourse to coups in Turkey; (2) eliminating the tutelage of the bureaucracy, the military, and the high judiciary over civilian politics; and (3) reinforcing the separation of powers and furthering democracy with adoption of the constitutional amendment package. As an overwhelming majority of 58% of Turkish voters said “YES,” the referendum demonstrated that the electorate found this campaign meaningful. Turkish society sent a message that they viewed these amendments as a further step in developing democracy.

The referendum results indicated that in addition to the AKP’s own electoral base, voters of the MHP characterized as “idealists” (especially in Central Anatolia) and liberal-left circles generally organized around NGOs supported AK Party’s position on the Constitutional amendment package. Although there are some bright lines that these two groups would not cross or agree upon - their support to the referendum package demonstrates the overarching goal for Turkey’s political and legal system to be more democratic. Hence, the 2010 was the year in Turkey to consolidate democracy and introduce a new Constitution.

Also, the referendum results point out that Turkish society is eager to change the status quo and end the domination of the political-bureaucracy establishment to

consolidate democracy. This loftier goal is more important than local agendas. The support for the Constitutional amendments by both idealists and socialist, who fought against each other for a quarter century during the Cold War, indicates that the consolidation of democracy has become a unifying ideal in Turkey.

In 2011, the main political issues for the AK Party will include: drafting the new constitution, moving the Kurdish Question forward, addressing the EU process, and confronting the Cyprus problem. The 2010 Supreme Military Council decisions and the success of the September 12th referendum has opened the way for the AK Party to have the latitude and political clout to make significant progress on these issues. Since 2002, Erdogan has worked to restore and reform Turkey's political system. The Constitution amendment package will be the culmination of this effort and introduce an improved political system. Time will be Erdogan's political test. The AK Party will propose may long term projects set to 2023 Vision which is the 100th Anniversary of the Foundation of the Republic. If the AK Party completes 2011 by successfully transforming the political system, it should remain Turkey's leading party for a while, maybe until 2023. However if it fails to implement the second part of the reform program and not transform the system, Turkey may encounter period of instability.

1.4.2 Can the CHP rise to the Challenge of Change?

2010 was a long year for the CHP (Republican People's Party). The CHP had an active and critical year due to the change in its leadership, the election of the party's new assembly, and two congresses - all in the same year. This was a year of great disappointment and high hopes. First, in May 2010 there was the scandal of the secret video that caused the longtime CHP leader, Deniz Baykal, to resign, making many fears that the CHP would crumble along with its leader's demise. But then at the 33rd Congress of May 22nd, 2010, new excitement was born with the election of the new leader, Kemal Kılıçdaroglu. He has brought hope that the CHP can fundamentally change and meet the challenge of the AK Party.

In order to analyze who conspired to bring down Baykal by leaking this scandalous video and the meaning of the rise of Kılıçdaroglu's leadership for the CHP and Turkish politics, the CHP's Baykal era should be examined.

The CHP under Baykal's leadership was a pro-status quo party that prioritized the concerns of the bureaucracy and the "secularists." The CHP did not formulate a viable alternative to the bureaucratic tutelage system. The general attitude of the

CHP rejected any political and economic development, which deepened society's polarization and prevented the establishment of a new political system through negotiations. The CHP also seem to have disconnected itself from the needs and demands of its own grassroots base. It closed itself off from the society at large - and seemed mainly only concerned keeping the old political establishment in power.

Under Baykal's leadership, the CHP broke with the leftists and social democrats that sought change, and became a party of "Kemalists" who are disturbed because of the reforms and whose unique goal was to protect the status quo. Instead of being a party representing the masses and the nation as a whole, the CHP evolved into a class and regional party. The CHP was stuck in a position of defending the old guardians of the regime and extreme secularist politics with a narrow geographic, demographic, and cultural base.¹⁰ Baykal and his political circle's electoral failures engendered certain distrust in the parliamentary system. Thus, they looked for ways to exert influence outside the democratic system. At one point when Baykal attempted to effectuate change, he had to immediately backpedal due to reactions within his own party's base, shaped by Baykal himself.¹¹

However, CHP's strategy was inadequate to counter the AK Party's electoral gains. And the AK Party's response to the CHP maneuvers was extremely effective, and mobilized the electorate at the grass roots level. The only way for the CHP to challenge the AK Party is if it developed a substantive political program. The CHP was unable to find enough social support, represent an alternative political power, or at be a viable and strong opposition party to at least unsettle the AK Party's position of dominance. The referendum on the constitutional amendment package gave the CHP an opportunity to boot up and turn its struggle against the AK Party into a legitimate political dynamic. To do this, the CHP had to reform itself to become a stronger opposition actor.

The night that amendment package was presented to parliament (May 7th, 2010) was also the same night that the secret video of Baykal was leaked to the internet, which caused his immediate resignation from the leadership of the CHP. Briefly afterwards, Kemal Kılıçdaroglu supported by the authorized party organs and Onder Sav was elected at the CHP Congress as the new leader. Under the new

10. For a detailed analysis on the grassroots of the CHP, see: Bekir Ağırır's article, newspaper *Radikal* (20-22.05.2010, "Değişmemek ya da Değişmemek").

11. For a comprehensive examination of the CHP's policies and statements during 2002-2009, see: Tanju Tosun, "Statüko ile Değişim arasında CHP", *SETA ANALİZ*, February 2009. <http://setav.org/public/HaberDetay.aspx?Dil=tr&hid=6976> (accessed on 06.06.2010).

leadership of Kılıçdaroglu and administrative staff of Onder Sav, the CHP entered into the referendum process. However, Sav's position remained closer to the old CHP.

Every speech or message that Kılıçdaroglu gave towards the change was circumvented by his contradictory speeches or his party spokesman's statements during 2010. When it was clear that it was going to be difficult to bring CHP's message of change to the masses because of these contradictory statements, one of CHP's strongest actors, Onder Sav was eliminated from power. On November 5th, Sav resigned from his position as Secretary General of the CHP, but he continued to dominate party assembly. As the domination of Sav in the party assembly prevented Kılıçdaroglu's to make his mark on the party, the party assembly changed at the CHP congress on December 18th, 2010.

The elimination of the two strong personalities of the CHP, who were the architects of the party's pro-status quo politics, and the dissolution of the party's assembly to increase the CHP's potential for change does reveal the determination to transform the CHP. When Baykal stepped down, he declared it was his "duty" to cede the way for the CHP to pursue politics of change instead of politics of status quo.

Kılıçdaroglu has exhibited the image of a dynamic political style with his rhetoric on socio- economic policies, constitutional change, openness to meet with Ocalan, general amnesty for those arrested in connection with the Kurdish movement, and the head scarf issue. He is markedly different than Baykal, who only prioritized the protection of Turkey's secularist regime. This is a clear indication of a prospect of fundamental change within the CHP. However, there are limitations to this potential for change as CHP still relies on the same electoral base consolidated by the former leader Baykal and his old policies. It would be unrealistic to expect the CHP to come up with a more progressive democratization program than the AK Party.

The CHP is under pressure to participate in the process of change so that the democratization program will also benefit its own electoral base. Ironically, the CHP's democratization move derives from a deep seated concern to delineate the limits of democracy itself and to prevent true democracy from taking root. Nevertheless, the CHP's transformation will ultimately benefit the democratic process in Turkey. The very language of democracy will improve the quality of the political debate and reduce tensions in the political system.

Change will be inescapable for the CHP in 2011 because of the party electoral base's desire to accede to power. Kılıçdaroglu political mandate is to achieve this goal on behalf of his party. While modest steps were taken in this direction in 2010, we can expect the CHP to make bolder moves in the new year on issues such as the Kurdish Question, the EU accession process, and the new constitution. Kılıçdaroglu's political survival will depend on his attitude on these issues and ultimately the results of the 2011 general elections.

1.4.3 MHP's Test with History and its "Idealist" (Ülkücü) Electoral Base

2010 was a year of crises for the MHP (Nationalist Movement Party). While it pursued a hard line opposition policy against the "Democratic Opening," it also attempted not to alienate Kurdish public opinion. In addition to this difficult balancing act, the MHP was pulled into an identity crisis because of the September 12th referendum. The referendum accelerated the tension between the MHP's historical political mandate and the demands of its base.

Issue such as a new constitution, political freedoms, and the Kurdish issue pose serious problems within the party. The party fears that the State will be fragmented and a separate Kurdish state will be established. Thus, the MHP is convinced that its position on the unity of the Turkish state is fundamental to its very political mission. This explains the MHP's cautious attitude. The Kurdish issue renders the MHP irreplaceable while provoking a deep crisis within the party.

This debate carries the implicit answer to the question whether the MHP will be an "Islamic" leaning party or a "Turkish" leaning party. The Kurdish issue is essential for the future of the party in the short term. Every crisis caused by the debates over bilingualism and Kurdish democratic autonomy turns the focus to the role of the MHP. This also increases the party's votes. In 2011 the future of Devlet Bahçeli and the MHP will depend on developments on the Kurdish Question.

When the Turkish Armed Forces became preoccupied with its own internal problems, the MHP sought to fill the vacuum. While the party leadership maintains a statist attitude on issues such as the Kurdish issue, bureaucratic tutelage system, and the new constitution, its electoral base had a pro-democratic orientation during the referendum. The fears of division propagated by the leadership no longer resonated with the traditional Anatolian base. This friction between the party leadership at its base seems irreparable.

The party base traditionally preferred democracy over the tutelage system and wanted to come to terms with the 1980 Coup, as it was one of the political groups most affected by it. The pre-referendum split over the “NO” vote persisted after the referendum. The party leadership invited the “old idealist” (ülküçüler, conservative-nationalists) to return to the party fold, which was a form of auto-critique.

The MHP’s electoral base has two major components that could easily be at odds ideologically with each other.¹² In Central Anatolia, there are the Conservative Nationalists, while in the West the Secularist Nationalist vote for the party. The MHP shares the Conservative and Secularist constituencies with AK Party and the CHP respectively. The party draws its main strength from nationalism based on the fear of terrorism and separatism. Whenever this fear overcomes conservative and secularist concerns, the MHP is able to draw voters away from the AK Party and the CHP. When the fears recede in the face of conservative and secularist concerns, the party loses voters to the other two parties.

The referendum shifted the focus from nationalism to the debate on democracy versus the old bureaucratic tutelage system. Because its political base had opposing views on the issue, the MHP had a dilemma. On the one hand, if the MHP adopted “NO” position, it would offend its grassroots base in Central Anatolia. On the other hand, if the MHP supported the “YES” position that would strengthen civilian politics and democracy, it would offend its base on the South-West coast. Finally, the MHP adopted the “NO” position and aligned itself with those closer to the CHP position, based on nationalism and arguing that the constitutional amendments could threaten Turkey’s state unity.

The underlying reason behind MHP’s choice to go with the “NO” block is because it realized it had lost its Central Anatolian conservative base to the AK Party. Already, because of Turkey’s economic-political transformation, the political identity of these voters had changed and they found that the AK Party better represented their needs and views. The MHP realized that it could not count on these votes. So, instead of developing a new statement and a new vision to keep these voters, the MHP chose to look for a new electoral base.

In the 1990s, the politicization of the Kurdish issue, the forced migration of Kurds from the East towards cities in the West, the arrest of Ocalan, and the conservative image of the AK Party which was perceived as a threat to a more secular life

12. For a detailed analysis on MHP’s grassroots, see: Hüseyin Yayman, *Değişim ve Süreklilik Ekseninde MHP*, SETA ANALİZ, February 2009.

style by some - stirred a reactionary nationalism on the South-West coast. The MHP's rhetoric found an audience in this region. During the 2007 general elections, the MHP received significant support from this coastal region and only partial support from Central Anatolia. The slide had already begun during those last elections. Therefore, the MHP adopted a platform of opposition to AK Party and a rhetoric of Turkey's disintegration as a unified state constituted the central message of the party statements. During the 1999 general elections, the MHP expressed the need for change in the political system in response to society's need for change, and it received the support of the Central Anatolian electorate. But it later seemed to have dropped this language in favor of the more reactionary and nationalism agenda.

During the 2010 referendum, the MHP objected to the constitutional amendments and prioritized the concerns of the electorate on the Coast. However, the MHP still fears the total loss of its former Central Anatolian electoral base. But if the MHP continues to advance a platform based on idealism, conservative nationalism and secularist nationalism (*ulusalci*), the gap may continue to widen to the point that it will be impossible to recover. The MHP will end up being only a secularist-nationalist (*ulusalci*) party. For now, the electoral base of the Coast's reactionary nationalism is more about life-style. This blurs the line between the attraction for the MHP or the CHP. But, if the electorate has to make a choice between life-style concerns and "*ulusalci*" (secularist nationalism), the MHP may lose out again to the CHP. It will depend of which issue is more important to this regional political base.

The CHP's gains with its change of leadership will have a strong impact on the votes on the Coast. The MHP will lose votes to the CHP. For this reason, the major problem in the forthcoming the general elections for MHP will be reaching the election threshold while competing with the CHP for votes in the region. MHP is acutely aware of this problem. It will enter into direct competition with the CHP in the upcoming general elections.

It seems that year of 2011 and June general elections will be critical for the MHP. The MHP has to take an internal transformation if it wants to survive politically. If not, it will be a minor and won't be able to meet the threshold. Its "NO" position against the new constitution will probably result in the MHP failing to reach the election threshold.

1.4.4 The BDP - between the Kurdish Question and National Politics

In 2010, the Peace and Democracy Party (BDP) found itself in a difficult position having to choose between being a real actor in Turkish national politics and being the representative of Kurdish regional and political issues. The closure of the DTP on December 11th 2009 and discussions to withdraw from the parliament created pessimism on the success of Kurdish politics. Ocalan's last minute intervention convinced the DTP deputies to stay in the parliament and this decision prevented a huge political crisis in Turkey. When the DTP deputies joined the newly established BDP on December 23rd 2009, the crisis was temporarily resolved. So, Kurdish politics continued under the tent of the BDP, which included all other ex-Kurdish parties, HEP, DEP, ÖZDEP, HADEP, DEHAP, and the DTP.

In 2009, in addition to the DTP's closure, Kurdish politics was faced with another crisis because of KCK trial. The co-leader of the BDP, Selahattin Demirtas called for civil disobedience on February 1st 2010 at the congress in which he was elected as the BDP's new leader of BDP. The grassroots responded positively to this call. In a way, 2010 opened a new page for Kurdish politics. Abdullah Ocalan also began to dominate this process through his speeches and interviews with his lawyers. He has taken on a different position than the BDP on almost every issue - including political involvement, disarming, the cease fire, the referendum and which actor should represent the Kurdish issue in negotiations. Ocalan sent a de facto message - saying that "the question cannot be resolved without his participation" to the state.

The BDP had to navigate between the multiple Kurdish actors and take a position to support or not their actions. For instance, it took the position that it was against the KCK operations, but it struggled to manage the PKK's erratic behavior in maintaining a cease fire. Another problem for the BDP was what position it would have when voting for the constitutional amendment package. The BDP's non-participation in the vote was criticized by many, especially the Government and intellectuals. The constitutional amendment package contained an article protecting parties against the judiciary's party closures which was dropped from the package as the quorum to approve the article was not met. This issue of closures directly victimized the BDP and this article would have been in its favor.

The other critical development in 2010 for the BDP was the September 12th referendum. While the BDP's leadership called for a boycott of the referendum, it had a similar problem with its grassroots than the MHP. The BDP assumed that Kurdish voters would generally vote "YES." Instead of contradicting its grassroots

base, the BDP opted to boycott the referendum. Its goal was to demonstrate its control over the Kurdish electorate. It demonstrated that its priority was not the democratic process in Turkey but the resolution of the Kurdish Question. However, this did not change the result of the referendum.

Many BDP voters at the grassroots level criticized the BDP's political leadership for ignoring the importance in Turkish politics of the struggle for democracy to overcome the bureaucratic tutelage system. But the BDP to prove its capacity as a key factor in Kurdish politics and the primacy of the Kurdish Question, disregarded the referendum's agenda. In fact, for the BDP's electoral base both the issue of democracy and the Kurdish question are fundamental.¹³ The BDP's attempt to use the referendum process for an entirely different political issue and exercise its own political strength was a miscalculation in the eyes of its own electoral base. Instead of using the referendum to obtain a new political goal, the BDP played old style politics.

Moreover, the BDP did not reach the level of votes in the boycott it was aiming to reach. It did maintain the majority of its loyal electorate with a slight loss. However, when a party like the BDP mobilizes its members to boycott a vote, it places a tremendous pressure on voters not to vote. Because if they were to vote either "yes or no" based on the secret ballot system, they could use their own free decision making power and exercise their free will and right to vote. But in a boycott campaign, individual voters feel physical and psychological pressure from the community to go out and vote - so they stay home.

Another critical issue in 2010 for the BDP was the role of the NGOs in the region and their demands for the Kurdish population. The difference in their positions was clearly apparent during the referendum. The NGOs in Diyarbakir collectively voted "YES" in the referendum. This difference in the vote, illustrates how the BDP and the NGOs adapted different strategies for local-national and private-general agendas.

The NGOs, during the referendum process, did not focus on the Kurdish Question. Instead they realized that the constitutional amendments could be the right framework and serve as the legal basis to find a resolution for the Kurdish Question. It by no means implies that the NGOs excluded the resolution of Kurdish Question from the overall process of democratization. But they reconciled the Kurdish agenda with the national agenda.

13. For parties established before the BDP and deadlocks in PKK-state-Kurds relations, see: Hatem Ete, *Örgüt ile Parti Olma geriliminde DTP*, SETA ANALIZ, March 2009.

In addition to the tensions and crises of 2010 mentioned at the beginning of this report, the “Democratic Autonomy” proposal discussed at the Democratic Society Congress (DTK) at the end of December 2010 brought a new dimension to the debates on Kurdish question. The demands of the democratic autonomy of Turkey’s “Kurdistan” will be highly debated throughout 2011. Another critical issue for the BDP is the June 2011 general elections. Due to the 10% election threshold, BDP entered 2007 general elections through independent candidates to discharge the threshold. For now, BDP’s elections strategy is not certain, but it is anticipated that it will enter the following elections through independent candidates.

In the context of the upcoming elections, another critical issue for the BDP is whether it can increase the number of its deputies or not. In the 2007 general elections, the BDP missed its target of 35 deputies. In these upcoming elections, the BDP’s political goal is to be the only representative of Kurds in Parliament and compete with the AK Party. Although there are rumors that BDP will take a risk of participating in the elections as a political party, it seems that BDP will enter the elections through independent candidates and establish a party group in the parliament after the elections. This strategy has the potential to increase the number of elected deputies compared to the 2007 elections, but does not entail an increase the percentage of the votes. In 2011 the issues like “autonomy, bilingualism (Kurdish language together with Turkish), actor problem and the resolution of Kurdish Question” will dominate the BDP’s agenda.

2. LAW AND HUMAN RIGHTS

This section will analyze the progress in the areas of law and human rights in Turkey during 2010. First, the legal and constitutional regulations, which are related to human rights, will be examined. Second, developments with regard to the judiciary will be evaluated. In the third and last chapter, an annual analysis on the issues and problems Turkey faces regarding human rights will be carried out and some suggestions for 2011 will be proposed.

2.1 LEGISLATIVE ACTIVITIES

In 2010, the Grand National Assembly of Turkey (TBMM) enacted a total of 151 laws. The majority of those were composed of the bilateral agreements signed by Turkey with other countries. At the top of the list of the initiatives directly related to democratization and human rights was the Constitutional Amendment Package approved by referendum held on September 12th 2010.

2.1.1 Constitutional Regulations

There is a social consensus that Turkey needs a new civil and democratic constitution grounded on the respect for human rights and reinforcing democracy. Almost all political parties agree on this. With this in mind, the ruling Justice and Development Party (AK Party) had asked a group of academics to prepare a draft of Constitutional amendments and other related regulations. However, while progress was being made in furthering human rights legislation and building democracy in Turkey, the judiciary branch was blocking these very same initiatives. Since the judiciary's position was likely to prevent a new constitution from being

drafted and more precisely being enacted, the AK Party opted to put some immediate constitutional amendments to the nationwide referendum first. This would override the potential legal barriers the judiciary branch would set up to stop the constitutional amendments from going forward. To this end, on March 3rd, 2010, Act No. 5955 was passed which reduced the waiting period for regulations to be submitted to referendum from a hundred twenty-days to sixty days.¹⁴

Subsequently, on April 5th, 2010, AK Party deputies submitted a bill on the constitutional amendments to the Grand National Assembly. The proposal was approved by 336 votes on May 7th, 2010. As the proposal fell short of the 367 votes required from the Parliament, the amendment package was put to a referendum on September 12th 2010, where it was approved with 57.88% “YES” votes.¹⁵

Constitutional Amendment Package

While the concerned package consists of a total of 26 articles and includes different subjects, it is essentially divided into two main sections: the largest section is directly related to human rights and freedoms, and the other section deals with the judicial system. The articles on human rights address principles of equality, the protection of private life, freedom of movement (right to travel), children’s rights, freedom of association, freedom of information, the right to legal remedies, freedom of expression and the right to a fair trial.

The amendments can be summarized as follows:

- Affirmative Action gains a constitutional basis for persons who require social protection, such as women, children, the elderly, disabled people, widows and orphans of soldiers killed in action as well as for invalids and veterans. The inclusion of Affirmative Action in the Constitution is a significant improvement to strengthen the principle of equality.
- The right to the protection of personal data would be under constitutional guarantee.
- A citizen’s freedom to leave the country may only be restricted by judicial process.
- Protection of Children’s rights has been guaranteed by constitution.
- The provision, which prohibited being a member of more than one union in the same industry, has been abolished. Civil servants and other public officials are granted the right to collective bargaining and retired civil servants could also enjoy this same right.
- The provision stating that a labor union is liable for any damages caused in a workplace where a strike is being held has been abolished.

14. See Law No. 5955 “Amending the Act on the submission of Constitutional amendments to the Nation” Article 1

15. The participation rate to the referendum was 73.71%; 21,787,244 people voted (57.88%) yes; 15,856,793 people voted (42.12%) no. See <http://ysk.gov.tr/ysk/docs/2010Referandum/KesinSonuc/Sonuc.pdf>, Last Access: 31 December 2010.

- The prohibitions relating to politically-motivated strikes and lockouts; non-violent strikes and lockouts; general strikes and lockouts; occupation places of business; slowdowns; reduction in output and other forms of non-violent resistance have been abolished. Collective bargaining provisions of civil servants have been taken under legal guarantee. Every citizen has been granted the right to request information and apply to an ombudsman. These rights shall have a constitutional basis.
- Deputies shall remain in their posts until they reach the end of their elected term even if their parties have been closed.
- Decisions by the Supreme Military Council (YAŞ) and the High Council of Judges and Prosecutors (HSYK) and all disciplinary decisions against civil servants and other public officials have partially been opened to judicial review.
- The duties of judges and prosecutors have been divided into administrative and legal duties. The High Council of Judges and Public Prosecutors, henceforth, shall be responsible, to evaluate the performance of judges and prosecutors, which was previously conducted by the Ministry of Justice.
- The jurisdiction of military courts has been restricted and military courts have been provided guarantees in terms of their independence and judges' tenure.
- New constitutional provisions explicitly prohibit civilians from being tried in military courts while civilian courts will be allowed to try members of the military.
- The number of members of the Constitutional Court has been increased and the term of membership has been limited to 12 years.
- The right to individual appeal to the Constitutional Court has been introduced. The place of trial of the speaker of the TBMM and the Chief of General Staff and the commanders has been determined as the Constitutional Court.
- The structure of the High Council of Judges and Prosecutors has been rearranged in a manner to increase the number of Council members and diversify the sources from which they originate.
- The Economic and Social Council has been given a constitutional protection.
- An article banning the prosecution of the 1980 coup leaders for 30 years has been annulled and legal protection of coup leaders has been abolished.

The amendments represent a step forward in strengthening the rule of law and guaranteeing democracy and human rights. However, some shortcomings and deficiencies still exist in the proposal.¹⁶

Certain legislative regulations are required in order to implement the constitutional amendments. The government explained that it established an action plan and would consult with stakeholders. In addition to this, consultations are also ongoing with the Venice Commission of the Council of Europe for those constitutional amendments regarding the judiciary. These consultations and explanations are closely monitored by human rights organizations. One of the key provisions originally included in the package, which would have made the closure of political parties more difficult, was dropped when it failed to secure sufficient votes in

16. For detailed analysis of the recent amendments to the Constitution, see Yılmaz Ensaroğlu, "The New Constitutional Package in the Context of Human Rights and Democratization", SETA Analysis, Number 27, September 2010.

parliament; however it should be put onto agenda. During all these processes, the government is expected to have close contacts with all political parties and civil society actors.

2.1.2 Legal Regulations

Among the legal regulations made in 2010, laws mentioned below are of particular importance in terms of human rights.

Biosafety Law

The objective of the Biosafety Law (Law No. 5977) approved by TBMM on March 18th, 2010 is described in Article 1 as follows:

The objective of the present Law is to establish and implement a biosafety system in order to prevent the potential risks of genetically modified organisms and products thereof obtained through modern biotechnological means within the context of scientific and technological advancements; protect human, animal and plant health; safeguard and ensure the sustainable use of the environment and biological diversity and to determine the procedures and principles governing the control, regulation and monitoring of these activities. (Article 1/1)

This law provides Turkey with an important regulation related to human rights, health and environmental protection.

Law Amending the Basic Provisions on Elections, Voter Registers, and Parliamentary Elections

Article 58 of law no.298 on the Basic Provisions on Elections and Voter Registers prohibited the use of languages other than Turkish in election broadcasting on radio and television, and through other means of broadcasting. Due to this prohibition, voters, primarily Kurds, who did not know Turkish, had difficulty in communicating with the candidates. In addition, investigations were carried out against candidates who used languages other than Turkish, especially Kurdish, during electoral campaigns. Law no. 5980, enacted on April 8th 2010, abolished the ban of using other languages and dialects in election campaigns by political parties.¹⁷ Thus, Turkey resolved one of its major electoral issues to a certain extent. Hundreds of cases on election broadcasting are still pending, and have yet to be presented to the court. With this new Law (No. 5980 of April 8th, 2010), these cases have lost their significance. Additional amendments to the current law aim mostly to increase transparency on the financing of political parties and candidates during election campaigns.

17. Article 58 of Law no.298 on Basic Provisions on Elections and Voter Registers states that “it is strictly forbidden to use languages other than Turkish in election broadcasting on radio and television, and through other means of broadcasting.” Law no.5980 enacted on April 8th 2010 amended the above mentioned provision as “The use of Turkish language by political parties and candidates is essential in election broadcasting.”

Law Amending the Establishment of Military Courts and Tribunal Procedure

In Turkey, in order to give the military a privileged and autonomous position in the political system, military jurisdiction was autonomously organized in parallel to judicial proceedings.¹⁸ Thus, the power of the military judiciary had always been at the center of ongoing debates. One of the most serious criticisms with regard to military courts was that the adjudicating officers were also composed of military officers who did not hold the title of “judge”. However, with the amendment enacted into Law no. 353 by Law no.6000, dated 19th June 2010, this practice was terminated. Accordingly, it was stipulated that three military judges must be assigned to the military court.¹⁹

Law Amending the Anti-Terror Law and Other Laws

In Turkey, the age of maturity is eighteen. There are legal procedures and juvenile courts that adjudicate the rights of minors. However, some minors are deprived of these rights and are treated as adults. This has led to a rapid increase in the number of minors arrested and prosecuted in recent years.²⁰ In particular, minors who were sentenced for their participation in meetings or demonstrations with regard to the Kurdish problem attracted extensive media coverage and public criticism. Therefore, the TBMM enacted law no.6008, dated 22 July 2010, which protects the rights of minors who are in conflict with the law.²¹ Thanks to this amendment, many of the problems that children face have been resolved.

Law Approving the Council of Europe’s Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse

With Law no.6084 the Grand National Assembly of Turkey ratified the Council of Europe’s Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation

18. For a detailed analysis of military judiciary, see Fazıl Hüsnü Erdem and Vahap Coşkun, “Military Judiciary and Military Tutelage” Seta Analysis, No.9, July 2009.

19. According to the article 2 of Law no. 353 on the Establishment of Military Courts and Tribunal Procedure, “the courts consist of two military judges and an officer. In the cases against generals and admirals are heard the General Staff Military Court consists of three military judges and two generals or admirals. This article was amended as follows: “Military Courts consists of three military judges unless otherwise specified. The highest-ranking judge serves as the chief judge.”

20. For more data, see <http://www.ihop.org.tr/dosya/cocukadalet/opactr.pdf>, Last Access: 02 January, 2011.

21. Law no.6008 added some provisions to Law no. 2911 on Demonstrations and Meeting (Article 34/A), Law no. 3713 on Anti-Terror (Article 5), Law no. 5271 on Criminal Procedure Code and law no. 5275 on Execution of Sentences and Security Measures (Article 107) with regard to children’s rights. Through these articles, significant arrangements have been made with regard to the rights of minors. Accordingly, minors have a right to be tried in juvenile courts.

and Sexual Abuse on November 25th, 2010. In accordance with the Convention, Turkey like other signatory parties is responsible for the prevention and prosecution of all forms of sexual exploitation and abuse against children as well as the protection of the rights of victims subject to sexual exploitation and abuse. Turkey must also take effective measures to improve national and international cooperation to raise awareness about sexual abuse and violence.

Law on the Court of Auditors

The law no.6085 on the Turkish Court of Auditors, enacted on December 3rd 2010, is among the laws that have a significant place within the Turkey's National Programme for the EU accession. Because this law will provide more transparency, accountability, and participation particularly in security services and in the public administration and pave the way for the civil control of public administration notably the security sector. However, during the working sessions concerning this law, serious discussions²² occurred in the Parliament. Despite the passage of the law on Court of Auditors, the military audits still have the possibility of being hidden as it has been up to now. This law will also broaden the scope of audit over military expenses. But a classified legislation will be drafted in order to determine how the audit will be carried out and how and under which circumstances the public will be informed.

2.2 THE JUDICIARY

In 2010, the judiciary was highly discussed and radical reforms were made with respect to the judiciary. In fact, the Ministry of Justice outlined a "Judicial Reform Strategy" paper in 2009, and this paper was put into force in 2010. Thus, the last amendments to the Constitution were based on this Judicial Reform Strategy Document.

2.2.1 Amendments to the Judicial System

All transactions and actions of a state governed by the rule of law must be in accordance with the universal principles of law and pre-defined rules of law. In a state governed by the rule of law, there is no room for arbitrary administrative acts, as the state's branches of power and its respective administrative agencies exercise their authority based on the legitimacy of the Constitution and the country's laws. Thus, in a state governed by the rule of law, not only legislative and executive actions but also judicial actions have to be in conformity with the law. Independence of the judiciary, judges' security of tenure, and other similar

22. For further information on discussions, see the Commission report no. 510. The report is available at <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/sirasayi/donem23/yil01/ss510.pdf>. Last Access: 02 January 2011.

guarantees enjoyed by the judiciary branch do not provide limitless freedom and authority to the judiciary. Although judges have the right to adjudicate and interpret existing legislation based on jurisprudence, the Constitution, and other relevant laws of the land, they do not have legislative competences. Furthermore, according to the existing Constitution, certain policies, actions, and activities of the State and political administration are not within the jurisdiction of judicial control. This in fact weakens Turkey's rule of law and prevents Turkish citizens from exercising their rights and freedoms as well as their ability to seek a remedy. Certain decisions of Turkey's judiciary have equally been criticized as an attempt of the judiciary to act like the executive branch of the state, which is completely incompatible with Turkey's laws. Because of the way Turkey's judiciary has acted in the past, it has come under fire and is now subject to broad political debate. Turkish society has, thus, lost confidence in its judiciary.²³

We will analyze, in four sub-headings, how the Constitutional Amendment Referendum Package has planned to remedy Turkey's judicial system and strengthen Turkey's as a Constitutional state.

The Removal of Judicial Restrictions or Expansion of Judicial Control

With the amendment to Article 125 of the Constitution, decisions of the Supreme Military Council are partly opened to judicial control. Furthermore, it was decided that the Military Council's authority shall under no circumstance be used as the control of expediency.²⁴ Disciplinary sanctions carried out against public servants and employees and members of public professional organizations or their higher bodies were in the past closed to judicial control. With the amendment to Article 129/3, all disciplinary decisions are now opened to judicial control.²⁵

Likewise, decisions of the High Council of Judges and Prosecutors (HSYK) were close to judicial control. With the amendment to Article 159/10, decisions of the HSYK dismissing members of the judiciary from the profession are opened to judicial review. In summary, with these amendments, Turkey has strengthened the rule of law and has implemented its international commitments. In the future, it is expected that judicial reform will remove those actions and procedures of the public administration that are still outside the judicial control.

23. For a detailed analysis see Yılmaz Ensaroğlu, *ibid.*

24. Article 11 of the Constitutional Amendment package proposes: Article 125 added to second paragraph of Constitution, "Except Supreme Military Court's promotion issues and dismissals due to lack of cadre, all dismissals of military staff by the Supreme Military Council are opened to judicial control. First sentence of the fourth paragraph was amended as follows: "Judicial power shall be limited to the control of the legality of administrative actions and procedures and shall under no circumstance be used as the control of expediency."

25. Article 13 of Law no. 5982 proposes that paragraph three of Article 129 of the Constitution has been changed as follows: "Disciplinary decisions shall not be excluded from judicial control."

Rearranging Judicial Control

Before, all performance evaluations of judges and prosecutors were carried out by judicial inspectors with the consent of the Ministry of Justice. The new regulation proposed that a distinction be established between the mandates of judges and prosecutors into separate administrative and legal categories. Accordingly, the HSYK will inspect judicial services of judges and prosecutors during their tenure. However, the administrative duties of public prosecutors and other judicial services would be investigated by the judicial inspectors of the Ministry of Justice.

Restrictions on the jurisdiction and tasks of Military Courts

In a state governed by the rule of law, civilians are never tried in military courts and decisions of military courts are controlled by superior civilian courts. Thus, in Turkey the superior military courts, such as the Military Supreme Administrative Court and the Military Court of Appeals, need to be abolished and the duties of these courts should be exercised by offices in the Supreme Court of Appeals and the Council of State.

Through the Constitutional Amendment Referendum Package, important changes have been made regarding military courts. For instance, “military zone criterion” was abolished and the mandate and duties of the military courts have been restricted. Therefore, cases related to offenses against the security of the state, the constitutional order and the proper functioning of this order are to be tried before civilian courts. The immediate ramification is that any form of attempted coup plots or plans and “gangs” in the military shall no longer be tried in military courts. Similarly, civilians shall not be tried in military courts except war time. Furthermore, the competence of the military courts under martial law has been rescinded, except war time. In fact, the right to a fair trial and principle of the natural judge should require that civilians be tried before civilian courts even in war time. If Turkey was to fully implement the principles of a State that respects the rule of law, this war time exception should not have been put into place.

According to the Constitutional Amendment Package, henceforth, the establishment and procedures of military courts, personal matters of military judges, and the relations of military prosecutors with their commander shall be organized according to the principle of the courts’ independence and the judges’ security of tenure. This will allow military judges not to be subjugated to the insecurities that are tied to the officer status.²⁶

26. Umit Kardas, “Neden Yetmez, Neden Evet 2,” *Zaman*, 25 Temmuz 2010.

Restructuring of the Constitutional Court

The Constitutional Amendment Package also changes structure of the Constitutional Court. For instance, there are no longer substitute members. Additionally, the number of members of the Court has increased from 11 to 17, and the TBMM has been granted the right to select three members of the court. The required qualifying age to be selected, as a member of the Constitutional Court, has increased from 40 to 45 and the necessary professional experience from 15 to 20 years. Rapporteur judges of the Constitutional Court shall also be members of the Court.

Because of these amendments to the Constitution and their widespread implications, the Government was accused of trying to control the judiciary branch. Some of the more controversial points include that the majority of the court members will be elected by the President of the Republic and the Parliament will elect three members of the Constitutional Court. In certain circles, reservations have been expressed that these changes will cause the politicization of the judiciary.

According to the previous regulations, all the members of Constitutional Court were elected by the President. After these amendments, the President will elect the majority, while the remaining three members will be elected by the Parliament.

These amendments lay the legal foundation for a new Constitutional Court that is reflective of the national will. Currently, there are discussions underway to elect the President of Turkey directly by the people from now on. Thus, the nomination of the members of the Court by the President would also be a more democratic step and the Court would be more representative of Turkey's current social viewpoints. However, the election of only three members of the Court by Parliament is insufficient, as a strong relationship between Parliament and the Constitutional Court exists in many advanced democracies. The problem of Turkey's judiciary system still resides in the dilemma that a court, which has the right to oversee all the country's elected representatives' official duties and actions but is itself free from all accountability and oversight, will continue to be disconnected from society. Moreover, it cannot monitor the social changes and transformations and its democratic legitimacy will always be questioned.²⁷ As an illustration of the need for democratic change in Turkey's judiciary system, Turkey's 2010 European Progress Report stressed that the involvement of the Turkish parliament in the election of Constitutional Court judges brought Turkish practice closer to that of EU Member States.²⁸

27. For further information on Constitutional reforms and amendment proposals for selecting members and restructuring the organs of the Constitutional Court and HSYK, see Mustafa Sentop, "Anayasalarda ve deęişiklik önerilerinde AYM ve HSYK", SETA Analysis, No.23, June 2010; Yılmaz Ensaroęlu, *ibid*.

28. European Progress Report 2010 and its translation into Turkish can be accessed at http://www.abgs.gov.tr/files/BasinMusavirlik/yayinlar/ilerleme_2010.pdf. Last access: 05 January 2011.

Another important democratic step is that, the amended Constitution limits the term of membership of the judges to twelve years and forbids their re-election. This regulation allows the Constitutional Court to renew itself, thus staying in sink with societal developments.

Another change is the right for individual citizens to directly bring a case to the Constitutional Court. Accordingly, all Turkish citizens will have the right to apply to the Constitutional Court on the grounds that one of his or her fundamental rights and freedoms, which are guaranteed by the Constitution and enumerated in the European Convention on Human Rights, is violated by public authorities. The right to individual application to the Constitutional Court is in line with practices in advanced democracies. However, there may still be restrictions on the subject matter and nature of individual applications based on the Constitution and the European Convention on Human Rights. These should be clearly delineated. Although the restriction aims to decrease the number of applications to the ECHR, Turkey is a party to several conventions on human rights, not only to the ECHR. Thus, these rights have to be based on not only the Constitution and the ECHR but also all the conventions in which Turkey participates.

Another change, brought by these Amendments, is the re-regulation of the Constitutional Courts competences to try high ranking officials. According to the draft, the Speaker of the TBMM and the General Chief of Staff, and the commanders of the army, air force, navy and gendarmerie will be tried before a Superior Tribunal in its capacity as the Supreme Court for any offenses committed in the course of their official duties. Through this arrangement, some privileges were abolished and the principle of equality has been strengthened.

Restructuring the High Council of Judges and Prosecutors (HSYK)

Article 22 of the proposal proposes the restructuring of the HSYK. The constitutional amendments have increased the number of full members of the HSYK from seven to twenty two and substitute members from three to twelve. Three chambers have been established in the HSYK. Previously, all members were appointed by the President of the Republic from among candidates nominated by the Supreme Court of Appeals and the Council of State. Yet, according to the new reforms, four full members shall be elected by the President from among academics in the field of law and lawyers. Plenary Assemblies of the Supreme Court, the Council of State, and the Justice Academy of Turkey will elect three full, three substitute members, two full, two substitute members and one full, one substitute member respectively. The most significant change has been made in the selection of judges and prosecutors. Seven full members and four substitute members of the Council will be elected by the Court of first instance judges and prosecutors. And

three full members and two substitute members will be elected by first instance administrative judges and prosecutors.

Though the Minister of Justice and the Undersecretary to the Ministry of Justice remain members of the Council, the Minister who is still the President of the HSYK, albeit with reduced competence, cannot join the meetings of any of the chambers of the Council. The performance evaluation of judges and prosecutors and any judicial proceedings against them will be carried out by inspectors or senior judges and prosecutors of the Council and no longer by the Ministry of Justice. Also, it is important to note that a Secretariat General was established under the HSYK. In summary, the administrative structure of judges and prosecutors has been democratized and are more pluralistic through the application of the principle of broad representation.²⁹ Nevertheless, the most recent amendments to the Constitution do not authorize the TBMM and the government to elect certain members of the HSYK. Nonetheless, the selection of members to a certain extent by the Parliament would have given the Council more democratic legitimacy and accountability. However, by this decision the government wanted to avoid criticisms arguing that the government was attempting to seize control over the judiciary.

In Turkey, in terms of the independence of the judiciary, the existence of the Minister of Justice and the Undersecretary of the Ministry of Justice in the Council has been a subject of debates for a long time. In fact, it is possible to see common procedures in the world where a person from the government serves as the president of the Council. The real problem was the lack of a system ensuring individual independence of judges and prosecutors. And, this was mainly because of the anachronistic structure of the HSYK and the involvement of the Ministry of Justice in the evaluation of the performance of all members of the judiciary. The recent amendments to the Constitution have radically changed the structure of the HSYK and provided the Council with a new framework, in line with the general practices of most democracies, according to the report “Judicial Appointments,” adopted by the Venice Commission and the Opinion (No. 10) of the Consultative Council of European Judges. In conclusion, reforms such as making the High Council a representative of the judiciary as a whole, building an effective internal audit system, establishing a General Secretariat under the Council, and constructing a separate building have substantially reduced the criticisms against the HSYK.³⁰

29. Ergun Ozbudun, *ibid.* pp.373–374

30. Serap Yazıcı, “Yeni HSYK ve yargı mensuplarının bağımsızlığı,” *Star-Açık Görüş*, 27 December 2010.

Strengthening the Judicial System

In 2010, significant strides were made to strengthen the judiciary system. The Regional Courts of Appeals, which should have been in operation by June 2007, were still not established by 2010. However, according to the Ministry of Justice's Strategy Development Directorate data,³¹ the necessary infrastructure that needed to be put into place these Regional Courts of Appeals has been met. The hardware and software infrastructure of the courts are ready. Furthermore, planning activities as regard to judges, prosecutors, and other auxiliary staff who will work in these courts is almost complete.

In terms of new legislations, law no.6087 on the High Council of Judges and Prosecutors was enacted on December 11th 2010. This law amends law decree no. 2992 on the organization and duties of the Ministry of Justice. New drafts related to law no.2802 on the High Council of Judges and Prosecutors were opened for discussion on the Ministry's web page.³²

With regard to the number of vacancies among the judiciary staff, a total of 363 judges and prosecutors, and a total of 18 administrative judges were appointed. A total of 300 people started their duties as candidates for positions as judges and prosecutors. Moreover, in order to accept 50 administrative judge candidates, exams were offered for these positions and 20 Civil Enforcement Office Directors and the Civil Enforcement Office Deputy Directors were appointed. 31 judges and prosecutors were sent abroad for foreign language training and 215 judges and prosecutors also took foreign language training within the country. Additionally in 2010, a total of 124 courts were established. It includes 10 Family Courts, one High Criminal Court, 3 Civil Courts of First Instance, 12 Criminal Courts of First Instance, 2 Juvenile Courts, 9 Civil Peace Courts, 2 Civil Enforcement Courts, one Land Registry Court and 84 Penal Peace Courts.

In 2010, the Ministry of Justice took significant steps towards applying the use of information technology to the judicial system and National Judicial Network Project (UYAP). For example, the UYAP Emergency Centre was set up to prevent the loss of information in extraordinary circumstances and to ensure that the system works smoothly and efficiently. All decisions of the Supreme Court of Appeals were opened to judges and prosecutors. The construction of 17 new buildings earmarked to be offices for the judiciary administration and courts is underway.

31. Data was obtained by summarizing a presentation on "The Work of the Ministry of Justice in 2010" by the Ministry of Justice's Strategy Development Directorate.

32. The above mentioned draft can be accessed at <http://www.kgm.adalet.gov.tr/2802/Hakimler%20ve%20Savcilar%20Kanununda%20Değişiklik%20Yapılmasına%20Dair%20Kanun%20Tasarısı%20Ön%20Taslağı.pdf>. Last Access: 03 January 2011.

More importantly, a planning period has begun for the judiciary. Accordingly, on September 3rd, 2010, Sadullah Ergin, the Minister of Justice, declared a Ministry of Justice Strategic Plan for 2010–2014.³³

Controversial Cases and Expectations

In Turkey, the majority of the judicial staff believes that the primary role of the judiciary is to protect the Turkish states' security and interest rather than the individual rights and freedoms of its civilians. This approach is obvious, especially in the courts for political dissidents. The judicial staff's approach and attitude clearly reflect their dominant perception and mentality problems.³⁴

In this context, cases related to the coup plans referred to as 'Sledgehammer,' 'Ergenekon' and the 'Cage Plan' were highly discussed in 2010. Likewise, the KCK³⁵ cases concerning many politicians from the Peace and Democracy Party (BDP) were seriously discussed. The long detention time of suspects and the violation of their right to a fair trial were among the most criticized issues

Certain Turkish security forces have been accused of unlawful killings, torture, and inhumane or degrading treatment. It has been claimed that these acts have been carried out with impunity and segments of the judiciary have been charged with protecting offenders. Examples of such cases are: Semdinli,³⁶ Temizoz, Hrant Dink's assassination and the Malatya Zirve Publishing House murder. On the other hand, certain law-enforcement officers have launched cases against individual citizens who have accused them of torture or mistreatment. It has been claimed that these cases are given the priority and thus are quickly expedited by courts. In the TBMM Human Rights Investigation Committee's 2009 reports, it was noted that very few cases against law enforcement bodies for mistreatment or torture resulted in convictions.³⁷ A case in point is illustrated by the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) in its Chamber judgment of September 14th, 2010 on the case of Hrant Dink's assassination. This case held that the Turkish authori-

33. The full text of the Strategic Plan can be accessed at <http://www.adalet.gov.tr/stratejikplan/AdaletBakanligiSstratejikPlan2010-2014.pdf>. Last Access: 29 December 2010.

34. For a detailed analysis, see Mithat Sancar-Eylem Umit Atılgan, *Adalet biraz Es Geçiyor: Demokratikleşme Sürecinde Hakimler ve Savcılar*, TESEV Yayınları, İstanbul 2009. The full text can be reached at http://www.tesev.org.tr/UD_OBJS/PDF/DEMP/Yargi1_07_05_09WEB.pdf. Last Access: 02 January 2011.

35. KCK(Koma Ciwaken Kurdistan-Kurdish Communities Union) is asserted as PKK's urban wing.

36. The defendants are accused of the November 2005 bombing that killed one person and injured others in the town of Semdinli in Southeast Turkey.

37. For detailed information see TGNA Human Rights Investigation Committee, *İstanbul İlindeki Karakollarda Yapılan İncelemeler ile İlgili Rapor ve İstanbul Beyoğlu Emniyet Müdürlüğü İnceleme Raporu*. Full text of reports can be accessed at http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/komisyon/insanhaklari/belge/Karakollarda_inceleme_Raporu2008.pdf and http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/komisyon/insanhaklari/belge/Beyoglu_Ilce_Emniyet_Mudurlugu_inceleme_Raporu.pdf. Last Access: 04 January 2011.

ties did not do everything that could reasonably have been expected of them to prevent Hrant Dink's assassination. Furthermore, the Court decided that no effective investigation had been carried out regarding the assassination. Therefore, the ECHR decided that article 2 (right to life), articles 10 (freedom of expression), and 13 (right to an effective remedy) have been violated. Likewise, the ECHR condemned Turkey for the Diyarbakir prison case.³⁸ However, the case concerning Engin Ceber,³⁹ was concluded in June 2010 and for the first time in such a case convicts received heavy sentence.

On the other hand, problems concerning the accession to legal aid services, their scope and quality couldn't be resolved. Another important component of the criminal investigation process is forensic medicine. There have been continuous concerns and complaints regarding the effective functioning of the Forensic Medicine Institute in 2010. The Institute often gave conflicting reports on the same case at different times and because of serious backlogs, the judicial proceedings were consequently delayed. Therefore, the Ministry of Justice must seek assistance from forensic medical experts of universities, state hospitals, and private hospitals, which will contribute to the resolution of the problems.

2.3 HUMAN RIGHTS IN 2010

This section will evaluate the most debated human rights issues of 2010. Then the necessary approaches and expectations for 2011 will be addressed.

Civilian Oversight of Security Forces

The following main developments occurred in 2010 regarding the Civilian Oversight of Security Forces:

- On February 4th, 2010, the Government annulled the Protocol on Security, Public Order and Assistance Units (commonly called EMASYA), which allowed the military to involve in social events without the consent of civilian authorities. It was originally signed on July 7th, 1997 between the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the General Staff during the February 28th postmodern coup.
- On February 17th, 2010, the Parliament adopted a law establishing an Under-Secretariat for Public Order and Security under the Ministry of the Interior to develop policies on counter-terrorism and to coordinate intelligence-sharing between security institutions.

38. On September 24th, 1996 an operation at the Diyarbakir prison led to the death of eight prisoners and the injury of six. Criminal proceedings were carried out against the security forces, who took part in an operation, but have yet to be completed. The ECHR condemned Turkey on several accounts, including the lack of an effective investigation into this case.

39. Engin Çeber, while distributing the weekly *Yürüyüş* journal in İstanbul, was arrested on September 28th, 2008. Çeber died as a result of injuries sustained because he was tortured in a police station in İstanbul and the Metris prison.

- With the last Constitutional Amendments, the jurisdiction of Military courts has been limited. Furthermore, it became mandatory to hold the title of “judge” in order to be a member of the Military Courts. The decisions of the Supreme Military Council were partly opened to judicial control. The constitutional provision providing immunity for the perpetrators of the 1980 Coup D’état was removed from the Constitution. The Chief of General Staff and commanders of the army shall be tried before a High Tribunal for any offenses committed in the course of their official duties.
- Progress has been made with regard to internal audits in security institutions but the announcement of the Court of Auditors’ reports will be regulated by a specific regulation.
- The jurisdiction of residential areas in 31 towns with a combined population of about one million civilians was transferred from the Gendarmerie to the Police. However, there has been no progress on civilian control over the gendarmerie’s law enforcement activities.
- The Chief of General Staff and other military officials have made a number of written or oral statements on certain political issues, ongoing court cases, and investigations that could influence the Courts and put the impartiality of the judiciary at risk even though these statements were less in number compared to previous years. A number of criminal complaints were lodged by citizens and NGOs about such statements but there was no judicial follow-up.
- The selective accreditation system of the Turkish Armed Forces for the media has also continued in 2010.
- In the Constitutional Court, two of the judges are still military judge despite the fact that. The presence of military judges in a Constitutional Court is an unusual practice in advanced democracies.
- For the first time in the history of the Turkish Republic with the will of political power, radical changes have taken place in the state’s threat perception and the National Security Policy Document. Until then, this document had been prepared and imposed on civil politicians by the military bureaucracy. However, there has been no initiative to alter the Turkish Armed Forces Internal Service Law, which is used as a pretext by the army to intervene in the country’s domestic politics. Likewise, no progress has been made to redefine the broad notions of ‘security’ and ‘terrorism’ on which the National Security Council and the Anti-Terror Law are based respectively.
- In the annual meeting of the Supreme Military Council in August 2010, the military insisted on the promotion of military officials, for whom courts recently issued arrest warrants, to a higher rank. However, the Government resisted and declined these promotions. Although the decisions of the Supreme Military Council were closed to judicial review until the recent referendum, officials who were not promoted appealed to the Military High Administrative Court to have the decision reviewed. Meanwhile, for the first time in Republican history, three generals were laid off by the Internal Affairs Minister and the National Defense Minister.

Compliance with International Human Rights Law

On November 10th, 2010, Turkey signed the Council of Europe’s Convention on Cybercrime in Strasbourg. From October 2009 to September 2010, the European Court of Human Rights delivered a total of 553 judgments finding that Turkey

had violated the European Convention on Human Rights. In the same period, a total of 5.728 new applications were made to ECHR. As of September 2010, 16,093 cases remain pending before the ECHR regarding Turkey.⁴⁰

ASSESSMENT OF TURKEY BY INTERNATIONAL INSTIUTIONS

- The UN's "Universal Periodic Review" mechanism evaluated Turkey on May 10th, 2010. They requested that Turkey remove its reservations put on the Conventions; ratify the International Criminal Court's status and the Optional Protocol to the UN Convention against Torture (OPCAT).
- The UN Committee on Racial Discrimination evaluated Turkey in 2009. Turkey was asked to deliver its 4th and 5th Periodical Report in 2011.
- The UN Committee on Children's Rights will review Turkey's periodical report towards the end of 2011.
- The UN Committee for Prevention of Torture reviewed Turkey's 3rd Periodical Report submitted with a delay of approximately four years on November 3-4th, 2010. Turkey was asked to prepare an interim report, including several issues⁴¹ in one year (until November 2011).
- A Committee established under the UN Convention on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights will evaluate Turkey on May 9th, 2011 and publish its observations, suggestions and outcomes.
- Turkey has not submitted its report within the framework of the UN International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights so far.
- A Committee established within the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) has discussed Turkey's report in their 46th session on July 13-30th, 2010. They asked several questions on certain key issues, including discrimination against women with headscarves. On August 16th, 2010, a final commentary was published.
- Turkey is expected to submit a report on the implementation of the UN Convention on Disabled Rights by September, 2011.

Institutionalization in the Field of Human Rights

At the beginning of 2010, the government stated that they would establish four human rights institutions within the scope of the democratic opening. The draft law on the establishment of the Human Rights Institution of Turkey was submitted to the Parliament on January 28th, 2010 and is still pending in the Constitutional Committee. Since NGOs and experts were not consulted on their opinions during the preparation of the draft, the Constitutional Committee established a sub-committee and conducted close consultations with the relevant counterparts and institutions. Experts and NGO representatives argued that the proposed insti-

40. The European Progress Report 2010 and its translation into Turkish can be accessed at http://www.abgs.gov.tr/files/BasinMusavirlik/yayinlar/ilerleme_2010.pdf. Last access: 05 January 2011.

41. A Turkish translation of these issues covered in the 23 article can be accessed at www.ihop.org.tr.

tution and board were far from meeting the Paris Principles particularly in terms of issues concerning economic and administrative autonomy.

The draft Law on the Establishment of a Monitoring Commission on Security Forces was submitted to the Parliament on July 22nd, 2010. It passed the Internal Affairs Commission and is pending before the General Assembly. During the preparation period of this draft law, negotiations were limited to a few public institutions. More importantly, instead of establishing an independent commission based on the Paris Principles, a new internal audit mechanism, which will strengthen the existing internal audit system of the Ministry of Internal, was preferred. In this respect, law enforcement bodies will be investigated by their peers.

A draft Law on “Anti-discrimination and Equality” was submitted to the Prime Ministry by the Ministry of Internal Affairs after consultations with related public institutions, experts, and NGOs. It is pending before the Council of Ministers.

The Optional Protocol to the UN Convention against Torture (OPCAT) was signed by Turkey on September 14th, 2005 and after a long interval, on July 29th, 2009 it was sent to the Parliament for ratification. However, during 2010, both the three additional Protocols to the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) and the OPCAT had not been ratified.

Apart from these four institutions, the Draft Law on the Establishment of an Ombudsman Institution should be mentioned here. In 2006, the law on the establishment of an Ombudsman Institution was enacted but it was annulled by the Constitutional Court on the grounds that there is no law in the Constitution to back this institution. However, the last amendments provided a constitutional basis for establishing an independent Ombudsman Institution and on January 5th, 2011 the draft law was sent to the Parliament.

Training for Public Officials

Human rights training continued in 2010 with a particular focus on law enforcement, judicial officers, and public officials. In addition, training targeted the effective investigation and documentation of mistreatment and torture. Training for healthcare personnel, judges, and prosecutors was carried out with a view to implement the Istanbul Protocol.⁴²

42. The Istanbul Protocol is an official document of the United Nations. Its full title is “The Manual on Effective Investigation and Documentation of Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment”, commonly known as the Istanbul Protocol.

Prisons

Kurdish or the use of another language by prisoners and convicts is allowed during family visits. Architectural changes to some prisons enabled more communal activities for prisoners. Because the number of juvenile detention centers is insufficient, children are unfortunately incarcerated with adults in many prisons. Thus, the Ministry of Justice has started to build juvenile detention centers. Financial and human resources and health services in prisons remain woefully inadequate.

Freedom of Expression

Problems of freedom of expression come to the forefront mainly when the State and its official ideology address certain sensitive issues, such as the Kurdish problem, minority rights, the Armenian issue, and relations between politics and military officials. In the Turkish Criminal Code and other laws, there remain many regulations restricting freedom of expression. Unfortunately, 2010 saw no improvement being conducted in this field. After the amendment made in 2008, there was a significant drop in the number of cases opened against Article 301⁴³ of the Turkish Penal Code. However, this does not necessarily mean that freedom of expression is guaranteed. Because according to the recent amendments, the Minister of Justice must give his consent in order for a case to be opened. Thus, there have been very few cases presented so far as the current Minister of Justice hasn't given his consent to each and every case. In this sense, the freedom of expression isn't guaranteed at all because getting consent in order to open a case is already limiting the freedom of expression.

The articles limiting the Freedom of Expression in various laws notably in the Turkish Penal Code, Turkey's Anti-Terror Law and Press Law should be amended and some of them should be removed. Also, newspapers dealing with the Kurdish question and publishing in Kurdish are under great pressure of these oppressive laws.

After the publication of videos, which allegedly violated Law no. 5816 on crimes against Atatürk, YouTube was officially inaccessible in Turkey from May 2008 to November 2010. Besides, many video sharing websites and mainstream web por-

43. Article 301 is as follows:

1. A person who publicly denigrates Turkishness, the Republic or the Grand National Assembly of Turkey, shall be punishable by imprisonment of between six months and three years.
2. A person who publicly denigrates the Government of the Republic of Turkey, the judicial institutions of the State, the military or security organizations shall be punishable by imprisonment of between six months and two years.
3. In cases where denigration of Turkishness is committed by a Turkish citizen in another country the punishment shall be increased by one third.
4. Expressions of thought intended to criticize shall not constitute a crime.

tals have been banned for several years. Obviously, Law no. 5651 on the Internet limits freedom of expression. Likewise, court cases which have been opened against journalists by high level authorities, including military authorities and politicians threaten freedom of the press.

Freedom of Assembly and Association

The closure of political parties is one of the serious problems concerning freedom of association in Turkey. The AK Party deputies' proposal to amend the Constitution included this issue but was rejected by Parliament. Furthermore, certain associations and foundations were closed for various reasons in 2010. Particularly, associations are subject to disproportionate administrative checks and heavy fines. They face many bureaucratic obstacles and difficulties in fund-raising and obtaining a 'public benefit status.' However, the recent referendum package broadened trade union rights. On the other hand, many demonstrations including the *Newroz* and 1 May demonstrations took place peacefully. But there was still excessive use of force and violence used by the police against certain demonstrations by university students in the Southeast.

Freedom of Religion

Though freedom of religion is one of the most violated human rights issues, it is one of the human rights issues that draw less attention. According to previous European Progress Reports, the main problems described are those of the non-Muslim communities recognized by the Lausanne Treaty and discrimination against the *Alevi* community. However, issues facing the Sunni Muslim community of Turkey, such as the headscarf issue, the obstacles before vocational religious high schools, religious orders, and communities are not underlined. These types of religious rights advocated by the Sunni Muslim majority of Turkey are ignored by the European Union. The attitude of the European Union, therefore, is considered a "double standard" by the Turkish public because not one of the Progression Reports touches upon the problems concerning the freedom of religion of Muslims living in Turkey.

After nine decades, on August 15th, 2010, a religious service was held at the Soumela Monastery in Trabzon. Likewise, since 1915, religious service was held for the first time at the Armenian Holy Cross Church on the Akhdamar Island in Van Lake on September 19th, 2010. Although the above mentioned religious services were important markers, it does not mean that the problems of the non-Muslim communities have been resolved. Both majority Muslim communities and minority non-Muslim communities continue to face many obstacles in acceding to their fundamental rights to freedom of religion. Moreover, there are some communities, such as the Caferi Muslims or Protestant Christians, which are not at all legally represented.

In 2010, the Council of Higher Education annulled the prohibition on entering the exams with a headscarf and consequently in many universities students started to participate to lectures with headscarves. The Judiciary continued to prevent the implementation of any legislation aiming to abolish the coefficient difference applied to graduates of vocational schools compared to secular schools. The Council of Higher Education tried to overcome these obstacles through various regulations. Governmental authorities have had frequent meetings with religious representatives of non-Muslim communities. In May, Prime Minister Erdogan issued an executive order instructing all relevant authorities to pay due attention to the problems of non-Muslims. This executive order covers such issues as protecting and maintaining non-Muslim cemeteries, implementing court decisions in favor of non-Muslim community foundations, and launching immediate legal proceedings concerning the publications against non-Muslim communities.

In the framework of the *Alevi* opening, several workshops were held but a report on the outcome has not yet been produced. Debates continue on whether compulsory religious classes are acceptable. The cases brought by Protestants and Jehovah's Witness following the Alevis are still pending. Furthermore, there are still problems concerning the training of clergy. The Halki (Heybeliada) Greek Orthodox seminary still remains closed. The Armenian Patriarchate's proposal to open a university department for the Armenian language and clergy has been pending. The Syriacs can only take informal training. Likewise, applications by authorities of religious minorities for allocation of places of worship continue to be refused. Two cases regarding Cem Houses have been concluded and their applications have been denied. In May 2010, a Cem House applied to the ECHR after exhausting other domestic remedies.

Women's Rights

The 2010 Referendum on the Constitutional Amendment Package opened the door to Affirmative Action for women. This is one of the most significant improvements as regards to women's rights in a long time. In addition, the Prime Ministry issued an executive order promoting women's employment and equal opportunity in the work place. This executive order provides for the establishment of a board, integrating social partners and NGOs in its work to draft and implement legislation and policies in pursuit of gender equality.

In July 2010, the Parliamentary Committee on Equal Opportunity for Women and Men submitted a report on "combating violence against women."⁴⁴ In this report, several recommendations were made on rehabilitating women shelters,

44. The report can be accessed at http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/komisyon/kefe/docs/komisyon_rapor2.doc. Last Access: 05 January 2011.

training public officers to deal with domestic violence, collecting the necessary data on domestic violence, allocating a budget to combat domestic violence and establishing more shelters for victims of domestic violence.

A number of members of the judiciary and law enforcement bodies were trained under the Protocol signed between the Directorate-General for Women's Status and various institutions in 2009. However, additional resources are required to sustain this training.

Women's participation in politics as elected officials remains low. Similarly, their numbers are few in the bureaucracy and even in the NGO community. To guarantee women's rights in practice, problems concerning the practice of law should be resolved. The Supreme Court of Appeal's approach towards cases related to domestic violence is an obstacle to such progress.

Children's Rights

The last amendment to the Constitution ensures the protection of children's rights under the constitutional framework and enables the inclusion of Affirmative Action for children, under the Constitution. A Prime Ministerial executive order for better access of children to education and health services was issued with the aim of improving the conditions for seasonal migrant agricultural workers and their families. Reservations that Turkey put on international treaties have not been removed.

With the amendment relating to the Anti-Terror Law and other laws, children whom are accused of committing terror-related crimes will be tried by Juvenile Courts. Moreover, the majority of children sentenced for those crimes have been released. However, children are still held in detention centers, which do not even meet the bare standards for adults. Those centers are generally manned by unqualified personnel who do not possess the necessities of a Juvenile Justice System. Juvenile courts still do not exist throughout all of Turkey's provinces. .

The Disabled

The most recent Constitutional Amendments also cleared the way for Affirmative Action in favor of the disabled. 2010 was declared as the 'Accessibility for All Year' by the Government. A national mechanism in order to monitor the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and its Optional Protocol still has not been established. The employment of people with disabilities in public institutions has been exempted from the recruitment limitations in the general budget, paving the way for improving their employment prospects.

Minorities and Cultural Rights

Turkey has not yet removed its reservations on the rights of minorities based on the UN International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and it has not signed the Council of Europe Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, and the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages. Minorities continue to face difficulties in relation to property and education rights. The schools for minorities continue to meet challenges in regards to management, registration, budget and enrollment of students.

As regard to cultural rights, on January 1st 2009, TRT Şeş started the 24-hour Kurdish language TV broadcasts. At the end of 2009, the Radio and Television Supreme Council (RTÜK) published the regulation related to the issue. At the end of 2010, 5 TV channels and 11 local radio stations were given permission to broadcast, and 2 other TV channels broadcasted in Kurdish through satellite. Furthermore, on April 4th 2010, TRT started the 24-hour Arabic TV broadcasts. In this period, a Kurdish play was staged in the Diyarbakır Municipal Theatre and the State Minister and chief negotiator invited all EU embassies to a Kurdish literature event in the village of Bahcesehir, Van. Mardin Artuklu University, Bingol and Mus Alparslan University applied to the Council of Higher Education to open Kurdish language departments. Mardin Artuklu University established the first Kurdish and Assyrian language departments, and started to accept students to post-graduate programs organized by these departments.

Though the use of the Kurdish language in election campaigns became possible, the use of any language other than Turkish in Turkey's domestic political life is still illegal under the laws on elections and political parties. Thus, the courts have been issuing contradictory decisions in court cases against Kurdish politicians.

As regards to Romani people, the government organized several workshops and meetings and the Ministry of the Interior asked all governors about the housing needs of their population in each province. During this period, a civil registration of Romani people was facilitated. However, a comprehensive policy to address the situation of the Romani people could unfortunately not be developed. That's why, in the aftermath of the demolitions under the urban renewal programs in various cities, Romani people face serious problems, which could incite desperate incidents, such as in Manisa, Selendi.

The Kurdish Question

Some restrictions on the use of the Kurdish language in broadcasting and the use of grazing lands in the region have been removed. However, as a result of opera-

tions against the Union of Communities in Kurdistan (KCK), a large number of administrators and politicians have been arrested. Therefore, the government's "Democratic Opening" has been highly questioned by the Kurdish community.

Landmine clearing in the border areas is a priority issue. No new regulations concerning the village guards have been carried out. The Damage Assessment Commissions established by the Law on Compensation of Losses due to Terrorism and the Fight against Terrorism accepted more than half of the applications. Applicants, whose cases were rejected, applied to the judiciary and in some instances, after exhausting all other domestic remedies, applied to the ECHR. The adjudication process continues to deal with these cases.

A large number displaced people cannot return to their villages because of security problems, the presence of landmines, the lack of basic infrastructure, economic problems and most importantly the threat posed by village guards. In the last days of 2010, Turkey discussed a model of democratic autonomy and bilingual language, which the Democratic Society Congress (DTK) has presented as a draft at the end of the meeting held in Diyarbakır on December 18-19, 2010.

Refugees

On March 19th, 2010, two directives were issued by the Ministry of the Interior on "Combating Illegal Migration"⁴⁵ and "Refugees and Asylum Seekers."⁴⁶ Furthermore, work is underway on the "Draft Law on Foreigners and International Protection" which is expected to be enacted in 2011. However, regional reservations by Turkey have not been removed from the 1951 Geneva Convention and the 1967 Protocol.

2.4 EXPECTATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

The Parliament and the government need to work on resolving the human rights problems of Turkey in 2011. In this context, building of human right institutions of different kinds should take place in same package rather than separately and their mandates should be defined clearly. While the Parliament continues to work on advancing human rights legislation, it should also work in close consultation with NGOs. Previously, the process of consultation with NGOs was insufficient and the NGOs were not able to efficiently deliver their ideas to the Parliament.

45. For the executive order see http://isay.icisleri.gov.tr/ortak_icerik/www.icisleri/yasadisi.pdf. Last Access: 05 January 2011

46. For the executive order see http://isay.icisleri.gov.tr/ortak_icerik/www.icisleri/multeci.pdf. Last Access: 05 January 2011

Review mechanisms of international institutions require reliable data. However, there is no statistics in most areas related to human rights policies in Turkey. Without this data, there are no benchmarks on which to base the promotion and improvement of human rights. For instance, Turkey collects data only for perpetrators of crimes through police registers. Yet, it does not monitor or collect data on the length of detention and investigation or on how trained judges and prosecutors use their education. Thus, the lack of data makes it impossible to ascertain how efficient were the resources devoted for human rights training. As a result, training packages cannot be developed or improved. In brief, the Government does not have instruments to adequately measure human rights performances nor to collect reliable data. In this sense, in 2011, specific action plans should be adopted.

The issues below is expected to be taken up on the agenda and resolved during 2011:

- While enacting adjustment laws, particularly those concerning the protection of personal data and the right to access information, the protection of fundamental rights and freedoms should always be maintained. The rights guaranteed by the Constitution should not be overruled by adjustment laws.
- The reform process, heralded by the Constitutional Amendments, should be continued. Transparency, accountability, and participatory mechanisms must be strengthened. Public administration reform should also be put on the agenda.
- A monitoring mechanism for problems and implementation of legal aid should be established.
- Those laws and related institutions that limit freedom of expression should be revised on the basis of international standards. In this context, regulations regarding hate speech and hate crimes should be legislated and implemented.
- Government oversight to establish shelters for women victims to domestic violence in coordination with local municipalities, organizations, and institutions should be strengthened.
- Considerable training to increase awareness and effectiveness of law enforcement bodies, the judiciary and civil servants, who deal with cases of domestic violence, should be supported more effectively.
- The juvenile justice system should be evaluated and overhauled to ensure the rights of minors and juvenile offenders. Regulations should be legislated and implemented to provide education for children in their mother tongue, if it is not Turkish, in either private or public schools. Likewise, measures should be taken to facilitate access to public services and the judiciary for non-speakers of Turkish.
- To increase the participation of people with disabilities in Turkey's social and economic life, awareness-raising efforts to fight prejudices need to be intensified.
- Turkey needs to take further measures to develop social consciousness for the protection of minority rights and property rights of all non-Muslim religious communities.

3. FOREIGN POLICY

3.1 IMPORTANT INCIDENTS AND THEIR IMPACT ON TURKEY

3.1.1 The “Axis Shift” Debate

Some Western analysts have recently claimed that Turkish foreign policy is “heading towards the East” and “drifting away from Europe.” The basis of this so-called “axis shift” has assumed that Turkish foreign policy has been undergoing an ideological transformation. Indeed, the debate over this “axis shift” is not new. Turkey’s attempts to have good relations with its Middle Eastern neighbors have always been carefully scrutinized. Those attempts have raised concerns in the past on Turkey’s foreign policy orientation. However, the recent debates are beyond reasonable.

Currently, the “axis shift” debates are closely related to the recent crisis in Turkish-Israeli relations. The Davos incident, 2009 where Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan and Israeli President Shimon Peres argued over the Israeli attacks in Gaza, and PM Erdogan walked out of the meeting intensified the debates. In the following days, the “axis shift” debates continued in both the domestic and foreign media. In 2010, allegations of an “axis shift” were fueled with Israel’s bloody Mavi Marmara attack, and the subsequent freezing of Israeli-Turkish relations. In addition, to the cooling down of relations between Turkey and Israel other Turkish initiatives such as Turkey’s “No” vote in the UNSC on the sanctions against Iran are foddors for the advocates of this “axis shift” argument.

Chronology

IMPORTANT DEVELOPMENTS IN FOREIGN POLICY

Axis Shift Debates

- **January 29:** Prime Minister Erdogan walked off the stage at the Davos World Economic Forum after a clash with Israeli President Shimon Peres over Gaza. The Davos incident triggered the debates on axis shift.
- **May 31:** Israeli commandoes attacked a humanitarian aid ship “Mavi Marmara” in high seas. 9 passengers were killed. The attack restarted the debates on axis shift.
- **June 9:** Turkey voted against the draft resolution of the UN Security Council to impose new sanctions on Iran. The ensuing tension between Turkey and the US reopened the debates on axis shift.

Nuclear Security Summit

- **April 8:** Russia and the US signed Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty in the Czech capital, Prague.
- **April 11-13:** Nuclear Security Summit was held in the United States. Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan, the Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu and the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources Taner Yildiz went to the US to attend to the summit.

NATO Summit and the Missile Shield Project

- **February 4-5:** Unofficial meeting of the NATO Defense Ministers was held in Istanbul.
- **February 5-7:** FM Davutoglu attended to the 46th Munich Security Conference with a Foreign Ministry delegation to discuss the future, strategic concept and mission of the NATO.
- **April 22-23:** FM Davutoglu visited Tallinn, Estonia to participate in two-day unofficial meeting of NATO Foreign Ministers.
- **June 10-11:** A Turkish delegation headed by the Defense Minister Vecdi Gonul went to Brussels to participate in NATO Defense Ministers meeting.
- **October 8:** The Secretary General of NATO, Anders Fogh Rasmussen, met PM Erdogan and FM Davutoglu during his official visit to Turkey.
- **October 14:** A Turkish delegation headed by FM Davutoglu and DM Gonul participated in the Foreign Affairs and Defense Ministerial Meetings in Brussels to discuss the preparations for the Lisbon Summit.
- **November 19-20:** NATO Summit was held in Lisbon. The new strategic concept of NATO was ratified in the meeting.

Wikileaks

- **July 25:** Wikileaks released the Afghan War Diaries, secret documents of the years between 2004 and 2009 on the US war against Afghanistan.
- **October 22:** Wikileaks released the Iraq war logs that contain documents of the years between 2004 and 2010 on the Iraq War.
- **November 28:** Wikileaks released US Embassy cables of the years

In response, the AK Party government and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs refute this claim of an “axis shift” and explains that Turkey’s positions and actions in

international and regional affairs are an expression of the pro-active diversification of its foreign policy. Turkey, in a changing global environment, truly needs to redefine its basic foreign policy principles by referring to its historical, geographic, economic and demographic resources. Accordingly, Turkey adopted a new foreign policy and has been implementing it. Therefore, the matter is not an “axis shift” towards the East, but an expansion of Turkey’s foreign policy based on a rational and sustainable activism towards its neighboring regions.⁴⁷

The political and economic developments of the last decade in Turkey should be enough to render the “axis shift” allegations meaningless. Especially during the AK Party’s administration,, significant strides towards democratization in line with the EU process have been made and marked economic development has been accomplished. Another point, which undermines the “axis shift” argument, is that Turkey has never wavered in its responsibilities toward Western institutions like NATO, the EU or the European Commission. In November, 2010, Turkey took over the term presidency of the European Council, which is the most important institution of Europe. In line with this reasoning, Turkey voted “Yes” to the New Strategic Concept of NATO in Lisbon in November, 2010. All these examples are valuable and important to prove that Turkey is still very much part of the Western alliance.

Turkey’s will to become a full member of the EU is still alive and strong. Turkey views accession to the EU as a strategic goal. The weakening in the accession process is not because Turkey is faltering in its efforts to become and EU member, it is because of certain European countries’ opposition towards Turkey’s membership. The impact of these European countries vision of the future and identity of the EU will greatly influence Turkey-EU relations. Turkey’s good relations with the Western world should not be an obstacle for Turkey to also establish good relations with Middle Eastern and neighboring countries. In fact, the “EU Progress Reports” have praised Turkey for its close relations with its neighboring countries.

Despite many Turkish political leaders refutation of this notion of an “axis shift,” this debate continued throughout the year 2010 in both foreign and domestic media. Although there was no real logical and analytical substance for this axis shift claim, the volume of the debates proves that there is an audience for it in the West. The worst side of this debate is psychological pressure it places on Turkey.

47. For more on the axis shift debate, see, Cengiz Çandar, *Türk Dış Politikasında Eksen Tartışmaları: Çok Kutuplu Dünya için Yeni Bir Vizyon*, SETA Analiz, January 2010; E. Fuat Keyman, *Türk Dış Politikasında Eksen Tartışmaları: Küresel Kargaşa Çağında Realist Proaktivizm*, SETA Analiz, January 2010.

3.1.2 The Nuclear Security Summit

The US hosted the Nuclear Security Summit in Washington D.C. on April 12-13, 2010. Since the foundation of the UN at the San Francisco Summit in 1945, the latest summit gathered the maximum number of world leaders together. The leaders of the EU, the International Atomic Energy Agency, the UN, and 47 countries including Turkey joined the summit. The Obama administration did not invite Iran, Syria, and North Korea to the summit. Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu cancelled his trip to the Nuclear Summit at the last minute to avoid being pressured by certain countries, including Turkey, over its nuclear weapons. The President of the Israeli Atomic Energy Agency, Dan Meridor, joined the summit in instead of Netanyahu.

The summit, which was held after the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) Agreement with Russia, represented one of the most important steps in Obama's program for a "nuclear weapons free world" based on his pledge for "exchanging the balance of fear with the balance of trust." The new strategy of a "nuclear weapons free world" described in Prague in April, 2010, included providing an alarm for border security, setting up warning systems, and engineering technological systems to recuperate stolen equipment. This Nuclear Security Summit was an extension of the strategies initiated in Prague.

The main goal of the summit was to prevent nuclear materials from being captured by non-state actors. The Summit's agenda covered issues such as: securing nuclear materials for 4 years, taking precautions against nuclear terrorism, fighting against the international nuclear black market, and preventing the distribution of plutonium and uranium through illegal means. All these topics were discussed. Another important goal at the Summit was to establish a bank of international nuclear material, which would enable all states to buy nuclear materials provided by countries which possess advanced nuclear technology. This would also facilitate the inspection of all nuclear materials. However, non-nuclear states objected to this proposal, as nuclear states already hold a disproportionate advantage when enriched uranium is traded on the international markets.

The US effort to bring the issue of sanctions against Iran to the UNSC received considerable attention during the Summit. The Obama administration supported other countries' claims that Iran violated the NPT regime by not opening its doors to the International Atomic Energy Agency inspectors, and that Iran possesses enriched uranium that is not under the control of the IAEA. According to the Obama administration, Iran should have sanctions imposed upon it. Along with

China and Brazil, Turkey opposed the US proposal in favor of sanctions at the UNSC. Turkey believes that sanctions can harm the diplomatic process while diplomatic efforts are actively pursuing a solution to this nuclear chaos. That is why diplomatic and peaceful means should insistently be sought. At the summit, PM Erdogan and Brazilian President Lula da Silva met to talk about the nuclear issue on Iran. This meeting paved the way for the Tehran Declaration, which will be signed in May 2010. Subsequently, Turkey and Brazil voted “No” to the sanctions against Iran at the UNSC.

Another important agenda for Turkey during the Summit was relations with Armenia. PM Erdogan and Armenian President Serj Sarkisian met at the Summit, despite opposition from the Armenian Diaspora in the US. Although there was some pressure from the US on Turkey to pass the Protocols, Turkey remained steadfast that Armenia should take the first step. Accordingly, PM Erdogan said to Sarkisian that Armenia should make some progress in the context of the Protocols signed in Zurich on October 12, 2009.

3.1.3 The NATO Summit and the Missile Shield Project

The NATO summit, held in Lisbon on November 19-20, 2010, was highly important in redefining the new strategic concept of the organization.⁴⁸ After the Cold War, it was the third time that NATO members gathered to discuss and update the function of the organization according to the new conditions. By the end of the Cold War and with the collapse of the Communist regimes, the “raison d’être” of NATO was being questioned.⁴⁹ In 1991 and 1999, the definitions of the “function” and the “threat” for NATO were reformulated in line with the US’ national security concept.

As the scale of the organization was expanded, there emerged some ambiguities about issues such as terrorism, energy security, climate change, and organized crimes. Then the presidents met in three different cities, Strasbourg, Kehl, and Baden-Baden, on April 3-4, 2009, to talk about the changing threats and to prepare a new strategic concept to tackle them. The ‘Missile Shield Project’ determined the agenda of the summit, held in Lisbon on November 19-20, 2010. The

48. For a detailed analysis on the Lisbon Summit of NATO see, Selin M. Bölme, *NATO Zirvesi ve Füze Kalkanı Projesi*, SETA Analiz, December 2010.

49. For a detailed analysis on the evolution of NATO see, Tarık Oğuzlu, *Turkey and the Transformation of NATO*, SETA Policy Brief, July 2009.

Missile Shield Project dates back to the Cold War; however, actual efforts began during the George W. Bush administration. Obama revised the project because of his wish to revitalize relations with Russia, as Russia's opposition to the shield project is well known. Indeed, Obama needed to revise the project not only because of Russia, but also because of the resistance of other countries as well. A revised version of the project was easily accepted by certain countries. It also facilitated sharing the project's expenditures among NATO members.

The new project, entitled "Phased, Adaptive Approach" would activate the missile defense system corresponding to Iran's estimated capacity of developing nuclear ballistic missiles. To protect Europe against ballistic missiles, defense missiles would be located on the Aegeis ships in the Mediterranean Sea, along with radars in some countries and defense missile systems in others. Turkey was described as the most suitable country for the radars, as it is the closest country to the Middle East; the region where potential future threats are likely to originate. Ankara's response to this demand has been transformed into a test of its commitment to NATO under the pressure of the axis shift debate. Turkey's approach will also have an impact on future Turkish-American relations.

Turkey has several reasons to hesitate in accepting this project. Turkey wanted to see what Russia's attitude toward the project would be. More importantly, it did not want Iran to be designated as the real threat and the reason behind this project. According to the new National Security Policy Document determined at the last National Security Council meeting, Iran was not a threat for Turkey. In the same document, Iran is described as one of the new allies with which cooperation and a common vision is formed. This means that Turkey did not want to target Iran as a major threat for the "Shield Project" right after its own document describing Iran as an ally. Turkey's effectively presented its demands and they were implemented. These demands included the following: no country's name was cited (meaning Iran and Syria) concerning the Ballistic Missiles, Missile Shield Project, the project would be implemented as a result of NATO's collective defense concept, the intelligence provided by the radars should not be distributed to non-NATO countries like Israel, and the shield project should protect all NATO countries including Turkey.

The new strategic concept of NATO was ratified in Lisbon on November 19-20, 2010.. However, one issue that remains ambiguous is the division of labor among members NATO members. A proposal will be prepared and presented within the next 6 months to the member countries through the North Atlantic Council. It is

known that Turkey will be asked to host the radars; but Turkey's position is still uncertain.

The proponents of the axis shift argument point to Turkey's position of not singling out Iran as the target country in the Strategic Concept Paper as substantiating their claim. Others, once Turkey signed the Concept paper criticized it for breaking away from its own foreign policy. The Missile Shield Project is not only a defense project, it has far broader implications. It is an American attempt to sustain the existing global order. Thus, Turkey's efforts and position should be considered in this context. Turkey no longer wants to be NATO's frontier country. Turkey's insistence to not target Iran is considered by some in NATO as the weak link in the chain. Turkey is also struggling against regional polarization, as it aspires to be a regional power in the future. Turkey fears the old dynamics of Cold War polarization. Therefore, Turkey has a cautious approach towards the strategic concept paper of NATO, as Turkey no longer wants to be a "frontier state."

Turkey is attempting to create a new space and a different approach within the Western alliance. Turkey is not spared the same global threats that are defined by NATO. In fact, Turkey's faces the same threats including international terrorism and nuclear weapons as its Western allies. However, Turkey now demands to have a say in the policies to defend against these threats. This explains why Ankara signs the agreement with NATO on the Missile Shield Project - on the one hand, while also being cautious - on the other hand. All are consistent with Turkey striving to establish itself as a strong and influential player at time when the region is unstable.

3.1.4 WikiLeaks

WikiLeaks is an international non-profit organization that publishes US official documents, including those classified as confidential and secret. Wikileaks first went on line on October 4, 2006, at www.wikileaks.org. The founder and the editor of the website is Julian Assange, an Australian journalist. In July 2010, WikiLeaks surprised many when it released 92,000 documents related to the war in Afghanistan between 2004 and 2009. It provided documents to major newspapers, such as The Guardian, The New York Times, and Der Spiegel. The documents detail individual incidents including friendly fire and civilian casualties. The second major leak was on the war in Iraq with the release of 400,000 documents on October 22, 2010. However, WikiLeaks attracted the world's attention when it started to

release 251,287 cables by the US Department of State, covering the period from 2004 to 2010. 100,000 of the documents were classified as confidential, and 15,000 as secret; but there seemed to be no top secret document in the leaks.

Although Julian Assange is considered to be the head of the group, the Wikileaks' staff is allegedly comprised of a mix of Chinese dissidents, journalists, mathematicians, and start-up company technologists from the United States, Taiwan, Europe, Australia, and South Africa. Julian Assange was arrested in the UK on December 7, 2010, on suspicion of rape due to an arrest warrant by Sweden. Assange was released on bail on December 16, 2010. The future of WikiLeaks seems to be ambiguous.

However, aside the scandal surrounding Wikileaks itself and Assange's arrest, what is salient is how certain leaks could affect Turkish-American relations. WikiLeaks released 7.918 cables from the US Embassy in Ankara, and this number is the second largest number of cables leaked after the Department of State. However, by the end of 2010, only a few cables were released. The leaked cables from 2004-2009 revealed that the US Government - represented by the US Embassy in Ankara, were highly concerned and raised objections about the AK Party's new foreign policy. In addition, during US Ambassador Eric Edelman's tenure between 2003 and 2005, many cables expressed concern over the orientation and actions of the AK Party Government itself. Ambassador Edelman employed harsh language in the cables when commenting on the AK Party's foreign policy. It was apparent from the content of these leaks that the comments and inferences in these cables are based on "diplomatic gossip" based on what diplomats have heard from their counterparts, policy makers, journalists and etc.

As mentioned above, one of the questions raised was how the WikiLeaks cables would affect Turkish-American relations. Aside being an embarrassment there is no strong evidence that these cables will undermine Turkish-American relations in the medium or long term. However, the release of the documents is likely to make diplomats and politicians more careful with their relations with their US embassies.

Nevertheless, this whole incident leads to a legitimate question being asked; to what degree do these cables reflect a policy making mechanism of American foreign policy? No doubt, the cables are important to some extent; yet they are only one factor in shaping US foreign policy decisions. All the cables coming from the capitals around the world are classified. Then they are assessed by regional experts and used as advice. Thus, these cables are neither the reflection nor the expression of American foreign policy.

In conclusion, the WikiLeaks “leaks” are not a milestone in diplomacy. However, underestimating their value by labeling them as conspiracies is equally wrong. WikiLeaks will probably bring about several changes in diplomatic practices, particularly regarding cable writing techniques, their transmission, and the security of the documents.

3.2 TURKISH FOREIGN POLICY AND DISCUSSIONS

3.2.1 The Relations between Turkey and the United States

Turkish-American relations in 2010 were markedly different than their bilateral relations of the last 60 years. The “Model Partnership” debate, which began in 2009, led many to hope that 2010 would be a productive year. However, contrary to expectations, relations were besieged by several problems. Even the debates over the Armenian genocide bill in Washington in late 2010 demonstrated the mutual lack of confidence on both sides. As for the year 2011, despite all the problems that arose in 2010, relations appear to be improving and should evolve on a firmer ground again in 2011.

The problems that erupted in 2010 were structural in nature. Thus, if these structural problems are not resolved, we should not anticipate the re-establishment of smooth relations between the two countries. In 2011, the main problem in Turkish-American relations is the transformation of the hierarchical structure between Turkey and America, where Turkey is no longer in a position of inferiority. The US has not been able to adapt to this more egalitarian structure, insisting on keeping the old structure between them. It is essential for the US to acknowledge this change and modify its approach to Turkey. Then relations could again once again improve. If the US chooses to ignore this rebalancing of power, there may be new tensions between it and Turkey in the coming years. Another serious source of conflict between Turkey and the US is when third party-countries in the Middle East, the Balkans and the Caucasus attempt to “punish” Turkey through Washington whenever these countries want to counter one of Turkey’s foreign policy initiatives or actions. For example, this has taken the form of mobilization of strong pro-Israeli, Greek and Armenian lobbies against Turkey in the US when these countries could not stand up against or counter Turkish foreign policy bilaterally or on the international platform. Within Turkey, foreign countries attempt to use Turkish domestic politics through certain domestic actors to weaken the Turkish government. Parallel to these covert types of activities in Turkey’s domestic politics, whenever certain countries like Israel, Greece, and Armenia face a challenge

from Turkish foreign policy, they appeal to Washington for help. These types of attempts also contribute to undermine relations between the US and Turkey and will likely continue in 2011.. However, there are still limits to what these lobbies can accomplish both in the US and in Turkey. Thus, relations in 2011 also have the potential to improve.

Chronology	TURKEY-US RELATIONS
	February 5-6: US Secretary of Defense Robert Gates paid an official visit to Turkey
	March 2010: US House of Representatives approved the draft resolution 252 on Armenian Genocide with a vote of 23 to 22. Turkey recalled its ambassador for consultations.
	April 6: Turkish Ambassador to Washington, Namik Tan was sent back to the US after the US administration gave clear signals to Turkey that it will not bring the Armenian resolution to the House floor.
	April 12-13: PM Erdogan met US President Barack Obama and Secretary of State Hillary Clinton during the Nuclear Security Summit in Washington. Top agenda items were Iran and Turkish-Armenian relations.
	April 15: FM Davutoglu met Clinton in Washington
	May 17: Iran, Turkey and Brazil signed a joint declaration on fuel swap for Tehran Research Reactor. The agreement increased the tension between Turkey and the US.
	June 1-2: FM Davutoglu visited the US to discuss the Gaza flotilla attack and Iranian nuclear program with the US and UN authorities. During his visit, he met Clinton and US National Security Adviser James Jones.
	June 9: US-Turkish relations soured after Turkey voted against the UNSC resolution on new sanctions on Iran.
	June 26-27: PM Erdogan met Obama and James Jones during the G-20 meeting in Toronto.
	June 28-30: US Secretary of Transport Ray LaHood visited Turkey as an official guest of his Turkish counterpart Binali Yildirim.
	November 13: PM Erdogan met Obama during the G-20 meeting in Seoul. The Missile Shield Project was the top agenda item.
	November 29: FM Davutoglu met Clinton and US National Security Adviser Tom Donilon in the White House.
	December 22: The US House of Representatives did not include HR 252 – the Armenian Genocide resolution – on its agenda on its final day of session, thus the resolution became null.
	December 30: Obama bypassed the Senate and appointed Francis Ricciardone as the Ambassador to Turkey. Due to objections by the Republicans, the post of the U.S. Ambassador in Turkey had been kept vacant since the ex-Ambassador to Turkey James Jeffrey left Ankara on June 31.

In 2009, President Obama’s first visit overseas after he took office was to Turkey. This engendered a positive atmosphere, further bolstered by Obama’s conception

of a “Model Partnership.” Within this framework, relations improved with the development of the Armenian Protocol, cooperation on Iraq, and Afghanistan. However, the Mavi Marmara crisis threw relations back into crisis because of Israel’s actions. And the positive expectations of 2010, gave way to political crises.

Although the full extent of the crisis between the US and Turkey over Israel became apparent with the Israeli attack on the Mavi Marmara, the first signs of the crisis occurred much earlier, as Turkish Prime Minister Erdogan openly criticized the Israeli government during his visit to Washington in December 2009. In addition to the tensions with Israel, a parallel crisis occurred when various wings of the US Congress demanded from President Obama to recognize the event of 1915 as genocide. The Turkish response to the Congressional panel passing a resolution calling the killing of Armenians in Ottoman Turkey as genocide (23-22) was harsh. Turkish Ambassador Namik Tan was recalled to Ankara following the vote and bilateral relations were almost frozen. The Americans thought that the Turkish side overreacted and stated that Turkey recalling its Ambassador was not how allies behaved. Turkey’s counter argument was that the US was unfairly using this issue to exert pressure on Turkey to pass the Armenian Protocols in the Turkish Grand National Assembly. For Turkey, the White House was playing a double game. Because on the international scene, it was supporting the rapprochement between Turkey and Armenia, while on the domestic scene, it was playing the Armenian card in Congress against Turkey to sway Turkey’s Parliament’s final decision on the Protocols. The issue of timing is also important in this particular scenario. Because the Israeli lobby also plays a role in how far the Armenian genocide issue gets in Congress. So, it is worth-noting that the bill on the Armenian Genocide did not pass - and Turkey was able to hold its position in the US for the first time without the support of the Israeli lobby. The crisis was overcome, as Erdogan attended the Nuclear Security Summit in Washington in April 2010 and Ambassador Namik Tan returned to his post prior to the summit.

Another crisis emerged between Turkey and America with the Tehran Declaration in May 2010. The P5+1 group, which failed to come to terms with Iran on the issue of nuclear fuel swap, asked for help from Turkey in October 2009. Upon this request, Turkey together with Brazil started to negotiate with Iran and arrived at a settlement in May 2010. However, a number of countries following the US’ lead did not even want to give Iran a chance. They did not think that Tehran would sign any such agreement. So they announced that they supported UN sanctions against Iran and distanced themselves from the Tehran Declaration. Furthermore, the US argued that the Tehran Agreement undermined the sanctions resolution and did not contain the necessary conditions for Iran to stop its nuclear activities. Turkey and Brazil, however, defended the agreement, and this attracted further accusations

leveled against Turkey that it had been played by Iran. Turkey argued that the US went against its earlier stance and had an approach towards Turkey contrary to what Obama's wrote to Erdogan in a letter shortly before the Declaration was signed. The mutual accusations between the US and Turkey followed and distrust deepened.

On June 1st 2010, Israel attacked a Turkish aid ship, the Mavi Marmara, in international waters, and killed 9 Turks, of which one was an American citizen. Turkey was shocked by this event and it took the case to the UN. However, following the attack, a campaign emerged targeting Turkey instead of Israel, which strained relations with Israel and the US even further. Moreover, Israel mobilized all of its lobbies in the US in an attempt to punish Turkey via Washington. This translated into a global psychological war, bringing back the shift of axis debate to center stage. Turkey was made the scapegoat in Washington and in certain international forums. An anti-Turkish atmosphere arose in Washington, which adversely affected Turkish American relations. But the main shock came later.

In the context of these strained relations, Turkey went ahead and voted "NO" on the UN sanctions on Iran resolution at the UNSC. Obama had requested that Erdogan change his vote. So, Turkey's "NO" vote caught the American administration off-guard. This development strengthened the hands of the pro-Israeli lobby in their campaign against Turkey. Following the vote, the shift of axis debate circulated with greater intensity in the international media and went beyond the pro-Israeli lobby.

While Turkey was defending its "NO" vote as a natural extension of its involvement and stake in the Tehran agreement, the American administration perceived it as a betrayal. The American Administration's over the top reaction demonstrated to Turkish policy makers the depth of hostility against Iran embedded in the consciousness of the American public and policy-makers. However, this fierce reaction of the US, further frustrated Turks whose expectations were not satisfied with respect to the flotilla attack. For certain US policymakers the shift of axis debate was replaced with discussions on the potential 'expulsion of Turkey from NATO' and the development of 'give and take' relations instead of a 'strategic or model partnership'. In this environment, Washington spent the whole summer of 2010 discussing with Turkish, Israeli and American experts the question of what direction Turkey is heading towards.

In this sense, September 2010 can be marked as another turning point in bilateral relations. During its campaign against the Turkish government over the summer, the Israeli lobby almost persuaded Washington that the AK Party government would either not receive popular support for the referendum of September 12, 2010 or it would only win by a narrow margin. They also argued that Kılıcdaroglu, the new leader of the CHP, would replace the government in the upcoming elections. However, these arguments were mute with the AK Party's overwhelming and con-

clusive “YES” victory - in the referendum. The outcome of the referendum persuaded Washington that the AK Party government would stay in power for at least for another term. As a result, discussion over a ‘give and take’ type of relationship with Turkey were replaced by more constructive discussions over how to recover and normalize relations with Turkey in Washington. Another off shoot of this victory was a renewed effort to improve Turkish-US relations on behalf of the American Administration and policy makers. To this end a flurry of activity began with an increase in intellectual discussions and the consultations of ‘experts’ on Turkey to determine the meaning behind Turkey’s new policies.

Despite the pro-Israeli lobby’s efforts to sway US policy against the AK Party’s Government, Turkey was able to hold firm to its positions and the Israeli lobby failed to cause a rift between Turkey and US. This demonstrates that Turkish politics can withstand outside influences, and the power of the pro-Israeli lobby in Washington is not limitless. Thus, 2010 was the year that the Turkish government showed the world that change would only come from within the country and not be imposed from Washington. For many in Turkey, the “Myth of the pro-Israeli Lobby” has been debunked. And the network of the Israeli lobby’s relations within Turkey was exposed, weakening its influence domestically. The years to come will show that 2010 was a turning-point in Turkish-American relations.

Another matter of discord in Turkish-American relations was the NATO Missile Shield issue. Turkey found itself in a difficult position because of the importance the Missile Shield issue plays in the Strategic Concept discussion. The condition of unanimity in the decision-making process was jeopardized because Turkey expressed concerns with respect to the Missile Shield Project itself. Turkey’s protracted resistance to certain aspects of the project and bargaining over the issue caused a negative reaction from certain of its Washington allies, among them Transatlantic-NATO experts and realists specialized in security issues. Although these circles do not give much weight to the shift of axis argument, they contend that security issues are the real test for Turkey’s allegiance to NATO. Relieved that Turkey’s supported the Agreement at the NATO Summit, these circles felt that Turkey’s bargaining was a good sign. Because it showed that Turkey was involved and had a stake in the game. Subsequently, the shift of axis debate has subsided, allowing for relations to ease. Another important development is Turkey’s joint military exercise with China instead of with America and Israel for the Anatolian Eagle military exercise. This joint exercise has also drawn attention to the improving Turkish-Chinese relations.

In addition to these developments, the Wikileaks scandal highlighted the problems in Turkish-American relations. In fact, Wikileaks was a source of embarrassment for the US diplomatic service and temporarily put Ankara on a higher “moral ground.” Thus, the US was doing its best to avoid another political crisis in US-

Turkey bilateral relations, which was further eased with Turkey's affirmative vote at the NATO Summit.

The change of US Ambassadors in Ankara was another diplomatic issue causing tension at the end of 2010. The former Ambassador to Turkey, Jim Jeffrey, became Ambassador to Baghdad, leaving the position open in Ankara. Frank Ricciardone was appointed on December 30th by President Obama for the position, however he was unable to win the Senate's confirmation. This was due to the impact of the pro-Israeli lobby, which was exerting influence in Washington to stall Ricciardone's appointment. Nevertheless, Ricciardone became Ambassador to Turkey in February 2011.

2010 was an important year for Turkish-American relations. It showed that the US was not really ready to assume a role as an equal partner in the new "model-partnership" between the two countries. The US still saw itself as the dominant actor in bilateral relations with Turkey, and was not ready to accept a shift in the power balance. Both the results of the referendum and the domestic and international media campaign against AK Party government demonstrated that politics in Turkey does not change according to Washington's whim anymore, disappointing those who tied their fates with Washington. This is true for Turkey's domestic politics and it is also true for Turkey's ability to pursue an independent foreign policy

It is expected that relations especially in the areas of science and the economy will improve and diversify in the future. And relations will expand beyond security issues only. Despite problems and tensions between the US and Turkey, both sides exerted great efforts to maintain strong relations and this effort will likely continue in 2011.

3.2.2 The Relations between Turkey and the EU

The decision of the Council of the EU to grant Turkey a candidate status in 1999 at the Helsinki Summit was a watershed event in the history of relations between the EU and Turkey as for the first time relations gained a degree of certainty and formality. In the decade after this decision, the Turkish political scene witnessed the most dramatic and extensive process of democratization in Turkey's republican history. The consequences of that decision in Turkey was so far reaching that today a third of Turkey's Constitution has been amended, along with the adoption of many new laws and regulations that support democracy in Turkey. Turkey's steadfast effort and developments in the political and economic realms culminated in the decision of the Council of the EU to start accession negotiations in October 2005. However, the historic decision of the European Council at the Brussels Summit to open accession negotiations with Turkey did not usher in a new period of intense democracy

and human rights reforms contrary to expectations. The accession process has been slow or even stalled because of the Cyprus problem and the French position rejecting Turkey's accession. Thus, Turkish-EU relations have only moved on technical issues, and at a slow tempo.

Chronology	TURKEY-EU RELATIONS
	<p>February 2-3: The Minister of EU Affairs and Chief Negotiator Egemen Bagis visited Brussels for talks on the membership process.</p>
	<p>February 6-9: Secretary General of the European Council Thorbjorn Jagland paid an official visit to Turkey.</p>
	<p>February 22-23: EU-Turkey Joint Parliamentary Committee meeting was held in Brussels.</p>
	<p>February 24-26: Minister Bagis visited Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania.</p>
	<p>March 5-6: FM Davutoglu attended to the Informal Meeting of EU Foreign Ministers in Cordoba, Spain.</p>
	<p>March 15-16: Stefan Füle, European Commissioner for Enlargement and Neighborhood Policy paid his first visit to Turkey.</p>
	<p>March 29-30: The Chancellor of Germany Angela Merkel visited Turkey to hold talks with officials.</p>
	<p>March 31: Minister Bagis visited Poland for talks on the membership process.</p>
	<p>April 6-7: PM Erdogan visited France for official talks.</p>
	<p>May 8: PM Erdogan went to Madrid for the EU-LAC Summit.</p>
	<p>May 11: FM Davutoglu went to Strasbourg to attend to 120th Ministerial Council meeting of the EU.</p>
	<p>June 11: Minister Bagis met EU Commissioner Androulla Vassilou in Istanbul.</p>
	<p>June 30: Chapter on Food Safety, Veterinary and Phytosanitary Policy was opened.</p>
	<p>July 8: FM Davutoglu paid an official visit to England.</p>
	<p>July 13: High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy of the European Union, Catherine Ashton attended to the ministerial level political dialogue meeting in Istanbul.</p>
	<p>July 26-27: British PM David Cameron came to Turkey for official meetings.</p>
	<p>August 9-11. Belgian Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Steve Vaneckere paid an official visit to Turkey.</p>
	<p>October 6-8: Austrian Foreign Minister Michael Spindelegger visited Turkey.</p>
	<p>October 8-9: PM Erdogan and FM Davutoglu paid an official visit to Germany.</p>
	<p>October 11-12: French Foreign Minister Bernard Kouchner came to Turkey for official talks.</p>
	<p>October 18-22: German President Christian Wulff paid an official visit to Turkey.</p>
	<p>November 6: President Abdullah Gul paid an official visit to England. President Gul received the prestigious Chatham House Prize from the Queen Elizabeth.</p>
	<p>November 8: EU Turkey Progress Report was published.</p>
	<p>November 9: FM Davutoglu visited Italy for official talks.</p>
	<p>November 25: President Gul visited Switzerland.</p>
	<p>December 10: Swedish, Italian, British and Finnish Foreign Ministers co-authored an op-ed in the International Herald Tribune to support Turkey's membership to the EU.</p>

From the initiation of the accession negotiations until the end of 2010, thirteen chapters of the Acquis out of thirty were opened with one chapter temporarily blocked. Fourteen chapters were blocked as a result of the Cyprus problem and one of them was also blocked by France. The total number of frozen chapters, including those rejected unilaterally by France, is eighteen. Currently, there are only three chapters that can be opened, which illustrates that the whole future of Turkish-European Union relations mostly depends on the resolution of the Cyprus problem.

In this regard, 2010 was hard and stagnant year for Turkish-EU relations. In fact, 2009 already signaled that 2010 would be a tough year for Turkish-EU relations. Scholars agreed that the democratic process, launched by the Turkish government the last couple of years aimed to increase freedoms enjoyed by different ethnic and religious groups, normalize relations with Armenia, and solve the Cyprus problem would all determine the direction of Turkish-EU relations in 2010. However, limited progress on these issues led to continued difficulties in Turkish-EU relations. The most remarkable development that took place in the previous year was the opening of the 'Food Safety, Veterinary, and Phytosanitary' chapter on the last day of the Spanish presidency. Although thirteen chapters are not finalized, the opening of this chapter in 2010s ensured the continuation of relations in technical terms. However, political stagnation is a reality in Turkish-EU relations today.

This stagnation is mirrored in the 2010 European Union Progress Report on Turkey announced by the Enlargement Commissioner of the EU Commission Stefan Füle. Contrary to reports in previous years, which led to heated debates in the media, this year's report did not attract much interest in the Turkish media. Acknowledging the standstill in Turkish-EU relations, the report, as earlier ones, stipulated that Turkey needs to fully implement the Additional Protocol to the Association Agreement and remove all obstacles to the free movement of goods, including restrictions on direct transport links with Cyprus in order for the relations between Turkey and the EU to progress. Otherwise, the progress report warned, unilateral measures taken by the EU in 2006 would continue. In this sense, the EU emphasized that the Cyprus problem is the key to recovering Turkish-EU relations.

Apart from the Cyprus deadlock, the report also conveyed the EU's opinion on domestic developments in Turkey. In this respect the new constitutional reform accepted by the referendum was praised as a right step taken in the areas of the judiciary, fundamental rights, and public administration, bringing Turkey close to the EU standards. However, criticizing a number of areas such as the role of the military in politics, freedom of expression and the press, and periods of

detention, the EU Turkey Progress Report concluded that Turkey was not ready for the membership and it needed to continue with the reforms.

The year 2010, despite being stagnant in terms of Turkish-EU relations, saw improvements in bilateral relations between Turkey and individual EU member states. In this regard, debates over Turkey's EU process were pursued within the context of Turkey's active foreign policy in its surrounding regions, especially in the Middle East. Actually, this is not something specific to 2010, Turkish foreign policy has been the subject of intense discussions both in academic and media within the framework of the EU. Nonetheless, this discussion that emerged under the shift of axis debate theme reached its peak in 2010 due to international crises, such developments as the Mavi Marmara attack of Israel and Turkey's "NO" vote for UN sanctions against Iran. These discussions even translated into mutual accusations over the question of "who lost Turkey?" across the Transatlantic. In this respect, US Secretary of Defense Robert Gates' remarks where he criticized Europe for its reluctance to increase contacts with Turkey, as the main reason for Turkey's eastward shift, have found great resonance in Brussels. Turkey's disagreements with the EU over Israel and Iran were highlighted at NATO's Lisbon Summit. Turkey's veto of the NATO-EU meeting due to mutual dispute between Turkey, a NATO and non-EU member, and Cyprus, a non-NATO and EU member brought Turkey-EU relations to the brink of another political crisis.

In spite of controversies over foreign policy issues, Turkey's economic boom of the last few years pushed European leaders, hurt severely by economic crises, to re-consider their policies regarding Turkey. In this respect, a joint letter was published in the International Herald Tribune by the ministers of foreign affairs of Britain, Sweden, Finland, and Italy in December 2010, and they pointed to the great economic performance of Turkey and maintained that the Turkish economy could save the European economy from the stalemate it has been mired in for some time. The view expressed in the letter was also voiced by David Cameron in his official visit to Ankara in July last year.

At this point, even the EU member States who most strongly oppose Turkey's EU membership have revised their rhetoric with respect to Turkey and espoused a more moderate position in 2010. For instance, in France's 'privileged partnership' concept, the discussions over Turkey's EU membership was not voiced. The French Foreign Minister, Bernard Kouchner, in his official visit to Turkey in October 2010, stated that France was ready to help Turkey out in order to open those remaining three chapters and expressed a more moderate attitude towards Turkey's membership prospect. Although Germany has moved from the 'privileged partnership' concept, which first was brought to the fore

in Germany, to remarks stating that the accession negotiations are an open process, and Turkey should somehow be integrated into EU structures. In fact, when German leader Angela Merkel visited Turkey in March 2010 she admitted that she had not been previously aware that the 'privileged partnership' option had such a negative connotation in Turkey. And she no longer employed this concept. Another European country that demonstrated perhaps the most hostile attitude towards Turkey's EU membership, Austria has also moderated its position towards Turkey. In his official Turkey visit in October 2010, Austrian foreign minister Michael Spindelegger remarked that there have been new developments in Austria's previous skeptical attitude with respect to Turkey and that his country had no intention to undermine Turkey's membership.

Despite stagnant relations between Turkey and the EU, last year witnessed very intense diplomatic traffic with several mutual visits of Turkish and European leaders and foreign ministers. What lies behind the increasing number of visits to Turkey is that Turkey represents the epicenter of peace and stability in the region, as a result of its economic development, democratization process, and active foreign policy. Although certain European countries still oppose Turkey's membership and their attempts to build stronger relations with Turkey have not turned into concrete support, the change and moderation in rhetoric have renewed a climate of hope for Turkish-EU relations. For Europe, good relations developed with Turkey would reduce the threat that European leaders directly oppose Turkish membership, and their softer and more moderate statements could influence the European public, thus decreasing their opposition to Turkish membership. For Turkey, improved official relations with Europe at the Governmental level would weaken the negative image held by Turkish people towards the EU because of recent aggressive and humiliating rhetoric employed by European leaders against Turkey's full accession to the EU.

3.2.3 Relations between Turkey and Afghanistan

In the aftermath of the election of Hamid Karzai to the presidency post in 2009, Afghanistan in 2010 was supposed to continue on its path towards domestic peace, stability and the strengthening of its nascent government institutions. However, disappointment grew as it became increasingly apparent and clear of the wide spread corruption, bad governance, resurgence of the Taliban, and the need for more substantial reform. Afghanistan is a country that poses a threat and an opportunity for many other countries who have a stake in the stability of this war-torn country. For the US, it has become a test-case for the newly elected Obama administration. For Turkey, it has historical ties with Turkey and it is an area opened to the exertion of Turkey's soft power. In fact, in 2010 Turkey became a very influential actor for stability in Afghanistan.

In an address at the US Military Academy at West Point, President Obama laid out his Afghanistan war strategy and called for US allies to bring in more troops in December 2009. This speech by an American president also created expectations with respect to the steps that Turkey could take in Afghanistan. In fact, in 2009 Turkey took over the Peacekeeping Mission in Afghanistan from France and increased the number of Turkish soldiers from 795 to 1700, which signaled that Turkey would be more involved in Afghanistan in 2010. Although Turkey is willing to contribute to the stability in Afghanistan, it has been reluctant to increase the number of soldiers, as this is a contradiction to its soft power strategy. This is why it accepted to increase the number of its security forces in Afghanistan, but on the condition that they would serve in the construction of infrastructure and be used as a police force. Turkey's attitude should not be misunderstood as reluctance to stay out of Afghanistan. On the contrary, Turkey would like to be part of the solution, which would contribute to the establishment of stability and peace in the country, as it sees this as part of its duties as a regional and global actor. However, it does not want to be drawn into a protracted armed conflict.

Chronology

TURKEY-AFGHANISTAN RELATIONS

January 1: Turkey became the coordinator country on Afghanistan issues in the UNSC.

January 1: Presidency of the UNSC Counter-terrorism Committee passed on to Turkey after Croatia.

January 19: Afghan Minister of Education Ghulam Wardak and Pakistani Minister of Education Sardar Aseff Ahmed Ali met Turkish Minister of Education Nimet Cubukcu in Ankara and made a joint declaration.

January 25: 4th Trilateral meeting between Turkey, Afghanistan and Pakistan was held in Istanbul.

January 26: Friendship and Cooperation in the Heartland of Asia meeting which brought together the neighboring countries of Afghanistan to discuss stability in Afghanistan, terror and education was held in Istanbul with the participation of Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Iran, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates and China.

September 1: Turkey took over the chairmanship of the UNSC.

November 2-3: Regional Economic Cooperation Conference on Afghanistan was held in Istanbul.

December 24: 5th Trilateral Summit between Turkey, Pakistan and Afghanistan was held in Istanbul.

Looking back at Turkey's foreign policy actions in 2010, Afghanistan stands out as a region where an active foreign policy was pursued most intensely. In addition, Turkey took on two important missions within the UN Security Council during 2010. First, Turkey took over from Croatia the chairmanship of the UN Security Council's Counter-Terrorism Committee. Also, in January 2010, Turkey became the lead council member on Afghanistan, a post which was held by Japan in 2009. Because of this position, Turkey can now closely follow the developments in Afghanistan. Turkey chaired the Council on Afghanistan within the scope of UNSC and prepared draft resolutions. In an interview published in the Times, Turkish Foreign Minister Davutoglu stated that Turkey is ready to take up more responsibility to persuade the Taliban to take part in the political process in Afghanistan.

In this regard, Ankara hosted another significant meeting on Afghanistan just before the London Summit. This meeting brought together Turkish Prime Minister Erdogan, Afghani President Hamid Karzai, and Pakistani President Asif Ali Zardari. The following day, the Friendship and Cooperation in the Heartland of Asia meeting brought together representatives from countries neighbouring Afghanistan: Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Iran, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, and China. This meeting was very important in bringing together not only domestic forces but also neighboring countries, and providing an environment in which both domestic and external actors discussed the problems facing their countries emanating from Afghanistan. These series of meetings demonstrated to the world that Turkey can play a significant role in finding resolutions to the problems that confront Afghanistan.

The London summit gathered representatives from 70 nations together to discuss reconstruction, public reform and development plans in Afghanistan. The conference decision, laying out a plan to reintegrate Taliban soldiers back into Afghani society confirmed Turkey's long standing position to re-conciliate all parties. This approach underlined Turkey's unique position as a country with historical and cultural ties to Afghanistan and one that could be accepted by all groups and countries related to the Afghanistan problem. As a result of the summit, efforts for dialogue between different groups in Afghanistan and the Taliban have accelerated. In this context, Turkey played a crucial role as a mediator. Another indirect outcome of the summit was that the Taliban would open a bureau in Turkey; an idea which was also brought up at the Turkey-Afghanistan-Pakistan triple summit in Istanbul.

Because of Turkey's new position at the UNSC, it has been poised to take on a role of greater influence and make important decisions. Among the decisions taken by Turkey was the extension of UNAMA until March 23,rd 2011 by a unanimous vote and the decision taken at the NATO Foreign Ministers Summit in Tallinn to transfer the control over security in Afghanistan to Afghan civilian and military powers.

The tasks that Turkey was charged with in 2010 were not only related to the training of the military and the re-construction of Afghanistan but also to other realms, such as Turkey's contribution to setting up vocational schools to educate female students. Moreover the number of the schools constructed by Turkey in Afghanistan amounted to 68 in 2010. These schools provide education to 65.000 students.

Kabul hosted the largest conference, so far, organized in Afghanistan with the participation of representatives from more than 60 countries. The speech delivered by the Turkish Foreign Minister at the International Kabul Conference summarized Turkey's position on Afghanistan. He emphasized Turkey's respect for the pride, peaceful traditions, and a great culture of Afghanistan. And he added emphatically that Afghanistan belongs to the Afghans.

The positive image and the credibility of Turkish soldiers in Afghanistan led NATO to request the extension of the Turkish command of ISAF in Kabul, which Turkey assumed on November 1 2009, for one more year. Within the same month, the Fourth Regional Economic Cooperation Conference on Afghanistan (RECCA IV) was held in Istanbul on 2-3 November 2010. Regional and international partners discussed how to promote economic cooperation to support Afghanistan and the region.

Another example of Turkey's efforts in Afghanistan was the Fifth Tripartite Summit between Turkey, Afghanistan, and Pakistan in December 2010. It was decided in the summit that these three countries would conduct joint military exercises in April 2011, they would cooperate on counter-terrorism issues, and they would take steps towards reviving their economies.

Despite the fact that Turkey is a new player in the global equation, it has employed its soft power most successfully in Afghanistan. Turkey's success is also acknowledged by other global actors. Especially in an atmosphere in which the increase of the number of soldiers in Afghanistan to 100.000 by Obama triggered greater political chaos in the country instead of easing it. Turkey's soft power strategy proved invaluable for stability in Afghanistan.

Despite the US plans to withdraw from Afghanistan, the number of international soldiers killed in Afghanistan is currently 2,276 (1,441 of whom are American soldiers) since 2001. The fact that only in 2010, 706 coalition soldiers died in the country demonstrated the weaknesses of the American strategy in Afghanistan. Nevertheless, US General David Petraeus told the BBC that Obama's decision to withdraw from Afghanistan was an earlier decision and that the war there has not been won yet, as Taliban's power has not been curtailed. This suggests that it would take time for Afghanistan to settle and stabilize after the withdrawal of American forces. Turkey, for this reason, is expanding all its efforts to contribute to the establishment of peace and stability in Afghanistan at a faster pace; this policy would benefit both Turkey and the Afghan people.

One of the most important threats stemming from the ongoing crisis in Afghanistan is the risk of the war's extension to Pakistan.

This risk could only be eliminated if Afghanistan and Pakistan, both played off against each other by other big actors in the region such as China and India, reach a compromise.

3.2.4 Relations between Turkey and Iraq

The core problem facing Iraq's reconstruction stems from the country's political structure, which is polarized around ethnic and sectarian groups. In addition, the Kurdish question in Iraq further complicates the already existing tensions between the Shiites and Sunnis. The end result is a complicated equation with multiple variations that is difficult to solve.

The overthrow of Saddam Hussein's regime, in the aftermath of the US invasion in 2003, did not put an end to country's suffering. Ethnic and sectarian differences turned into outright violence with civilian losses that surpassed the numbers during Saddam's regime. After the last elections, the government was only established nine months after the elections that were held in March 7, 2010 in this unstable country. The political environment is still volatile, and Iraq's future in 2011 is still uncertain. Efforts for the reconstruction of Iraq will take place within the parameters of a new political structure that emerged in the aftermath of the March 7 elections. The two main parameters are (1) the recently founded government and (2) the withdrawal process of American soldiers.

For Iraq the most important development of 2010 was its general elections that were held on March 2010.⁵⁰ In the March 7 general elections, 6200 candidates,

50. For a detailed analysis of the elections in Iraq and their effects see, Mete Çubukçu and Taha Özhan, *İşgal Altında İstikrar Arayışları: Irak Seçimleri*, SETA Analiz, April 2010.

12 coalition parties (that are made up of 167 parties) and 74 political parties competed for 325 seats in the Iraqi Parliament. The distribution of the seats after the elections is as follows: the Iraqi National Movement led by previous Prime Minister Iyad Allawi won 91 seats with 24.48% of the total votes, the State of Law Coalition led by the Prime Minister Nuri el-Maliki won 89 seats with 24.02% of the total votes, the National Iraqi Alliance won 70 seats with 18.98% of the total votes, the Kurdistan Alliance won 42 seats with 14.48% of the votes, the Movement for Change (Golan) won 8 seats with 4.18% of the votes, the Iraqi Accord Front (Sunni) won 8 seats with 2.61% of the votes, the Unity Alliance of Iraq led by the Minister of Internal Affairs won 4 seats with 2.70% of the votes, the Kurdistan Islamic Union won 4 seats with 2.27% of the votes, and the Islamic Group of Kurdistan won 2 seats with 1.41% of the votes. Also, in light of the last amendments, 8 seats were allocated to minorities. While Allawi received the highest number of votes in the provinces, such as Mosul, Kerkuk, El Anbar Ramadi, Diyala, and Salahaddin with a population of Sunni majority, Nuri el-Maliki won in the Shiite provinces, such as Basra, Babil, Kerbela, Wasit, Necef, and Musenne. The winner of the elections, Allawi's Iraqi list, struggled to reach a compromise with the other parties and coalitions. To do so, he not only had to negotiate with domestic actors but also with neighbors such as Turkey, Iran, and Saudi Arabia. He went on a diplomatic whirlwind of neighboring countries. He paid visits to Turkey in April, to Lebanon in July, to Syria in September, and to Saudi Arabia in October. However, his attempts to form a government without Maliki's support ultimately failed, as Maliki succeeded in obtaining the support of the Sadr group. Thus, the Shiite alliance appeared to be the strongest political group in forming the government. On September 1, Nuri el-Maliki took the most important step to acquire parliamentary support by releasing many prisoners belonging to the Mehdi Army. In this way, the second and third biggest alliances of the elections obtained the majority and arrived at an agreement with the Kurds. On the other hand, the winner of the elections, the Iraqi National Movement could not acquire the support of other groups and agreed to be in the equation formed by the Shiite and Kurdish alliance.

Chronology

TURKEY-IRAQ RELATIONS

January 24-28: State Minister for Foreign Trade Zafer Caglayan hosted Iraq's Minister of Trade Safa al-Din Safi in Ankara.

February 26: Ex-PM of Iraq Iyad Allawi came to Ankara for talks with Turkish authorities.

March 7: General elections were held in Iraq.

March 11: Turkey opened consulate in Erbil.

March 23: First official visit to Turkey by the Iraqi Kurdish Regional Government was paid by the Minister of Trade of the KRG Sinan Celebi.

March 30: Ex-PM of KRG and KDP Deputy Chairman Necirvan Barzani came to Turkey with high level KRG officials. The delegation met PM Erdogan, FM Davutoglu and the Undersecretary of Foreign Ministry Feridun Sinirlioglu.

April 24: Head of Iraqiya list and ex-PM of Iraq Iyad Allawi visited Turkey for the first time after his election victory.

June 2-7: The leader of the KRG Mesut Barzani came to Turkey with high level KRG officials, including the Minister of Natural Resources Asti Hawrami, Minister of Trade and Industry Sinan Celebi, Minister of Interior Kerim Sincari and Minister of Education Safin Dizayi.

August 5: Ex-Chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee of the Iraqi Parliament visited Turkey and met FM Davutoglu.

August 7: Special envoy of Iraqi PM Nuri el-Maliki and Spokesman of the Iraqi Government Ali El-Dabbagh met FM Davutoglu in Ankara.

August 9-11: Ex-PM of Iraq and the leader of the Iraqi National Reform Movement Ibrahim Caferi came to Turkey, following an official invitation by FM Davutoglu. Caferi met FM Davutoglu, President Gul, as well as Omer Celik, the AKP's Deputy Chairman for Foreign Relations.

August 14: Iraqi parliamentarians of Turcoman origin visited Turkey.

August 23: Head of Iraqi Front for National Dialogue and one of the founders of the Iraqiya list Salih al-Mutlaq met President Gul and FM Davutoglu in Ankara.

September 10-13: Iraqi Vice President Tarik el-Hasimi came to Turkey. He met President Gul and FM Davutoglu in Istanbul.

October 5-6: Iraqi Deputy PM and the Spokesman of Iraqiya Rafi el-Isavi visited Turkey and met FM Davutoglu.

October 21: Iraqi PM Nuri el-Maliki visited Turkey and met President Gul, PM Erdogan and FM Davutoglu.

November 7: FM Davutoglu met with representatives of Iraqi political groups in Iraq. Davutoglu also opened the Turkish consulate in Erbil.

November 25-26: Iraqi President Celal Talabani assigned Nuri el-Maliki to form a new government.

December 21: Iraqi Parliament gave the vote of confidence to the Maliki government.

Despite their concentration mainly in Mosul and Kirkuk, Turkmens in Iraq participate in the political process in different ways. In recent years, Turkey's deepening relations with the central government in Baghdad, in general, and Northern Iraq, in particular, contributed to the improvement in both the social develop-

ment of Turkmen and their political participation and representation. The most prominent political formation of Turkmen is the Iraqi Turkmen Front (ITC). This group participated in the 2005 elections stand-alone and sent only one MP to the Parliament. In the 2009 regional elections, Turkmen participated in the political process with different political parties. However, for the March 7 elections Turkmen allied with Allawi's Iraqi National Movement and sent 12 MPs to the Parliament. It should be highlighted here that Turkmen votes played the most important role in the Allawi's electoral win-by 2 seats.

Moreover, the attempts of US Vice President Joe Biden, Senators John McCain and Joe Lieberman who paid a visit to Iraq in the first week of November to persuade the Kurdish groups to leave the Prime Minister's position to someone Sunni from Allawi's party failed. The parties reached a consensus on November 11th with respect to power distribution. According to this consensus, Maliki who gained the support of the Sadr group would continue to be prime minister and Allawi would lead the National Strategic Political Council, and Talabani would remain as the president. Despite Allawi's opposition, this power sharing agreement ultimately came into effect and the new government was officially formed on the December 21st 2010. Consequently, US efforts failed in promoting a coalition in which Allawi's forces would be stronger or at least equal in power to Maliki which, in turn, would reduce the impact of Iran in Iraq.

In this new government the Ministry of Oil was given to the Shiite alliance, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was given to the Kurdish alliance, the Ministry of Finance was given to al-Iraqiya list. While Celal Talabani will continue to be the president, Maliki will hold the posts of Defense, Internal and National Security Ministries by proxy. Again Roj Nuri Şavis from the Kurdish Alliance and Salih Mutlak from the al-Iraqiya list will assume Deputy Prime Ministry posts. Moreover, in this new cabinet there are three Turkmen ministers.

The debate over if Turkey's preferred contenders in Iraqi politics were successful in forming and heading the Iraqi government is ongoing. Turkey would have liked to see Allawi obtain a stronger foothold in the Iraqi Government. However, Allawi was not able to obtain the political success that was hoped for because of the opposition of the Shiite alliance. Nevertheless, what Turkey seeks most in Iraq's political scene is stability. The political process in Iraq remains mired under the shadow of proxy wars. Moreover, it is likely to be dominated by the Shiite groups in the upcoming years. Turkey would have desired a more balanced distribution of power between all the sectarian groups in Iraq: Shiite, Sunnis, and Kurds. But

this was not realized, instead the Shiite-Kurdish alliance was strengthened. In this regard, Talabani fearful of not being able to regain the presidency obtained what he wanted by supporting the Shiite Islamists. In fact, the Kurdish alliance with the Shiites in the aftermath of 2010 elections resembles the alliance between the same groups in the immediate aftermath of the first Gulf War in the early 1990s. At this juncture, it is not known if Maliki will be receptive to building a strong relationship with Turkey.

In the context of Iraq's new power distribution after the 2010 elections, Iran now is well placed to be a key actor exerting influence in Iraqi politics due to the Shiite alliances.. With Maliki as the Prime Minister and the Sunni groups remaining weak, this new political equation opens the way for Iranian influence over Iraq. Although Malik makes an effort to look neutral, the extent of his close relations with Iran remains as a subject of much interest and discussion.

In 2011, the most important political question for Iraq will be whether stability and security will be attained. The Sofa Agreement, which was signed between the US and Iraq in 2008, envisages the complete withdrawal of US soldiers from Iraq by the December 31st, 2011. However, given the political instability and sectarian violence in Iraq, it is still too early to make any predictions of exactly when US soldiers will leave Iraq. Even some Iraqi policy makers are still demanding that US soldiers remain in the country a little longer.

Iraq's Economic performance of Iraq is likely to register some improvement due to the increase in both oil production and prices. It is estimated that the deficit in the balance of payments will decrease to 5.5% of the GDP in 2011. This improvement is due to the expected increase of oil production to 3.1 million barrels and the parallel hike in oil prices. If this trend continues, it is anticipated that the balance of payments would reach a surplus in 2014. The economic stability of Iraq heavily depends on the political stability and execution of a tight fiscal policy.

Another important matter for 2011 will be the undertaking of a population census, which has not been conducted since 1987. For now, it has been postponed from October 24 to December 5 because of disputes between the Arab and Kurdish populations and their representation in Iraq..In fact, the exact date of the census is still undetermined. While Kurds are requesting for the census to be based on ethnic origin, Arabs and Turkmens are opposed to this proposal. This problem has yet to be resolved. And demographic manipulations are possible in the strongly populated Kurdish region of Northern Iraq.

3.2.5 Relations between Turkey and Iran

2010 was an important year for Turkey-Iranian relations, as new ground was broken. The most important development was that Turkey along with Brazil brokered an agreement with Iran over the highly polemic Iranian nuclear issue. Turkey and Brazil were successful in bringing Iran to the table and signed the Tehran Declaration between Turkey, Brazil, and Iran on March 17, 2010. Holding steadfast to Turkey's position that an alternative route other than imposing sanctions on Iran was necessary to obtain Iran's cooperation, Turkey and Brazil voted "NO" together at the UNSC on imposing sanctions against Iran on June 9, 2010.

Turkey over the last year has intensified diplomatic efforts to overcome the nuclear crisis that erupted between Iran, Europe, and the US. Iran's non-compliance with the preconditions established by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) caused a major break down in trust of Iran's true nuclear intentions by Europe and the US. To create a new basis of good faith, re-establish trust, and avoid another wave of sanctions, Turkey and Brazil attempted to broker an agreement between Iran and the West, upon the request of the President of the IAEA - Mr. El- Baradei.

In President Obama's pre-election campaign, he promised that he would speak to Iran without any preconditions. A leak to the press by Hameini of a confidential letter to Iran written by President Obama, in which he calls for improvement of US-Iran relations, prompted certain American politicians to take a tougher stance against Iran. Consequently, Obama chose to appease the demands of the pro-sanction groups in the US administration instead of the of pro-diplomacy groups.. The US State Department persuaded China and Russia, who were reluctant to support the UN sanctions on Iran, to vote "YES" by narrowing the scope of the sanctions. The US appeared to have been playing a dual diplomatic game: on the one hand, pursuing a diplomatic route, while on the other hand pushing forward with the sanctions. In the end, the goal was still to put an end to Iran's nuclear enrichment program.

Turkey was strongly opposed to the sanctions. It argued that the sanctions would drag the international community down a one-way street and would harm the Iranian people rather than its political elites and government. In coordination with Brazil and based on intelligence from the West, Turkey carried out intense diplomatic efforts to get Iran to sign the May 17th Tehran Declaration. The Agreement was based on an uranium exchange proposal by the IAEA of October 2009. The Agreement envisaged that Iran's uranium would be shipped to Turkey in

exchange for fuel to use in Tehran's research reactor. The nuclear swap deal came at the same time when the United States announced that sanctions would still be imposed upon Iran. The US administration argued that the deal was not comprehensive and did not address the main concerns of the international community. U.S. officials portrayed it as yet another attempt by Iran to stall the sanctions process and to divide the international community. As a result, instead of welcoming the deal and treating it as a true opportunity for engagement and dialogue with Iran, the United States chose to move forward with sanctions.

Chronology

TURKEY-IRAN RELATIONS

February 1-3: Iran-Turkey Joint Economic Commission meeting was held in Ankara. Iranian FM Manucehr Mottaqi came to Turkey to attend to the meeting.

February 15-16: FM Davutoglu paid an official visit to Iran and met Iranian President Mahmud Ahmadinejad and FM Mottaqi.

March 26-29: Deputy Prime Minister Cemil Cicek went to Iran to join Nevruz celebrations

April 19-20: FM Davutoglu met Iranian President Ahmadinejad, FM Mottaqi, as well as the Chairman of the Iranian parliament Ali Larijani and Iran's top nuclear negotiator Saeed Jalili in Iran.

May 7: Iranian FM Mottaqi visited Turkey and met FM Davutoglu.

May 9-11: The Chairman of the Iranian Parliament Ali Larijani came to Turkey to attend to the second extraordinary meeting of the Parliamentary Union of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC)-member states (PUOICM)

May 17: Iran, Turkey and Brazil on signed a joint declaration on fuel swap for Tehran Research Reactor.

June 9: Turkey voted against the draft resolution of the UN Security Council to impose new sanctions on Iran.

June 13-15: The Chairman of the Turkish Parliament Mehmet Ali Sahin visited Iran and met his counterpart Larijani, President Ahmedinejad, FM Mottaqi and Iran's Supreme Leader Ali Khamanei.

June 23: Turkey's Ministry of Labor and Social Security signed a cooperation agreement with its Iranian counterpart.

September 15-16: Vice President of Iran Muhammad Reza Rahimi came to Turkey for official talks.

Turkey and the US Administration did not see eye to eye on this issue. Stating that the Tehran Declaration was the first step towards confidence building, Turkey argued that this official document would impose restrictions on Iran. Concerned that voting "YES" would have seriously damaged Turkey's integrity as a reliable negotiating partner and would alienate Iran even further, Turkey along with Bra-

zil voted “NO” at the Security Council, disappointing some in the West who at least expected Turkey to abstain.

Meanwhile, Turkey continued its relentless efforts to reduce tensions between Iran and the West by pursuing a consistent foreign policy towards Iran. According to Turkey, the solution to Iran’s nuclear program can only be obtained through diplomacy rather than sanctions.

The most important sector of Turkey’s economic relations with Iran is energy trade. Importing oil and natural gas from Iran, Turkey attempted to improve its relations with Iran in an effort to diversify its energy resources. Turkish Prime Minister Erdogan set the target that trade volume between the two countries would triple from the current levels of 10 billion dollars in the next ten years , suggesting the establishment of a free trade zone between Iran and Turkey.

Emphasizing that Turkey did not have to comply with the additional sanctions imposed by the US and Europe, Turkey also decided to vote against sanctions to avoid damaging bilateral trade with Iran. As a country that would like to diversify and balance its energy dependency, Turkey is aware that it needs to build friendly relations with oil and natural gas-rich countries, such as Iran. In accordance with its general policy of establishing free trade zones with neighboring countries, Turkey would get higher returns from increasing and diversifying trade relations with Iran. That’s why Turkey is among the main countries who demanded the resolution of Iran’s nuclear issue with the West.

Another matter of cooperation between Turkey and Iran is the joint operations against the PKK and the PJAK. In its cross border operations against the PKK in July 2010, Turkey acquired the backing of both Iran and Syria. The improved relations with Iran was one of the major factors behind this support.

Turkey’s policy towards Iraq is linked to Turkey’s relations with Iran and vice versa. Turkey would like to keep at bay Iranian influence in Iraq. However, Turkey also recognizes that Iran cannot be excluded in the resolution of regional problems. Even though Turkey wants to continue to improve its relations with Iran, it would be incorrect to assume that Turkey and Iran are not regional competitors. They both are developing active policies to resolve regional problems compatible with their respective best interests. At this juncture, Turkey is in a more advantageous position, as Iran has to contend with greater domestic challenges and a degree of international isolation. Turkey has come a long way in terms of enhancing its national security environment by developing security relations with all the actors in the region.

In the aftermath of Iran's presidential elections of 2009, Turkey abstained from commenting on the anti-regime demonstrations. Rather, it congratulated Ahmedinejad on his re-election, although the legitimacy of his presidential election victory was seriously contested in many Western countries. In this context, Turkey brought to the fore the non-interventionist character of its foreign policy in the domestic affairs of its neighboring countries. One reason for this caution stems from the destabilizing effect of interventionism, which is often the source of greater instability in the region. Another reason is that Turkey wants to send a clear message that it won't tolerate outside intervention into its own internal affairs. Turkey's approach towards Iran's elections opened the way for developing amicable relations with Ahmedinejad's administration in the aftermath of the elections.⁵¹

On the issue of sanctions, Turkey ultimately announced that it would comply with the UNSC internationally binding decisions. However, it would not apply any other additional sanctions. The US Department of Treasury warned several companies, especially Turkish ones, not to violate the UN decision on sanctions against Iran. In this respect, Turkey demonstrated that it would fulfill its commitments to international resolutions and regulations, but when it came to bilateral relations with Iran, Turkey would make its own decisions.

Iran's insistence on including Turkey in its nuclear meetings and its choice of Istanbul to host these meetings are interpreted by most Western countries as Iran's attempts to manipulate Turkey. However, Turkey has proven its ability to mediate or broker a deal because it can speak to all the actors in the region. Thus, it can play a unique role in building peace in the region. Turkey's efforts not to have Iran named as a target country in the official NATO documents related to the Missile Shield Project were very important in terms of Turkish-Iranian relations.

3.2.6 Relations between Turkey and Israel

Turkish-Israeli relations, which were established in 1949 and have gone through troubled times since then, and have recently reached a new breaking point in 2010. That year saw a worsening of the crisis-ridden atmosphere of 2009 and

51. For a detailed analysis of Turkish-Iranian relations see, Serdar Poyraz, *Turkish-Iranian Relations: A Wider Perspective*, SETA Policy Brief, November 2009; Nasuhi Güngör, *Ahmedinejad's Visit to Turkey*, SETA Policy Brief, September 2008.

just added to the list of structural conflicts of the Middle East.⁵² The Israeli attack of the Mavi Marmara on the 31st of May 2010 and the killing of the activists on board profoundly wounded bilateral relations between Turkey and Israel. These relations may be too difficult to repair, impacting the course of relations for a long period of time.⁵³

The diplomatic crisis that broke out between Turkey and Israel due to Israeli attack on Gaza when Turkey was brokering a deal between Israel and Syria marked the course of 2009. Turkish Prime Minister Erdogan's criticism of Israel at the Davos Summit in 2009 drew the attention of the international community, as to the depth of crisis between the two countries. From that point on, any incidents or crisis between Turkey and Israel received a great deal of coverage by the international press.

The crisis was further deepened by a Turkish TV series that portrayed the harsh treatment of Palestinians by Israel. Israel has been closely monitoring everything that goes on in Turkey that could be related to Turkey.

The year 2010 began with a major diplomatic 'faux-pas' by the Israelis in their bilateral relations with Turkey. Israeli Foreign Minister Danny Ayalon summoned the Turkish Ambassador to Israel Oğuz Çelikkol to a meeting at the Israeli Ministry in order to protest the image of Israel portrayed by the Turkish TV show mentioned above, *Kurtlar Vadisi*. However, he had Çelikkol sit on a lower seat than himself, making it look like that the Turkish Ambassador was inferior to Ayalon. Adding insult to injury, Ayalon did not have the Turkish flag placed next to the Israeli flag, and Ayalon spoke in Hebrew to the cameraman, employing humiliating language against Turkey. This egregious diplomatic discourtesy used by Ayalon drew shocked reactions from the international community, as well as many Israelis themselves and even the Israeli lobby in Washington. Ayalon had to apologize for his very rude behavior to Turkey.

52. For two important assessments of Turkish-Israeli relations see, Ufuk Ulutaş, *Turkey-Israel: A Fluctuating Alliance*, SETA Policy Brief, January 2010; Ufuk Ulutaş, *The 2009 Israeli Elections and Turkish-Israeli Relations*, SETA Policy Brief, February 2009.

53. For a detailed analysis of Israeli attack on the Turkish Mavi Marmara flotilla and its implications see, Ufuk Ulutaş, *Turkey and Israel in the Aftermath of the Flotilla Crisis*, SETA Policy Brief, June 2010.

Chronology

TURKEY-ISRAEL RELATIONS

January 12: Israeli Deputy FM Danny Ayalon called the Turkish Ambassador to Tel Aviv, Oguz Celikkol to the Foreign Ministry to protest a Turkish drama series which depicts Israeli soldiers as murderers. Ayalon's disrespectful treatment of Celikkol triggered the so-called "low-chair crisis".

January 17: Israel's Minister of Defense Ehud Barak visited Turkey in a bid to repair bilateral relations.

May 27: Israel was accepted to the OECD. Turkey, a founding member of the organization with a veto power, did not veto Israel's membership.

May 31: Israeli commandoes attacked a humanitarian aid ship "Mavi Marmara" in high seas. Israeli commandoes killed 8 Turkish citizens and 1 US citizen on board.

June 30: FM Davutoglu and the Israel's Minister of Industry and Trade Fuoad Ben Eliezer met in Brussels to discuss bilateral relations.

August 10: UNHRC's fact-finding mission on the Gaza flotilla started its investigation.

September 23: UNHRC's fact-finding mission issued its report on the Gaza flotilla incident. The report concluded that Israel violated international law, including international humanitarian and human rights law.

December 2: Turkey sent two fire-fighter planes to help Israel with the Carmel fire in the Haifa region.

December 6: Israel's representative to the UN Gaza flotilla probe panel Joseph Ciechanover met with Undersecretary Sinirlioglu in Geneva.

Israeli Defense Minister Ehud Barak paid a visit to Turkey following the crisis in order to apologise and repair the deteriorating relations. Bypassing the Israeli Minister of Foreign Affairs, Avigdor Lieberman, and acting as a "shadow" Foreign Minister, Ehud Barak stressed the differences within the Israeli Government but was unable to improve relations. In the following months, Lieberman's efforts to place the blame on Erdogan as the source of the crisis reflected Israel's complete failure to understand and effectively analyze the roots and dynamics of the crises. This was corroborated in November 2010 when documents were leaked by Wikileaks in which Israeli Ambassador to Turkey Gaby Levi held Erdogan responsible for the crisis between the two countries. This demonstrated the prevailing mind set of Israeli diplomats.

In spite of the crisis-ridden atmosphere, Turkey took its first step to normalize the relations by a gesture to include Israel as a member of the OECD. By not vetoing the request for membership by Israel, which had been pending a long time, Turkey presented Israel with an opportunity to make a move to repair the relations. However, this opportunity was lost with the attack on the Mavi Marmara by Israel, which took place just a few days later.

May 31st 2010 will be a date recorded in history as breaking point in Turkish-Israeli relations. Israeli commandos stormed the Mavi Marmara ship carrying humanitarian aid to the blockaded Gaza Strip in international waters killing nine people. The ships of the aid convoy were towed by Israeli commandos to the port of Ashdod, and Israeli authorities impounded the ships.

Turkey's reaction to the attack was harsh. Highlighting the violation of international law by Israel, Turkey presented its case to NATO, the UN, OIC, and the international community, strongly condemning Israel. In this respect, NATO, the UN and OIC also condemned the actions which resulted in civilian deaths and called for the immediate release of the detained civilians and ships held by Israel. Turkey had seven demands: (1) an apology from Israel, (2) release of the ships, (3) release of the detained civilians, (4) transfer of the humanitarian aid to Gaza, (5) the establishment of an international investigation and commission, (6) compensation to the victims, and (7) easing/removing of the Gaza blockade. So far, Israel has met five of these demands, excluding the two most important demands: an apology and compensation to the victims.

While both Turkey and the international community called for the establishment of an international commission to investigate the attack, Israel insisted on setting up its own commission and formed "The Turkel Committee" to investigate the raid under the chairmanship of Jacob Turkel in June. The Turkel Committee, which is still continuing its investigation, has been highly criticized for not having the permission to interrogate or question the soldiers involved in the raid.

However, a separate investigation was conducted by the United Nations Human Rights Council. The report of this Council, prepared by Desmond de Silva, Karl T. Hudson-Phillips, and Mary Shanthi Dairiam and published in September 2010, called the Israeli operation disproportionate and condemned it as an "unacceptable level of brutality." A resolution backing the report was passed with 30 votes, despite American opposition and EU abstention. Israel did not initially cooperate with the UN during the preparation of the report and ignored it just like the Goldstone report.

In August, Israel finally agreed to cooperate with the investigation conducted by the United Nations. The UN panel consisted of the former New Zealand Prime Minister Geoffrey Palmer, the outgoing Colombian President Álvaro Uribe, Turkish representative Özdem Sanberk, and Israeli representative Joseph Ciecchanover. However, Israel's cooperation with this commission stayed rather limited due to Israel's refusal to have its soldiers involved in the raid questioned by the Commission.

The meeting between Turkish Foreign Minister, Ahmet Davutoglu, and Israeli Commerce and Trade Minister, Benyamin Ben Eliezer, in Brussels in June 2010 did not yield any concrete results because of Ben Eliezer's weak position in the government. Tensions also persisted - when Ehud Barak leveled criticisms against the head of the Turkish Intelligence Unit (MIT), revealing that Israel does not have the intention to ease the tension in the relations between Israel and Turkey. Therefore, claims that Israel froze intelligence sharing with Turkey in October 2010 did not catch anyone by surprise.

Putting the strain in relations aside, Turkey sent fire fighting air crafts to assist in the fire that broke out in the Northern port city of Haifa in December 2010. This brought a glimmer of hope that relations could recover because of Turkey's constructive step. Expectations rose, especially when Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu thanked Turkish Prime minister Erdogan on the phone for his gesture and sent Joseph Ciechanover to Geneva to meet Turkish undersecretary Feridun Sinirlioğlu. Nevertheless, Israel's irresponsible attitude to the two Turkish demands related to the Mavi Marmara attack, an apology and compensation, has returned negotiations to a stalemate.

Today, what we see in the relations between Israel and Turkey is that the crisis has gone beyond the scope of traditional diplomacy and has become a domestic political instrument and issue. Israel's opposition to Turkey's apology and compensation demands due to public pressure stands as the biggest barrier against normalization of relations.

3.2.7 Relations between Turkey and Lebanon

Lebanon has been a hotbed for conflict and open to foreign influences throughout its history due to its complicated ethnic and religious structure. For this reason, Lebanon is the key country in the region in Turkey's efforts for economic development, peace, and stability in the Levant.

The year 2010 started off very promisingly for Turkish-Lebanese relations. On a visit to Turkey in the first days of 2010, Lebanese Prime Minister Saad Hariri signed a deal to abolish visa requirements with Turkey. The two countries also signed other deals on cooperation in the areas of health, agriculture, military, transportation, and education. With this agreement, Turkish-Lebanese relations reached their peak in the history of bilateral relations. In his next visit to Istanbul, Hariri stated that the number of Turkish tourists visiting Lebanon quadrupled since the signing of the treaty abolishing the visas.

In the context of the Turkish-Lebanese Economic Forum and the Turkish-Arab Cooperation Forum, economic cooperation between the two countries ministers

and businessmen intensified over 2010. Due to Lebanon's infrastructure needs as a result of the long standing civil wars and the Israeli invasions, Lebanon asked the Turkish investments to concentrate on infrastructure. In June 2010, Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, and Turkey signed an agreement to set up a free trade zone and complete a free-visa travel regime for their nationals. In July, with the establishment of a High Level Quadripartite Cooperation Council, these four countries took a very important step in carrying out the decisions that they adopted in June. Moreover, these four countries established the 'Close Neighbors Economic and Trade Partnership Council' to broaden and diversify trade between them. Coordination of the Council will be enabled by the Foreign Ministers, and the Council will convene at the Prime Ministry level once a year with the participation of the relevant ministers to discuss the issues within the sectors of energy, trade, customs, agriculture, health, investments, internal affairs, water, environment, and transportation.

Chronology

TURKEY-LEBANON RELATIONS

January 8: Lebanese PM Saad Hariri paid an official visit to Turkey. Turkey and Lebanon signed a series of agreements. Both countries mutually lifted visa requirements.

April 20: Turkish-Lebanese Economic Forum was held in Beirut. Turkish Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges signed a cooperation agreement with Beirut Chamber of Trade, Industry and Agriculture.

May 22: Lebanese PM Hariri visited Turkey.

June 10: Turkish-Arab Cooperation Forum began in Istanbul. After the meeting, Syria, Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey announced that they had provisionally agreed to abolish all mutual visa requirements and establish a quadrilateral free-trade zone.

July 19: FM Davutoglu met Syrian President al-Assad and Lebanese PM Hariri in Damascus.

July 31: Syrian Minister of Economy and Trade Lamia Asi, Jordanian Minister of Industry and Trade Amer Hadidi, Lebanese Minister of Economy and Trade Mohammad Safadi and Turkish Minister of State Zafer Caglayan met in Istanbul.

September 26: A quadrilateral meeting was held in Turkish House in New York between Turkish FM Davutoglu, Jordanian FM Nasir Cevdem Syrian FM Velid Moullem and Lebanese FM Ali Essami. They agreed to cooperate on trade, tourism, energy and transportation.

November 24-25: PM Erdogan paid an official visit to Lebanon.

November 26: High-Level Quadrilateral Cooperation Council between Turkish, Syrian, Jordanian and Lebanese Ministers of Foreign Affairs, Transportation, Energy, and Culture and Tourism was held.

The most recent Quadripartite Council meeting was held, in November 2010, with the participation of the four countries Ministers of Foreign Affairs, Transportation, Energy, Culture, and Tourism. They decided to strengthen the cooperation in these four sectors.

The preservation of a delicate political balance in Lebanon has been one of the most significant components of Turkish-Lebanon relations. In this respect, the assassination of former Lebanese Prime Minister Refik Hariri in 2005 was followed by the rising influence of foreign powers in the country while Syria has retreated. Moreover, Israel's invasion of the country further accelerated political chaos in Lebanon. In contrast, Turkey has come out as an influential but more politically neutral actor with its ability to build dialogue with all political entities in Lebanon.

The conflict which was suppressed by the Doha Agreement came back to the forefront with the approaching date of the indictment concerning Hariri's assassination by the Special Lebanon Court of the UN. The imminent release of the U.N. tribunal's indictment, which is expected to place the blame on Hezbollah for the assassination drew harsh reactions from Hezbollah and signaled forthcoming political chaos that would besiege the country. Following the visits of Saudi Arabia King Abdullah and Syrian president Beshar el-Assad, Turkish authorities paid also a very important visit to the country in November.

Turkish Prime Minister Erdogan's visit to Lebanon has been very important in terms of strengthening Turkish-Lebanese relations, and increasing Turkey's clout in the country. Meeting with all the different groups in the country, Erdogan stated that Turkey would object another civil war in Lebanon and it would not stay silent in case Israel attacks the country. With these statements, Turkey once more showed that it had a pro-active foreign policy that aims to contribute to the establishment of peace in the region.

Erdogan's Lebanon visit highlighted the appreciation the Lebanese people have towards Turkey. Erdogan began his two-day visit with the greetings of the Lebanese people who welcomed Erdogan in Beirut with Turkish flags and posters of him. Lebanon expects Turkey to be active in several areas of need. First, Turkey has a role to play as a broker between the political actors and, therefore, can ease the political conflicts within the country. Second, Turkey can raise its voice against Israeli aggression. And third, Turkey can actively contribute to the physical reconstruction of Lebanon. In relation to this last area of need, the Turkish International Cooperation and Development Agency (TIKA) will build two

hospitals and more than fifty schools in certain Lebanese municipalities. This effort in the sector of infrastructure and services reveals the extent of Turkey's economic contribution in rebuilding a thriving Lebanon. Thus, Erdogan's visit was important in signaling to Lebanon that Turkey is willing to meet the expectations of the Lebanese people.

Expanding relations between Turkey and Lebanon in both economic and cultural areas in 2011 should contribute to the efforts to prevent conflicts during the Hariri assassination indictment process and trial. The cooperation and partnership councils established between the two countries have institutionalized bilateral relations for the years to come.

3.2.8 Relations between Turkey and Syria

For Turkey, Syria has been the most successful "story" of the 'zero problems with neighbors' policy vision. Previously characterized in Turkey's eyes as the source of competition over water, sovereignty disputes and threats of terrorism. Turkish-Syrian relations have gained great momentum in the second half of this past decade. Turkish-Syrian relations also serve as a model for other countries in the region. With the establishment of Turkish-Syrian High Level Strategic Cooperation Council (HLSCC) in 2009, Turkish-Syrian relations have taken on an institutionalized character. In this respect, the year 2010 was the one in which decisions taken in 2009 were implemented with additional agreements towards the concretization of the concept strategic cooperation.

The Presidents, Prime Ministers and relevant Ministers of the two countries came together within the framework of the HLSCC throughout the 2000s. This cooperation showed its first results as of January of 2010. The first meeting of the Syrian-Turkish High-Level Strategic Cooperation Council held in 23-23 December 2010 was chaired by the Prime Ministers of both countries. In the meeting, it was decided that the "Friendship Dam" was to be built on Orontes River. Later on, the relevant ministers came together in Turkey to discuss the technical details of the this project and signed the proceedings.

The second HLSCC Ministerial level meeting was held in Syria, in October 2010, with the participation of the Turkish Foreign Minister and other 12 ministers. In this meeting, agreements signed in 2009 were reviewed and the common will for the enrichment of cooperation in the fields of energy, transportation, agriculture, trade, environment, and health was put forward. In the same context, the

second meeting of the HLCSC between Syria and Turkey was held in Ankara on December 20-21, 2010, under the co-chairmanship of Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan and his Syrian counterpart Mohammad Naji Otri with the participation of 16 Syrian and Turkish ministers. During the meeting both sides reiterated their determination to further develop, enhance, and deepen their cooperation in all fields of their relations. It was concluded that the Nusaybin-Kamışlı customs gate would be built, the joint Turkish-Syrian Bank would be set up to increase trade volume, an express train line would be constructed between Gaziantep and Aleppo, a natural oil systems of the two countries would be connected to each other, and 180 million Euros would be allocated to the Turkish Exim Bank to finance the finalization of specific projects undertaken by Turkish companies in Syria.

Chronology

TURKEY-SYRIA RELATIONS

January 5-7: Syrian Minister of Irrigation Nader Al Bunni visited Turkey to discuss the Friendship Dam project on the Asi River.

March 7: FM Davutoglu met Syrian President al-Assad, Syrian FM Moallem, and Assistant Vice President Hasan Turkmani in Syria.

April 6-8: Minister of Industry and Trade Nihat Ergun went to Syria to join the 3rd Turkey-Syria Industry Monitoring Committee meeting.

May 8-9: Syrian President al-Assad and FM Moallem visited Turkey.

May 9: A trilateral meeting was held with the participation of PM Erdogan, Syrian President al-Assad and the Amir of Qatar Hamad bin Halife al-Thani. Regional issues were discussed.

June 7: Syrian President al-Assad met President Gul and PM Erdogan in Turkey

June 9-10: The third meeting of the Turkish-Arab Cooperation Forum at the level of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs was held in Istanbul. Turkey, Syria, Lebanon and Jordan agreed to launch a free zone for the transfer of goods and people.

June 30: The Extraordinary Meeting of the Parliamentary Union of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC)-member states was held in Damascus. Chairman of the Turkish Parliament Mehmet Ali Sahin participated in the meeting. In the final declaration of the meeting, Israel was denounced for its attack on the Gaza flotilla.

July 19: FM Davutoglu met Syrian President al-Assad and Lebanese PM Hariri in Damascus

October 2-3: The Second Ministerial Meeting of the Turkey-Syria High-level Strategic Cooperation Council was held in Syria.

October 11: PM Erdogan and FM Davutoglu visited Syria.

December 21: PM Erdogan participated in the Second Prime Ministerial Meeting of the Turkey-Syria High-level Strategic Cooperation Council.

Economic and political cooperation between Turkey and Syria has turned into a model and a system that could encompass other countries in 2010. In June, free trade and a visa-free travel zone was set up between Turkey, Lebanon, Syria and Jordan. With the establishment of the High Level Quadripartite Cooperation Council in July, these four countries took a very important step in carrying out the decisions, adopted in June. Moreover, these four established the 'close neighbors economic and trade partnership council (CNETC)' to widen and diversify the trade between them.

In 2010, cooperation with Syria in the fields of security and regional peace and stability intensified. Syria detained 400 PKK militia members during operations carried out in July in five different cities. In October, a meeting between Prime Minister Erdogan and Syrian President Bashar al-Assad was held to discuss security issues. Both leaders reiterated the need for deepening intelligence sharing, strengthening cooperation between the Intelligence Units of both countries, and frequent meetings between Turkish and Syrian heads of Intelligence Units.

Another matter of cooperation was the efforts of both countries to improve the conditions in Gaza. To that end, Turkish president Abdullah Gul and prime minister Erdogan, Syrian president Bashar al-Assad, Qatari Amir Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani, Iranian president of Parliament Ali Larijani, and Iraqi government spokesman Ali El Debbag convened in Istanbul, in May, to discuss issues concerning the Middle East. Simultaneously, Turkish, Syrian and Qatari committees gathered under the chairmanship of Turkish foreign minister Davutoglu.

Both Syria and Turkey coordinated their attempts to appease the strained political atmosphere in Lebanon in the aftermath of the assassination of Hariri. Turkey made great efforts to keep the balance between Syria and Saudi Arabia and made a significant visit to Lebanon after Erdogan's visits to Syria and Saudi Arabia. Having spoken to Assad before going to Lebanon, Erdogan played the role of messenger and clearly conveyed to all the Lebanese political actors that Assad was not involved in Hariri's assassination.

Cultivating improved Turkish-Syrian relations translated into concrete terms in 2010. The trade volume reached levels of 2 billion dollars. Although this is still inadequate, it will most likely increase in the next years due to institutional mechanism that were recently set up. Trade volume is estimated to increase to 10 billion dollars by 2015. Also, there has been an encouraging increase in bilateral tourism between Turkey and Syria. Consequently, more active and intense contacts between Turkey and Syria are expected.

3.2.9 Relations between Turkey and the Balkans

The year 2010 has been very busy in terms of the relations between Turkey and the Balkan countries. With its growing economy, Turkey has become one of the primary countries in the region, taking bold steps towards the institutionalization of peace and cooperation. With the goal of establishment a lasting peace, Turkey has been involved in active cooperation with Serbia in particular. In parallel, Turkey also continued its relations with EU member Balkan countries, Bulgaria and Romania. With Bulgaria, Turkey, on the one hand, sustained its regular contacts with Turkish society in the country, on the other hand, enhanced its relations with its neighbors on the bases of regional cooperation. Turkey also made constructive use of its term presidency of the South East European Cooperation Process in order play a transformative role in the region. Turkey has kept a balanced approach towards all the political actors in the Balkans. Although, Turkey's proactive foreign policy has surprised the EU, the region's countries have received Turkey's initiatives positively, as long as Turkey does not seem to be leading an interventionist policy.⁵⁴

Chronology	TURKEY –BALKANS RELATIONS
	January 14: FM Davutoglu visited Zagreb to participate in the Turkey-Croatia-Bosnia Herzegovina Trilateral Summit.
	January 15: FM Davutoglu visited Belgrade to participate in the Turkey-Serbia-Bosnia Herzegovina Trilateral Summit.
	January 29-30: Bulgarian PM Boyko Borisov visited Turkey for official meetings.
	February 9: The fifth meeting of the Trilateral Consultation Mechanism between Turkey, Serbia and Bosnia Herzegovina was held in Ankara.
	February 19-21: Serbian FM Vuk Jeremic visited Turkey.
	March 18-19: FM Davutoglu visited Bulgaria.
	March 25-26: FM Davutoglu visited Macedonia.
	March 30: The Ministers of Trade Meeting of the South-East European Cooperation Process, chaired by Turkey, was held in Istanbul.
	March 30: The Serbian Parliament apologized for the Srebrenica massacre.

54. For an detailed analysis of Turkey's foreign policy in Balkans and Balkan countries see, Doğa Ulaş Eralp, *Kosova and Turkey: What Lies Ahead?*, SETA Policy Brief, November 2010; Doğa Ulaş Eralp, *Turkey and Bosnia Herzegovina: A Future Reflecting on the Past*, SETA Policy Brief, August 2010; Enika Abazi, *Kosovo Independence: An Albanian Perspective*, SETA Policy Brief, April 2008.

Chronology

TURKEY –BALKANS RELATIONS

March 30: The Serbian Parliament apologized for the Srebrenica massacre.

April 5-6: PM Erdogan and FM Davutoglu visited Bosnia-Herzegovina.

April 20: A consultation meeting was held in Belgrade between Serbian, Turkish and Spanish Foreign Ministers.

April 24: President Gul hosted the Head of Bosnian Presidential Council Haris Sladzic and Serbian President Boris Tadic in Istanbul for the Trilateral Balkan Summit.

April 27-29: Croatian FM and Minister of European Integration Gordian Jandrokovic visited Turkey.

May 11-12: Bosnian Minister of Civil Affairs Sredoje Novic visited Turkey. The two governments signed a health collaboration agreement.

May 14: PM Erdogan went to Greece.

May 19-22: The PM of Kosovo Hashim Thaci paid an official visit to Turkey.

June 2: Minister Bagis participated in the EU-Western Balkans High-level Conference in Sarajevo.

June 23: Presidential Meeting of the South-East European Cooperation Process was held in Istanbul.

July 10-12: PM Erdogan visited Bosnia-Herzegovina and Serbia.

September 2-3: President Gul visited Bosnia-Herzegovina together with a large group of businessmen.

October 4: PM Erdogan visited Bulgaria.

October 20: FM Davutoglu visited Bosnia-Herzegovina to discuss the coalition formation efforts in Bosnia- Herzegovina.

November 3-4: PM Erdogan paid an official visit to Kosovo.

The main component of Turkey's Balkan policy is its role as a broker in the Western Balkans. In this regard, Turkey took on the role as a facilitator, especially in improving relations between Bosnia-Herzegovina and Serbia. Having Bosnia submit its membership action plan for NATO in the beginning of 2010, Turkey played a significant role in the mutual opening of the Bosnian Embassy in Serbia and the Serbian Embassy in Bosnia. The tension in relations further thawed when the Serbian parliament apologized for the 1995 killing of thousands of Bosnian Muslims in Srebrenica in April and Serbian president Tadic attended the Srebrenica commemoration. The active involvement of Turkish prime minister and foreign minister set the stage for the softening of bilateral relations between Bosnia and Serbia, which also guaranteed Bosnia's territorial integrity. Similarly, Turkey was also active in its attempts to set up a tripartite consulting mechanisms to find a solution for the ethnic tensions, which erupted in Mostar between Croatia and Bosnia.

Turkey's foreign policy has been based on playing the role of a broker between the Western Balkan countries, which are going through a post-war process of healing. Relations between Croatia, Serbia, and Bosnia-Herzegovina have been improving through the tripartite consulting mechanisms mentioned above. Turkey's rapprochement with Kosovo made it possible for Ankara to serve as a potential broker between Kosovo and Serbia.

In 2010, Turkey paid particular attention to its relations with Serbia. The free trade agreement which was signed in 2009 took effect in September 2010 and a visa-free travel system was established in December 2010. Turkey also supported Serbian President Tadic's European oriented reformist policies in 2010. Furthermore, Turkey played a positive role in reducing the tensions between the Muslim Bosnians and the Serbian government in the province of Sancak. During Prime Minister Erdogan's official visit to Serbia in July 2010, Serbian and Turkish authorities agreed to the construction of the Novi Pazar-Belgrade highway and South Adriatic Connection Corridor, which would be built by Turkish companies. It is expected that Turkish-Serbian relations will be reinforced in the years to come.

Turkish Armenian relations were also good. Turkey gave its full support to Albanian efforts to strengthen the Kosovo economy and its full integration with the region. The abolishment of visas between Turkey and Albania in January 2010 left a positive impact on their respective economic relations. Also security cooperation between Turkey and Albania, both NATO members, gained momentum in 2010. When a flood disaster broke out in December 2010 in Albania, Turkey acted immediately and sent aid.

Relations with Bulgaria ran a positive course despite some minor bumps in the road. Turkey is not only one of Bulgaria's most important trade partners, Turkey has also undertaken a great number of construction projects in Bulgaria over the last 15 years. Therefore, sporadic reactions by Borisov's coalition government against Turkey cannot really impede the generally good relations between the two countries. Turkey lends political support to the Turkish community in Bulgaria. However, Turkey is mindful not to trigger any anti-Turkish and anti-Muslim reactions in the country. The demand for compensation of the Bulgarian people, who lived in Thrace and had to leave their properties, has subsided. Certain issues require for Turkey to be more involved, such as when Sofia attempted to appoint the chief mufti instead of allowing him to be elected by the Bulgarian muslim community. So, Turkish foreign minister Davutoglu intervened to find a solution by September 2010. But the rivalry between the elected and appointed muftis still

stands today. In this respect, Erdogan's one day visit to Bulgaria was an important step to ease tensions. Bulgaria still declared its full support to Turkey's EU membership in 2010.

Overall in 2010 relations with Greece moved forward in a positive direction, with the exception of the Cyprus issue. Erdogan's visit to Athens, in May 2010, can be seen as a sign of continued improvement in Turkish-Greek relations in 2011. The foreign ministers of the two countries are negotiating an agreement over the Aegean Sea's continental shelf. If this is successful, it could lead to joint touristic investments. Other areas of cooperation can lead to a significant rapprochement between the two countries, such as improving the conditions of the Turkish minority in Greece; increasing the number of Greek tourists to Turkey; and continuing cultural exchanges like the popularity of Turkish TV shows in Greece. The one major problem that the two countries had to face in 2010 was the illegal refugees entering Greece from Turkey. The deployment of the European Rapid Border Intervention Team to the Greek-Turkish border in 2011 is an indication that this problem has an international dimension. In tightening and further improving a close neighborhood relationship, Turkey has offered to help Greece during its financial crises and to take part in joint military exercises. At this juncture, a close military and strategic cooperation between Israel and Greece is not working out due to Greece's fragile economy. In this regard, Greek Prime Minister Papandreou has highlighted that the strategic cooperation between Israel and Greece is not targeting Turkey.

Another small country of the western Balkans, Macedonia, was not able to make it from its candidacy status to EU accession negotiations. Macedonia's coalition government's corruption scandals and misguided economic policies resulted in intense criticisms of the EU and negatively affected its EU process. Turkey's ongoing attempts to invest in Macedonia without distinguishing between ethnic Albanians, Turks and the Macedonian majority in the country boosted Macedonia's confidence in Turkey as an important actor in the Balkans. The Turkish Development Agency in Macedonia provided aid for the refurbishment of the Macedonian National Museum, and Turkish companies invested in the health sector, thereby strengthening Turkey's position as a trade partner with Macedonia. In addition, Turkey has been supportive of Macedonia's NATO membership prospect.

Turkish-Romanian relations are expected to advance in 2011, especially within the context of Nabucco Energy Project. Turkey abolished the visa requirements

for Romanian citizens in 2009 and underlined the significance of bolstering the trade relations with Romania. Romania also reiterated its support to Turkey's EU accession. In 2010, Turkish businessmen invested in the health sector; for example a hospital specialized in eye care was opened because of Turkish funding. Turkey and Romania also cooperated on issues related to the Black Sea region.

The year 2010 will be remembered as the year in which relations with Montenegro were enhanced. An excellent example was the launching of Turkish airlines flights from Istanbul to the capital Podgorica. Romania is trying to provide a convenient investment atmosphere for Turkish investors. So, it is expected that in 2011 relations will continue to improve. Turkey also supports Montenegro's accession to NATO.

Generally, Turkey paid special attention to conducting a constructive foreign policy in the Balkans. Opposing rigorously Neo-Ottomanist claims, Turkey has underlined the importance of economic and political cooperation for the attainment of peace in the region. By supporting the EU and NATO accession prospects of the countries in the region, Turkey made it clear to everyone that it is not in competition with the EU, rather it fully intends to cooperate with the EU. However, whether Turkey's intentions and actions have been recognized by the EU is still unsure. Turkey holds firm to the principle that intensifying its political and economic efforts in the region in 2011 remains the best policy option for Turkey.

3.2.10 Relations between Turkey and Caucasus

The most important development of 2010 for Turkey was the declaration of the Armenian Constitutional Court's decision on the protocols signed by the ministers of the two countries in Zurich on October 10th 2010. The constitutional court issued that while the Protocols were in line with the Armenian constitution in general, they did not fully comply with the 1990 Charter of Independence. This was an indirect way for Armenia, through its Court system, to contest Turkey's position on Nagorno Karabakh, the 'genocide' claims, and remaining border issues.

The Turkish foreign ministry reacted by stating that the decision of the Armenian Constitutional Court was against the spirit of the Protocols. Until now,, this decision has hurt the normalization process between Armenia and Turkey. The Protocols remain pending in both countries' parliaments. Moreover, rumors over Armenia's preparations for the 100th anniversary of the 1915 events say that

Erivan's administration was compelled by the "big powers" to sit at the negotiation table with Turkey. In this sense, 2010 was not a successful year in terms of Turkish-Armenian relations, however the process may still be salvaged.⁵⁵

Chronology	TURKEY-CAUCASUS RELATIONS
	January 12: PM Erdogan went to the Russian Federation.
	February 10-12: FM Davutoglu visited Kazakhstan.
	February 25: FM Davutoglu participated in the inauguration ceremony of the newly-elected Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovic.
	March 31-April 2: Head of the Presidential Administration of Azerbaijan Republic Ramiz Mehdiyev visited Turkey and met PM Erdogan and FM Davutoglu.
	April 8: Russia and the US signed Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty in the Czech capital, Prague.
	April 19: FM Erdogan paid an official visit to Azerbaijan.
	April 26-27: Georgian FM Grigol Vasadze visited Turkey.
	April 26-29: Parliamentary chairman of the Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic Vasif Talibov paid an official visit to Turkey.
	May 3-4: Kazakhstan Deputy PM and Minister of Industry Aset Issekeshiev visited Turkey.
	May 11-12: Russian President Dimitry Medvedev paid an official visit to Turkey. During his stay in Turkey, more than 20 agreements were signed between the two countries.
	May 17: PM Erdogan, FM Davutoglu and Undersecretary of MFA Sinirlioglu visited Azerbaijan
	May 23-26: President Gul paid an official visit to Kazakhstan.
	May 25: 7th term meeting of Turkish-Ukrainian Commercial and Economic Cooperation Commission was held in Istanbul. State Minister Caglayan and Ukrainian Deputy PM for Economy Sergiy Tigipko chaired the meeting.
	June 7-9: Russian PM Vladimir Putin participated in the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA), which was held in Istanbul.
	June 20-21: FM Davutoglu paid an official visit to Kazakhstan.
	August 16-17: President Gul paid an official visit to Azerbaijan.
	September 15: Turkey and Azerbaijan signed an agreement in Istanbul to establish High-level Strategic Cooperation Council.
	September 15-16: Turkish Speaking Countries Meeting was held in Istanbul.
	November 7: General elections were held in Azerbaijan.
	November 11: President Gul paid an official visit to Turkmenistan.
	November 30: President Gul went to Kazakhstan to participate in the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe summit.

55. For detailed analyses of Turkish-Armenian relations see, Bülent Aras ve Fatih Özbay, *Türkiye ve Ermenistan: Statüko ve Normalleşme arasında Kafkasya Siyaseti*, SETA Analiz, October 2009.

In terms of Azerbaijan, the most important development of 2011 was the general election held on November 7, 2010. This was the fourth election in the history of the country. In elections where approximately 5 million people went to the ballot box, 23 political parties and independent candidates competed. The new Azerbaijan party has come out of the elections stronger. Despite the Western world's criticisms, it has become clear after the election that an "Azerbaijani way of democracy" emerged. Also, both opposition and government converged on the issue of the Nagorno Karabakh in the run up to the elections. However, more voices were raised among the Azeri public on the need to take new steps to find a solution to the problem.

At the same time, 2010 was a time when Turkey tried to recover the strain in relations with Azerbaijan due to the normalization process with Armenia. Turkish president Abdullah Gul paid a visit to Baku on August 16, 2010 and there Gul and the Azeri President Ilham Aliyev signed a 'Strategic Partnership and Mutual Assistance Agreement.' Gul also invited Aliyev to the Turkish Speaking Countries Summit, which was held in Istanbul on 15-16 September 2010.

Moreover, Turkish Prime Minister Erdogan and Azeri President Aliyev signed a deal to set up the High-Level Strategic Cooperation Council between Turkey and Azerbaijan on September 15, 2010. This treaty would contribute to betterment of the relations between these two countries.. It transpired that for the improvement of relations, joint dialogue mechanisms should be developed not only at state level, but also at civil society level.

With respect to Georgia, 2010 ends up being a year where expectations were not met. The Tbilisi administration, which expected substantial support from the US and the West was disappointed by the softening of NATO-Russia relations and the improvement of US-Russia relations.

On November 4, 2010 the General Secretary of NATO met Russian President Medvedev and Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov in Moscow. During this critically important meeting, NATO and Russia reached an agreement on the issues of Afghanistan and ballistic missiles. Stating that strained relations during the Russia-Georgia war were left behind, Rasmussen argued that the Lisbon Summit would provide an opportunity to burry past's ghost and turn a new page in their relations. Russian president Medvedev stated that Russian-NATO relations have become more productive and that Russia would like to cooperate with NATO to form a more powerful security system at the global level. While NATO leaders agreed on the ballistic missiles issue on November 19-20, 2010 at the Lisbon Summit,

the START Agreement was signed between the US and Russia. It was approved by the American Congress on December 22, 2010. Apprehensive in light of these developments, Georgia announced that it would meet with Russia without pre-conditions in the aftermath of the NATO Summit.

The most important problem that arose between Turkey and Georgia in 2010 was Georgia's seizing of the Turkish ships traveling to Abkhazia. Georgia's action is related to its political problems with Abkhazia, which is part of the Georgian territory, but which declared its independence (also recognized by Russia in 2008 after the Russian-Georgian war). In order to negotiate the release of the Turkish ships forcibly detained by Georgia, and to prevent similar incidents from occurring in the future, a working group was formed between Turkey and Georgia. Since February 2010, it has met several times in Tbilisi, Ankara, and Batumi. As a result of these meetings, Georgia began to release Turkish ships that it had forcibly detained.⁵⁶

Russia sent conflicting signals to Azerbaijan. On the one hand, Russia let Azerbaijan know that it had to get closer to it, so Azerbaijan would not be isolated in the region. On the other hand, Russia implied that it would always back Armenia. On September 4-5, 2010 Russian President Medvedev paid an official visit to Azerbaijan and signed a treaty on the purchase of Azeri natural gas. The deal envisages the increase in the amount of natural gas that Russia would buy from Azerbaijan as of 2011. The deal is interpreted as Russia's attempts to pull Azerbaijan closer to itself. After the signing of the treaty, in the joint press conference with Aliyev, Medvedev declared Azerbaijan as a strategic partner. Following this meeting, the Azerbaijan Parliament ratified the draft bill on State borders between Azerbaijan and Russia.

Another important development in the Caucasus is the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan causing both countries to re-arm. In this respect, Russia and Armenia signed amendments to a 1995 bilateral treaty extending Russia's use of a military base near Armenia's border with Turkey through 2044. Russia's 102nd military base has been deployed in Gyumri and Erevan. Also with these amendments, Russia plans to reinforce its S-300 and S-400 surface-to-air missile systems in Armenia. Russia also agreed to deliver S-300 air defense systems to Azerbaijan in 2010.

Throughout 1990s, the assumption was that there were two axis in the Caucasus: Russia-Armenia-Iran and Turkey-Azerbaijan-Georgia. This type of power equa-

56. For a detailed analysis of Turkish-Georgian relations see, Hasan Ali Karasar, *Saakashvili Pulled the Trigger: Turkey between Russia and Georgia*, SETA Policy Brief, August 2008.

tions no longer applies today. Improving Turkish-Russian and Turkish-Iranian relations have made this type of characterization insignificant. Therefore, the situation has become difficult and more fluid for countries such as Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Armenia which used to take advantage of these power balances to strengthen their hand. However, closer and more constructive relations between Turkey-Russia and Iran would have a positive ripple in the region and guarantee the peace and stability in the Caucasus.

4. ECONOMY

4.1 FINANCIAL CRISIS AND THE TURKISH ECONOMY

Turkey has successfully managed to recover from the global economic crisis which started to emerge in 2008, and which has had a deep impact on a number of developed and developing countries. Turkey has even enlarged its economy while coping with this economic crisis. One of the fundamental reasons lying behind the Turkey's handling the crisis in a successful way is structural reforms enabling the economic actors to carry out their functions actively. Thanks to these structural reforms, macroeconomic stability and environment of trust emerged. Besides these reforms paved the way for the private sector, the investment environment and competitiveness were improved and finally the obstacles in the path of the international capital were eliminated. The determined and disciplined attitude of Justice and Development Party (AK Party) carried out all these legal regulations and created an environment of trust for international capital and investors.

Privatizations realized in 2010 not only decreased the influence of public sector on the market but also reinforced the capacity of supervisory and regulatory institutions and they enabled the public sector to have such a structure to be able to lead the economy. As a result of economic competition, investments in private sector recovered rapidly and Turkey's pace of growth was less affected by the global crisis than other countries. Foreign investment in the country increased and affected the economy in a positive way thanks to this environment of trust. Moreover, the reforms in the banking sector which had been implemented following the previous crisis in Turkey also gave our economy the opportunity to resist to the global economic recession and subsequent economic shocks. Structural transformation in the banking sector strengthened the sector. Thanks to this, Turkey wasn't adversely affected by the global economic crisis in terms of finance. While banks

in many countries, particularly in the USA went bankrupt during the economic crisis, the finance sector in Turkey didn't have any problem at all.

The experience that Turkey gained from the economic crises, the serious damage of these crises on economy and additional costs of them on the economy showed once more the need for a serious debt management particularly for the developing and increasing markets.⁵⁷ Debt stock in Turkey and this pay in GDP started to diminish by 2002. GDP debt stock (56, 2 %) in 2002 decreased to 43, 9 % in 2009 in spite of the global financial crisis. Moreover it was predicted to be 42, 3% in 2010. Increase in economic growth and decrease in interest rates have played a significant role in this decrease in the debt stock. Rapid decrease in interest rates has affected the dynamics of debt in a positive way and reinforced the trust of the implemented program. On the other hand, Maastricht Criterion was achieved with regard to total public deficit. In addition, gross public debt stock defined by EU decreased far below EU-27 average. Furthermore, net public debt stock went down when compared to national revenue and absolute value. In contrast to Turkey, this situation brought about economic crisis in European countries, especially in Greece and Ireland. A recovery package was prepared for Greece for its debt crisis following long discussions among the members of EU. Ireland also faced with similar economic problems like Greece. Moreover, similar problems started to emerge in other countries such as Portugal and Spain.

Table 1. Debt Stock / GNP (%) in EU Countries and Turkey

Countries	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Euro Zone (16 countries)	69,5	70,1	68,3	66,0	69,4	78,7
EU (25 countries)	62,5	63,1	61,9	59,4	62,3	74,3
EU (27 countries)	62,2	62,7	61,4	58,8	61,6	73,6
Italy	103,8	105,8	106,5	103,5	106,1	115,8
Greece	98,6	100,0	97,8	95,7	99,2	115,1
Belgium	94,2	92,1	88,1	84,2	89,8	96,7
Hungary	59,1	61,8	65,6	65,9	72,9	78,3
Germany	65,7	68,0	67,6	65,0	66,0	73,2
France	64,9	66,4	63,7	63,8	67,5	77,6
Portugal	58,3	63,6	64,7	63,6	66,3	76,8
Austria	64,8	63,9	62,2	59,5	62,6	66,5
Holland	52,4	51,8	47,4	45,5	58,2	60,9
England	40,6	42,2	43,5	44,7	52,0	68,1
Spain	46,2	43,0	39,6	36,2	39,7	53,2
Turkey	59,2	52,3	46,1	39,4	39,5	45,4

Source: The Undersecretariat of Treasury⁵⁸

57. See, Erdal Karagöl, *Geçmişten Günümüze Türkiye'de Dış Borçlar*, SETA Analiz, August, 2010.

58. See, www.hazine.gov.tr.

Turkey has started to have a successful growth pace after the global economic crisis owing to the structural reforms realized, determined privatization policies and financial discipline practices which were put into effect. Nevertheless, it is an obvious fact that there are still problems related to the influence of this economic growth on employment. In spite of the record growth figures throughout the last four quarters which started in the last quarter of 2009, growth performance didn't have a sufficient influence on the employment. In addition, Central Bank decreased the interest rates. Yet, the high unemployment rate continued to pose a serious problem in European region although it is not as high as that of other countries. According to the September 2010 results of Household Labor Force Survey, the number of unemployed people in Turkey reached 2 million 934 thousand people with a decrease of 462 thousand people when compared to the same period of the last year. Unemployment rate decreased by 2, 1 % and reached 11, 3 %. These figures show that the economic growth started to contribute to the employment in the last quarter of Turkey in contrast to the situation in other countries.

Although the capacity of growth for creating employment was limited, the most significant strategy against the problem of unemployment is still a high and stable growth dynamics. If economic growth is not creating employment, the factor which is responsible for this is not economic growth but other components affecting unemployment. These can be listed as totalitarian employment strategy, maladjustment to changing conditions of labor market, inflexibility of the market, high taxes, and discrepancy between the education and the employment. In other words, it is clear that there is not a consistent, totalitarian employment strategy which does not change from government to government. As social parties did not reach a consensus about the issues put forward in the national employment strategy which was prepared in workshops with a broad participation for the first time in 2010, their legalization was considered to be difficult. However, it is predicted that before elections there will be some partial changes in leading issues of national employment strategy such as labor inflexibility, development and spread of flexible working styles. Consequently, employment continues to be one of the most significant social problems in Turkey.⁵⁹

4.2 DYNAMICS OF THE ECONOMIC GROWTH

In Turkey, along with the global crisis, the economy has successively tightened in the last quarter of 2008 and the first three of 2009, but as from the last quarter of

59. Erdal Karagöl, *Türkiye'de İstihdam Durumu: Genel Eğilimler*, SETA Analiz, May 2010.

2009 it has gained a newly growth trend. According to the datum of the Turkish Statistical Institute, a growth of 11, 7% in the first three months of 2009 and 10, 3% in the second three and 5, 5% in the third three occurred. Turkey, with the growth of 11, 7% in the first quarter, after China, became the second rapidly growing economy in the G-20 countries. As of the first nine months-term of the year, it grew in real terms 8, 9% in the GDP in comparison with the same period of the last year. That growth came from either the low base effect caused by growth in 2009, or that of the economy affected partially from the global economic crisis. It is anticipated that these numbers of growth in the last quarter, will be lower in comparison with the first three quarters, because of the increasing growth of 6% in the last quarter of the last year and because the effect of base year disappeared. Hence, it is good to state that especially the growth of the first three quarters would not precede same.

Considering the nine months of 2010, it is seen that the economic growth arose from the investments and consumption expenditures of the private sector. In the first nine months of the year, while the investments of private sector grew in real terms with a rate of 30%, the final consumption expenditure grew 7, 4% in comparison with the same period of the last year.⁶⁰ These expenditures by private sector supported the growth; however, balance of trade that is the net foreign demand affected the growth in a negative way. The improvement in the demand conditions accompanied the growth of manufacturing industry and the sector showed an increase with a rate of 8, 7% in the third quarter of 2010 and 14, 7% in the time period of last nine months. It is seen that the observed tendency of growth in the construction sector from the beginning of 2010 continues to increase. The value added of construction sector, growing with a rate of 24,6% in the third quarter of the year in comparison with the same period of the last year, showed an increase of 18,4 % in the period of the first nine months.⁶¹ The indicators and expectations such as manufacturing industry and capacity utilization about the last quarter of 2010 declared by Turkish Statistical Institute showed that a growth rate above the envisaged rate declared in the Medium Term Program of October is expected.

Even though the expected growth rate for 2010 was 3, 5 % considering the fragilities and the global crisis, the expected growth rate of 6, 8 % in the Medium Term Program of October was suspected. In the current situation, according to the industrial production index and capacity utilization rates people believe that the growth potential of Turkey is far more than above-mentioned figure and Turkey has a potential of achieving a growth of over 6, 8%. It is remarkable that the

60. See, www.hazine.gov.tr/irj/go/km/docs/.../SN_BAKAN_20101210_buyume.doc.

61. See, http://www.tuik.gov.tr/PreHaberBultenleri.do?id=6373&tb_id=5.

figures with regard to Turkey declared by international economic bodies, notably IMF and OECD, are close and even above the expected figures for the economic growth of 6,8% in the Medium Term Program of October.

The more the real sector, which needs external source for growth, imported raw material, especially oil, intermediate goods and capital goods, the more increase was witnessed in importation which turned into production and provided dynamism. On the other hand, the high amounts of imports carried out by exporters for production affected the growth in a negative way. As it is known the low rate increased the import of consumption goods thus the importation became cheaper while the exportation for the companies that manufacture consumption goods became much more expensive and accordingly the competitiveness decreased. However, the increasing domestic demand, high oil prices and acceleration of the growth resulted in the current accounts deficit.

According to TurkStat data, in 2010, exports increased by 11, 5 % in the same period while imports increased by 31, 6 %. Thus, according to the balance of payments, the trade deficit increased to USD 56, 4 billion by the end of 2010. The current account deficit that was USD 14 billion in 2009 in line with the increased foreign trade deficit reached USD 48, 6 billion in 2010.⁶² This expansion of the foreign trade indicates that growth will continue in the upcoming period, too.

4.3 MONETARY POLICY

The world economic crisis that started in the financial markets of developed economies deepened during the last months of 2008 and outspread to the whole financial system. The effects of the crisis were experienced throughout 2009 and 2010. Accordingly it significantly determined the monetary policies of Turkey for 2010. Because of the stagnation, the Central Bank as other central banks in the world set its policies in order to prevent and limit the effects of the crisis on growth, employment and financial system.

It is possible to state that the Central Bank of Turkey partially maintained the policies it initiated in November 2008. Accordingly it continued to fund markets and to cut interest rates in 2010. During this period, the main monetary policy instrument of the Central Bank was the short term interest rates implemented in Interbank Money Market and Repo-Reverse Repo Market of the Istanbul Stock Exchange. When necessary, required reserve ratios or other liquidity instruments were also used.

62. See, *Balance of Payments Report 2010-IV*, Central Bank of Turkey.

In 2010 the most crucial development with regard to monetary policies was the “Monetary Policy Exit Strategy” of Central Bank of Turkey announced on April 14, 2010. The significance of the exit strategy in the monetary policies today is noteworthy. It is possible to consider the period from 2008 to April 2010 and the period from April 2010 and on as the measures period applied by the Central Bank and the period of Exit Strategy policy relatively.

It is clear that in the last two years the world economy has suffered from the most serious crisis since 1929. However, the crisis became less severe thanks to the measures of the central banks. During the crisis, markets were provided with high amounts of liquidity and all of the monetary policy instruments were used. Moreover the budget deficits have increased as a result of the policies implemented during the crisis. However long lasting discreet monetary policies and expansionist financial policies resulted in new imbalances thus inflationary risks increased. Because of the special consumption tax and the rise of energy prices in the inflation side a volatile period was experienced. In 2010, market expectation for the inflation was 7% while according to Central Bank of Turkey survey of December 2010 it was expected to be 7, 23% and in the Medium Term Program the inflation expectation ratio was 7, 5%. However, the consumer price index was realized 6, 40% in December 2010. It must be noted that the practices of Central Bank of Turkey is coherent to the normalization process of the world economy. In this period “Exit Strategy from the Crisis” became the fundamental policy document.

Besides, total amount of daily currency trade capacity was increased on August 2, 2010. In parallel to the increase in credits, required reserve ratio of Turkish Lira reached up to 5,5 % with an increase of 0,5% according to exit strategy on September 2010. The practice of interest payment to required reserve ratios of Turkish Lira was abolished in order to increase the efficiency of required reserve ratio as a mitigating instrument that decreases the macro-economic and financial risks. In October 2010, it was decided to amend currency bid systems, and the amendment was put into practice on October 4, 2010. Accordingly, the Central Bank of Turkey will be able to increase the amount of purchase in foreign exchange tenders if the liquidity conditions ameliorate and the foreign capital flow is guaranteed.

In conclusion, there are two key concepts for 2010. First of all, the above-mentioned interest rate was pegged. Second of all the required reserve ratio of Turkish currency was increased. Accordingly the medium-term program became a crucial factor to control and lead the economic developments. The Central Bank became one of the key institutions determining the dynamics of the Turkish economy. Turkey will sustain its stable economic growth by maintaining fundamental economic principles in all fields.

5. EDUCATION

5.1 NATIONAL EDUCATION

Turkey's national education system has been undergoing major transformations in the recent years. These transformations have not been without problems. Indeed, it has met a number of challenges during the years of 2010, among the most prominent were: difficulties experienced in the appointment of new teachers, rearrangement of the transition to secondary education, reorganization of secondary education, rearrangement in weekly schedules of primary and secondary education, the 18th Meeting of the National Education Commission, and the results of Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) 2009.

5.1.1 Teacher Appointments

The appointment of new teachers has long been one of the most controversial issues in Turkish national education. Due to budgetary limitations, the Ministry of National Education (MONE) has always appointed fewer teachers than needed. Therefore, the increasing number of prospective teachers waiting for appointments have put a great deal of pressure on The Ministry.⁶³ In 2010, the Ministry experienced more pressure in this sense than ever before. In the previous years, the Ministry used to make new appointments two times in a year; usually in the months of February and August. However, at the beginning of 2010, the MONE announced that new appointments would be done just once in a year in August and that no appointments would be made in February 2010.

63. For a study on the problems of the teacher assignment system in Turkey, see: Murat Özoğlu, *Türkiye'de Öğretmen Yetiştirme Sisteminin Sorunları* [Issues of Teacher Training System in Turkey], SETA Analysis, February 2010.

This decision has caused intense reactions from hundreds of thousands of prospective teachers waiting for appointments. Despite such reaction, the Ministry did not change its decision. Therefore, the prospective teachers' hopes for appointments were delayed to August 2010. However, due to the cheating scandal at the "KPSS Educational Sciences Test" held in July 2010, the Ministry postponed the August 2010 teacher appointments to a later date. This situation created several problems. Despite the existing teacher need in many schools; teacher appointments could not be made. Both the teacher candidates waiting for appointments and the students in the schools in need of teachers have been left swinging in the wind. Moreover, tens of thousands of prospective teachers had to retake the KPSS test and wait until the end of November 2010 to be appointed.

Before the KPSS Educational Sciences Test's cheating scandal, Nimet Çubukçu, the Minister of National Education, had emphasized in a TV program that the KPSS Educational Sciences Test did not measure specific field knowledge of the high school teacher candidates. On the same TV program, Nimet Çubukçu had expressed clues of a new exam that would be held by the MONE in order to measure high school teacher candidate's knowledge on their fields. Yet, the MONE officials stated that this would be possible only in 2011 and only with the support of the cabinet and the Council of Higher education (YÖK).

Chronology

NATIONAL EDUCATION

1. Teacher Assignment

- **January 26, 2010:** The teacher appointments expected to be made in February 2010 were cancelled. The MONE announced that from then on new appointments would only be made in the month of August.
- **August 30, 2010:** Because of the cheating scandal in the "KPSS Educational Sciences Test" in July 2010, the MONE announced that teacher appointments planned to be made between the dates of August 18 and the 27, 2010 were postponed to a later date.
- **December 6, 2010:** Teacher appointments postponed in August 2010 were made. Twenty nine thousands and three hundred and forty seven new teachers were appointed.

2. Re-arrangement of the transition to secondary education

- **June 28, 2010:** Nimet Çubukçu, The Minister of National Education, announced in a press conference that the three-stage high school entrance exam (SBS) applied to sixth, seventh, and eighth graders was replaced with a single-stage test that would be applied at the end of the eighth grade only.

3. Reorganization of secondary education

- **May 6, 2010:** Through the Circular No. 2010/30, the MONE informed governors of all the cities that within the next four years all of their public high schools would be transformed into Anatolian high schools or vocational high schools.
- **June 28, 2010:** Nimet Çubukçu officially announced in a press conference that all public high schools could be transformed into the Anatolian High Schools or Vocational High Schools within the next four years.

Chronology

NATIONAL EDUCATION

4. Rearrangement of Weekly Schedules of Primary and Secondary Education

• **July 21, 2010:** The MONE announced that the “Weekly Schedules” of primary and secondary education were re-arranged. According to the new schedules, the education hours in primary education were reduced and free-time activity hours were added to promote students’ self-interests. Moreover, in secondary education; fields of studies (such as science, social studies, and foreign languages) with fixed course schedules were abandoned and more flexibility will be given to core and elective courses.

5. 18th National Education Council

• **November 1–5, 2010:** 18th National Education Council met under the name of “Vision 2023 in Education.”

6. PISA Results

• **December 7, 2010:** The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) announced the PISA 2009 results in Germany. Turkey ranked 31st out of 33 OECD Countries in all three fields of study.

7. Application of Different Coefficient

- **February 8, 2010:** The State Council stopped the execution of the new “coefficient” regulation introduced by the Council of Higher Education (YÖK).
- **February 15, 2010:** The YÖK appealed the decision to the State Council.
- **February 18, 2010:** The State Council rejected the appeal of the YÖK.
- **March 17, 2010:** The YÖK rearranged the GPA coefficient applied to graduation of in- and out-of-field applicants at the university entrance exam . New coefficients were determined to be 0,15 and 0,12 for in and out-of-field applicants respectively.
- **April 21, 2010:** The Council of State rejected the application of two parents to cancel the YÖK’s new decision dated March 17, 2010.

8. The Headscarf Issue

- **October 5, 2010:** Upon the application of a female student who had been taken out of the class for wearing a headscarf in the class at a public university, YÖK sent a letter to the university and warned that “students that do not comply with the disciplinary regulations cannot be taken out of the class, but the record of the incidences can be kept.” With this letter, the ban on headscarf at universities has been practically resolved at most universities. Meaning that, students are free to wear headscarves in classes at most campuses in Turkey.
- **October 20, 2010:** Prof. Yusuf Ziya Özcan, the president of the Council of Higher Education, announced that the ban on wearing headscarf in the centralized exams of the Student Selection and Placement Center (ÖSYM) was removed.

9. Student Selection and Placement Center (ÖSYM)

- **August 17, 2010:** An alleged cheating scandal broke out after hundreds of candidates answered all 120 questions correctly in the KPSS Educational Sciences Test held on July 10-11, 2010.
- **August 23, 2010:** Chief Public Prosecutor of Ankara launched an investigation over the allegations about the cheating scandal in KPSS.
- **September 2, 2010:** Teacher candidate Baki S., who was involved in the cheating scandal, was brought to Ankara from Isparta for investigation.
- **September 17, 2010:** The KPSS Educational Sciences Test was canceled.
- **September 21, 2010:** Prof. Ünal Yarımağan, the President of ÖSYM, resigned.
- **September 22, 2010:** Prof. Ali Demir from Istanbul Technical University was temporarily appointed as the president of ÖSYM.
- **October 31, 2010:** Teacher candidates retook the KPSS Educational Sciences Test

5.1.2 Re-arrangement of the Transition to Secondary Education

The re-arrangement of the transition to secondary education was another important issue for national education in 2010. Retrospectively, in 2008 the Student Selection and Placement Examination for Secondary Education (known as OKS) was used for the transition to secondary education and it was administered at the end of the eighth grade had been replaced with the Placement Tests (known as SBS) to be administered at the end of the 6th, 7,th and 8th grades. The MONE officials had provided several reasons to justify their decision. For instance, it was indicated that the revised curriculum required different approaches to measurement and evaluation. Moreover, it was also indicated that using only one test for transition put too much pressure on the students and their families.

In July 2010, just after the Placement Test (SBS) completed its first cycle in 6th, 7,th and 8th grade classes, the MONE decided to abandon the Placement Test gradually for 6th and 7th grades and to apply it just at the 8th grade level. Ironically, the MONE justified its decision using similar arguments, i.e, to eliminate the anxiety and stress on students and families.⁶⁴ According to the new system that will be implemented in 2011, the Placement Test (SBS) will be administered just one time -at the end of the 8th grade- and will cover the 8th grade curriculum only. Moreover, in calculating the placement score, 70% of SBS and 30% of the average of 6,th 7,th and 8th grades will be used.

It is clear that the multistage Placement Test (SBS) initially implemented in 2008, had caused anxiety and stress among students at earlier ages and also had given rise to a trend among students where they would participate to out of school educational institutions at earlier on. Moreover, given that the families with greater economic and cultural advantages could spend more time and more money on their children's education, the multistage SBS had also increased the opportunities for the children of these families to perform better and be more successful on these tests. In this regard, both students and parents welcomed the new test system.

5.1.3 Reorganization of Secondary Education

On May 6, 2010, the MONE informed governors of all the cities that within the next four years all of their public high schools would be transformed into Anatolian high schools or vocational high schools, and requested information about

64. For a study on the removal of the Placement Test and Re-arrangement of the transition to secondary education, see: Bekir Gür&Zafer Çelik, *Ortaöğretime Geçişin Yeniden Düzenlenmesi* [Rearrangement of Transition to Secondary Education], SETA Comment, June 2010.

how this transformation would take place. The MONE indicated that the reason behind this transformation is to minimize the difference in standards among schools and to eliminate differences between schools in terms of quality. However, this arrangement has brought confusion. Given that public high schools provide academic education, after transforming some of the public high schools into Anatolian high schools and others into vocational high schools, it is possible that the number of academic institutions at the high school level will diminish..

If there was to be an imbalance between the number of secondary academic institutions available compared to the need and number of high school students, it is unknown which criteria will be used to select students to the Anatolian high schools. Moreover, it is not clear what will happen to those students who do not meet the decided criteria but also what would be the options for those who do not want to enroll into vocational high schools. It was implied in the circular sent to the governors that those students, who do not meet the academic criteria, should be “encouraged” to attend Vocational High Schools even if they are reluctant. Given that the graduates of vocational high schools are still disadvantaged in transition to higher education, encouraging students to attend vocational high schools is in fact a “mandatory orientation.” Therefore, the MONE must proceed cautiously because there may be a negative response or even a backlash.

5.1.4 Rearrangement in Weekly Schedules of Primary and Secondary Education

The MONE announced in July 2010 that the “Weekly Schedules” of primary and secondary education were re-arranged. According to the new schedule, the education hours in primary education were reduced and free-time activity hours were added to promote students’ self-interests. It was indicated that this change was made in order to give students some respite from compulsory course loads, to increase their “love” of the school environment, to provide them opportunities to select from elective courses, and participate in the activities of their own interest. Moreover, in secondary education; fields of studies (such as science, social studies, and foreign languages) with fixed course schedules were replaced with a system where more flexibility is given to students to move between these fields of studies through the elective courses. Furthermore, the education hours in the Anatolian High Schools were reduced.

In general, this arrangement was made in order to “relieve the course loads of students”.

However, it is ironic that just a year ago in September 2009 the Board of Education and Training (TTKB) increased the education hours in certain secondary

schools.. Given that the slightest change in the weekly schedules affects the distribution of teachers and classes, these changes in the weekly schedules, which were usually made soon before the schools started, caused instability particularly in determining and reducing the need for teachers. In this respect, before any changes are to be made in the schedules, such arrangements should be carefully planned out and thought through.

5.1.5 The 18th National Education Council

On November 1-5, 2010, the National Education Council was meeting for the 18th times. The following issues were handled during the meeting: training, employment and professional development of teachers; educational resources and environments, corporate culture and school leadership; strengthening the primary and secondary education and increasing access to secondary education; sports, art, and character education; psychological counseling and guidance.

The most prominent decisions of the Council are as follows: increasing compulsory education to 13 school years; reducing the duration of secondary education teacher training programs from five years to four years; abandoning teacher training via distance education, rewarding teachers and school administrators every November with bonus pay that is equal to their monthly salary; providing financial support to the families sending children to private schools at an amount equal to the cost of students in public schools; replacing the traditional desk order with a flexible or modular desk order in the classrooms; reducing the course load in the general secondary schools and vocational and technical high schools; increasing the duration of the “psychological counseling and guidance” teacher training programs to five years.

While the decisions taken in these meetings are just advisory and the Council does not have legislative power, it is often mentioned that the decisions of the National Education Council would be taken into account in determining national educational policies. However, it is hard to say that the decisions taken in the previous meetings have really been considered in the educational policy making process. Since the council handles important issues and develops related resolutions, more attention should be paid to the decisions of the Council when developing educational policies.

5.1.6 PISA Results

The PISA (Program for International Student Assessment) survey held every three years since 1997 by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Devel-

opment (OECD) is known as the largest international educational research that evaluates the basic knowledge and skills of 15-year-old students in mathematics, science, and reading at the end of compulsory education. The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) announced the PISA 2009 results in Germany at the beginning of December 2010. Turkey ranked 31st out of 33 OECD Countries in all fields. This result is no doubt sad and the public evaluation has been on the negative side.

A total of 65 Countries (33 of them were OECD members) have participated in the PISA 2009 Survey. Turkey has participated in this survey for the third time since 2003. Similar to the previous years' results, the results of PISA 2009 survey for Turkey were very poor compared to the OECD average.⁶⁵ This last survey focused on reading skills; the OECD average in reading skills, science literacy, and math were respectively 464, 496, and 501. Turkey's average scores were 464, 454, and 445 respectively. These scores show that Turkey lags behind the OECD average in all three fields. Out of 33 OECD countries, Turkey ranked 31st in all three fields.

5.2 THE HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM

In recent years, the Turkish higher education system has expanded at an unprecedented rate. In addition to this expansion, it enjoyed a process of normalization and democratization by eliminating some restrictions and bans on freedom of education. This normalization process triggered and renewed the demands of reform in higher education. The latest developments in Turkish higher education are summarized below:

5.2.1 Expansion in Higher Education

The number of institutions of higher education has been steadily and dramatically increased in the last several years. This expansion was ongoing in 2010 as well. In the academic year 2010-2011, formal higher education quotas for new students increased by approximately 7.5% compared with the 2009-2010 academic year. This increase was due to the new spaces in the existing universities and newly established universities. In addition, eight state universities and nine university foundations (private non-profit universities) were established, many of them in the largest cities in Turkey. They are expected to open in the coming years. With

65. For an evaluation of the PISA 2009 results for Turkey: Murat Özoğlu, *PISA'yı Doğru Okumak*, Sabah , December 18, 2010

these newly established universities in 2010, the total number of universities in Turkey increased to 156 (102 state universities and 54 university foundations).

With these universities opening their doors in the coming years, it is expected that there will be greater opportunities for higher education and it will increasingly expand.⁶⁶ The opening of new university foundations will also contribute to increasing the number and options for university placement. In addition, eight of 18 university foundations established in 2009 and 2010 are in provinces other than Istanbul, Ankara, and Izmir. The establishment of university foundations in provinces other than those three major cities is an extremely important development because these new universities bring competition and diversification to the higher education sector.

This increase in the number of institutions and supply of higher education options in recent years has increased the need for qualified teaching staff. With so many newly established universities in the last several years, Turkish higher education sector will be faced with a severe shortage of professors. Similarly, the number of students per professor is very high. The government and the Council of Higher Education (YÖK), a fully autonomous national board of governors that oversees all higher education institutions in Turkey, have started implementing several projects in order to meet the growing need for teaching staff. For instance, with the instructor training program (ÖYP), the newly established 41 universities were given budget to hire 2000 new research assistants. Moreover, the government gives scholarships for graduate studies and sent more than two thousands graduate students abroad in the last several years.

5.2.2 Normalization in Higher Education

The recent normalization and democratization process in Turkey has found its counterpart in higher education. While broad normalization and democratization steps aim to reach social consensus and to broaden freedoms, two important initiatives in this regard came from the Council of Higher Education: first, the lifting the ban on headscarf at universities and second, decreasing the difference between the coefficient weights for in field and out of field applicants for the university entrance exam.

The Headscarf Ban: Headscarves had been banned in Turkish public universities for over a decade, and especially enforced after the February 28, 1998, so called

66. For a study on the strategic relationships between the supply and demand of higher education and the quality of higher education in Turkey, see Mahmut Özer, Bekir S. Gür, and Talip Küçükcan, *Yükseköğretimde Kalite Güvencesi* [Quality Assurance in Higher Education], SETA Publications, 2010.

postmodern coup. The JDP's legal attempt to solve the headscarf issue was countered by the controversial decision of the Constitutional Court in 2008.⁶⁷ Following the Court's decision, the issue had not been on the political agenda for a quite some time. It was, Kemal Kılıçdaroglu, the leader of Republican People's Party (CHP), who brought the issue forward during the referendum of September 12, 2010. As the politicians were debating the solution to the headscarf issue, YÖK took an important step in the normalization process of higher education system by putting in place a practical solution. Upon the request of a female student, who had been taken out of the class for wearing "head coverage" in the class at a public university, YÖK sent a letter to the university and warned that "students that do not comply with the disciplinary regulations can not be taken out of the class, but the record of the incidences can be kept." With this instruction, the ban on the headscarf in universities, widely considered as a violation of human rights and an embarrassment for Turkish universities, has been practically resolved. In addition, Yusuf Ziya Özcan, the head of YÖK, firmly advocated the freedom of students to wear a headscarf and later removed the ban on wearing a headscarf during the centralized exams of the Student Selection and Placement Center (ÖSYM).

Differences among Coefficient Weights: Since 1999, graduates of high schools had points deducted from their admission scores when they applied to university departments unrelated to their high school specialization. This so-called coefficient system limited the freedom of students who wanted to study in a department unrelated to their specializations at high schools. It had particularly adverse effects on vocational school graduates.⁶⁸ In 2009, by decreasing the difference between coefficients and thus decreasing the points deducted from students admission scores when they applied to departments unrelated to their specializations, YÖK rearranged the university entrance exam and decided new coefficients (if a student applies to a department related to his/her high school specialization, the coefficient of his/her Weighted Secondary Achievement Scores would be 0.15; otherwise, it would be 0.13). The YÖK's rearrangement was later cancelled by the Council of State, after the request of the Istanbul Bar Association. The Council of State stopped the execution of new coefficients on November 25, 2009. Instead, YÖK decided new coefficients (0.15 and 0.12 respectively) on March 17, 2010. Thus, the adverse effects the coefficient differential system introduced in 1999 were eased starting from 2010.

67. For a detailed study on the controversial role of the Constitutional Court on the headscarf ban in universities, see Zühtü Arslan, *Başörtüsü, AK Parti ve Laiklik: Anayasa Mahkemesinden İki Karar Bir Gereğe* [Headscarf, JDP and Laicism: Two Decisions and One Justification from the Constitutional Court], SETA Analysis, January 2009

68. For a critical study on the coefficient system and its adverse effects on vocational high schools, see Bekir S. Gür, *Öğrenci Seçme ve Dışlama Sistemi* [Students Selection and Exclusion System], Anlayış, May, 2010.

5.2.3 Change in Higher Education

In recent years, there has been a broad consensus on the need for structural reform of Turkey's higher education system.⁶⁹ Similarly, there is a consensus that YÖK's regulations render Turkey's higher education system too centralized. Both the Government and YÖK agree with this consensus. Yusuf Ziya Özcan, the head of YÖK, declared in November 2010 that he launched a study on restructuring higher education and drafting new legal frameworks. In November 2010, at a meeting with the rectors of universities, PM Erdogan stated that "YÖK would be transformed from a governing board into a coordinating agency." He also declared that "a comprehensive reform will begin in higher education, after the general elections to be held in 2011."

5.3 THE STUDENT SELECTION AND PLACEMENT CENTER (ÖSYM)

The year 2010 has become a controversial and difficult period for the Student Selection and Placement Center (ÖSYM). ÖSYM has long been perceived as one of the most trusted institutions in Turkey. It has administered the centralized university entrance exam for more than three decades. Its objectivity has never been widely questioned until 2010. The new university entrance examination system, restructured in 2009, was administered for the first time in 2010. The new system includes two-staged multi-sessions and introduced significant changes in the types of scores, score calculations, and coefficients. When ÖSYM made a few technical mistakes in projecting the base scores of some 50 departments in the 2010 Guide to Higher Education Programs and Quotas based on a simulation, ÖSYM's technical integrity was questioned just after the university entrance exam, in July 2010.

Soon after July 2010, the results of the KPSS Educational Sciences, a proficiency exam for civil service for teacher candidates, administered by ÖSYM, were announced on August 17, 2010. As soon as the results were announced, some allegations were leveled against hundreds of candidates who correctly answered all 120 questions. Allegedly the questions were leaked to some candidates before the exam. An investigation was launched on the matter and later the Ministry of National Education decided to postpone the appointment of teacher candidates based on that particular KPSS Educational Sciences result. Ankara's Chief Public

69. For a study on recent developments of the Turkish higher education system and the perceived need for reform, see Talip Küçükcan and Bekir S. Gür, *Türkiye'de yükseköğretim: Karşılaştırmalı bir analiz* [Higher education in Turkey: A comparative analysis], SETA Publications, 2009

Prosecution Office ordered the police to search ÖSYM and confiscated the computers for investigations.

While the investigation on ÖSYM was still underway, YÖK postponed all the exams administered by ÖSYM, including the Medical Specialty Exam, the Language Proficiency Exam for the Civil Service, and the Graduate Admission Test. YÖK cancelled the KPSS Educational Sciences of September 17, 2010 after determining that questions were indeed leaked before the exam. Ünal Yarımağan, the-then-head of ÖSYM, rejected the allegations at first and later resigned from ÖSYM.

With the scandal triggered by the leak of exam questions and the mistakes in projecting the base scores of departments, the reliability and technical expertise of ÖSYM were harshly criticized.⁷⁰ In order to re-establish the credibility and legitimacy of ÖSYM, some changes were made in the senior management positions and in exam procedures. Finally, the Ministerial Committee has stated that the name of the Student Selection and Placement Center (ÖSYM) would be replaced by the Assessment, Selection and Placement Center.

70. For a study on the KPSS leak scandal, see Zafer Çelik, *Meşruiyet Krizindeki ÖSYM* [ÖSYM in Legitimation Crisis], SETA Comment, September 2010.

CONCLUSION

TURKEY AFTER 2010

How will the establishment process of the New Turkey announced by the 12 September referendum be managed? This will be the fundamental top agenda of 2011. This question will determine the agenda of the political center and other actors and the political situation will be reshaped according to the answers given to this question. A simple reason lies behind the vital importance of the post-referendum period. It was recognized that the old order is useless and accordingly the establishment process of the new order began. A new mindset that will establish the new order replaced the one that paved the way for the old order. Now there is a quest for a new order. The current situation symbolizes a political transformation. Within this transformation power balances and the people representing the power changed. But more importantly this transformation resulted in a Turkey where the rules of the game in domestic and foreign policy changed. Accordingly, social and political agreement was reached against the tutelage over the civilian politics; a new step was taken towards the resolution of one of the structural problems, the Kurdish issue; the status quoist actors tried to keep up with the new period and the social and political self-confidence increased. It is possible to see the traces of the New Turkey in the above-mentioned issues. In the New Turkey the crisis management and seeking solutions for the crisis are of great importance. Therefore we will witness great political fights and change of positions in the period between September 12, 2010 and June 12, 2011. AK Party systematically paved the way for the establishment of the New Turkey and adopted a vision and carried

out activities accordingly since 2002. Thus how the AK Party deepens the political transformation will determine the situation. The more it deepens the transformation, the faster the consolidation of the New Turkey will be. As a result AK Party will continue to be the leading actor.

On the other hand, the CHP is in a struggle for keeping up with the new period and political context together with Kılıcdaroglu and in the new period it will question to what extent its struggle for limiting this change will be possible. When it comes to the MHP, its struggle for resolving the crisis it faced following the referendum will determine its agenda. Accordingly, it will try to benefit from each and every issue in order to overcome the crisis. The representative of the Kurdish Issue, the BDP will be torn between being “a party and an organization.” It is highly possible that it will continue its ambiguous political attitude because of both practical reasons (electoral support) and political problems (the need for alienating from AK Party). In brief all of the political parties will take positions according to AK Party not because it is the party in power but because it undertakes the change. Moreover they will base their policies on the “deficiencies and mistakes” of the AK Party rather than making contributions. However the political sphere will be expanded and the establishment process of the New Turkey will gain acceleration as long as the agenda is set by translating the change and transformation into the political language

OLD ISSUES, NEW BORDERS

Issues that are also parts of the old Turkey will determine the consolidation of the New Turkey. Debates on the new constitution, the tutelage over politics, identity issues notably Kurdish Issue will occupy the agenda of domestic politics while the agenda of foreign policy will include the shift of axis and the debates on being a wise and an order-maker country. In addition to routine problems, the struggle for putting an end to all kinds of tutelage over politics through constitutional means will determine the spirit of the New Turkey. Without doubt it is clear that is impossible to resolve political problems only through legal regulations. However, these regulations prove to be effective in that they will set a framework for policy making. Moreover, election results will determine the fate of the period between September 12 and June 12.

The Kurdish Issue is still one of the crucial issues. Accordingly, the cease-fire decision, the trust that the actors have in civil society in terms of resolution will influ-

ence the Issue. However, the management and the fate of the process depend on how successful the AK Party will be in maintaining the political initiative it took. When international aspects and other aspects with regard to political-legal order of the issue are taken into consideration; it is obvious that the Kurdish Issue is the greatest test for the New Turkey. 2011 is a hopeful period because the issue started to be discussed thoroughly especially after 2009 and actors made discussions by making offers for resolution.

On the other hand other initiatives which are against the change will paradoxically take positions towards the New Turkey. In the establishment process of the New Turkey even the ones who resist the change will use arguments such as we mustn't resort to violence as a solution of problems; the dialogue must be established etc.

Even the above-mentioned fact indicates that there is a deep enthusiasm for the New Turkey. Thus a reasonable and prudent management is a must for the process. When individual events which don't have any structural influence on the political transformation come together, they may limit the transformation. The greatest test for the ones who lead the change is to manage these individual events and to balance the social security and the change process.

THE NEW TURKEY IN FOREIGN POLICY

Whether or not the New Turkey will be established was especially a particular concern to the Turkish foreign policy after 2005. In fact the transformation that Turkey underwent was not only a creative but also an expected transformation. Moreover, political-structural transformation in the domestic politics affected the foreign policy.

In terms of the consolidation of the New Turkey, the foreign policy in 2011 will undergo a similar process as in domestic policy. We can face various initiatives taken in order to create an atmosphere of panic. However, as the fruits of the political investments are received as it was the case in Syria, the consolidation of the New Turkey will gain acceleration in foreign policy as in domestic policy. What matters is not whether or not an active and effective foreign policy is needed but how this need will influence the foreign policy. The axis shift debate will be carried out by the actors who are against an active and effective Turkey; however, its sphere of influence will gradually be reduced.

Because the EU has doubts about its own future and because the USA faces political and economic problems and wants to take positions in the Middle East,

Caucasus and Europe; their perception of Turkish foreign policy will not be such narrow-scoped. When it comes to Turkey, it will deepen its new political vision with regard to its relations with the Middle Eastern countries, it will confront European countries with their domestic problems and it will try to establish mutual understanding with regard to the relations with USA. In brief, in 2011 the vision Turkey adopts in foreign policy will be reciprocated and become more established accordingly.

Contrary to the critical approaches, new conceptualizations in the foreign policy vision will come to the agenda. In this sense, the concept of wise country will be one of the top agenda items in 2011. This concept envisages that Turkey will maintain its attitude against each and every policy that hinders regional and global stability and gives harm to diplomacy. This vision will pave the way for the conceptualization of the relations with the Middle East notably Arab countries and relations with European countries will be improved.

Accordingly, Israel will be considered within this framework and its policies that hinder regional stability and even the global stability will be criticized. When it comes to specific issues such as the attack of Israel on Mavi Marmara; Turkey will maintain its position it took since May 31, 2010 as required by the attitude it must adopt as a wise country. In this framework, initiatives will be taken so that the New Turkey vision becomes established during the 2011 foreign policy process.

In conclusion, in 2011 the fundamental parameters of the New Turkey will be determined both in domestic and foreign policy.

SETA | Foundation for Political, Economic and Social Research

Nenehatun Caddesi No: 6
GOP Çankaya 06700 Ankara TÜRKİYE
Tel: +90 312.551 21 00 | Fax: +90 312.551 21 90
www.setav.org | info@setav.org

SETA | Washington D.C. Office

1025 Connecticut Avenue, N.W., Suite 1106
Washington, D.C., 20036
Tel: 202-223-9885 | Fax: 202-223-6099
www.setadc.org | info@setadc.org