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THE ROLE OF TURKEY IN EURO-MEDITERRANEAN SECURITY



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February 2003

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This brief was produced with the financial assistance of the Commission of the European Communities, under contract n° ME8/B7-4100/1B/98/0160-1, within the framework of the EuroMeSCo Working Group 3 activities. The text is the sole responsibility of the author and in no way reflects the official opinion of the Commission.

The drastic changes that marked the end of the Cold War with the collapse of the Soviet Union dramatically altered the strategic calculus of the Western security system. The radical change in the source and nature of threats confronting the transatlantic alliance gave way to NATO's search for a new role, strategy, and organisation compatible with the realities of the post-Cold War era and the emergence of a new European security architecture. Within this context, this paper aims to focus on the role of Turkey in Euro-Mediterranean security.

1. Turkey and the Mediterranean Region

Until recently, Turkish policy makers failed to conceptualise the Mediterranean region as a totality, for Turkey's perceptions of the Mediterranean have long been dominated by a Cold War mentality. Consequently, in parallel with American strategic thinking, the Mediterranean was approached in the context of the East-West confrontation and the Middle East conflict. With the emerging gap between the American and European perceptions of the Mediterranean in the post-Cold war era, Turkish concerns, shaped by the "hard-security" issues viewing the Mediterranean on a east-west axis rather than a north-south one, have been much closer to the American vision.

As a result, the Mediterranean is of interest to different regional departments in the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Separate divisions focusing on Europe, the Middle East and the Balkans deal with various issues related to the region. Unlike Euro-Mediterranean co-operation, which mainly focuses on North-South interaction in the Mediterranean, Turkey's strategic thinking is dominated by developments in the Eastern Mediterranean. The Cyprus issue, Aegean problems, the Arab-Israeli conflict and, most recently, the future of Iraq affect Turkey's vital national interests. The relatively stable and distant Western Mediterranean has not received much attention from Turkish policy makers.

From the very beginning, although Turkey was an affiliate of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (EMP), it was a rather reluctant partner. The Turkish stance has been primarily due to its anxiety over the fact that Turkey would be confined to the position of being a peripheral southern country inside the EMP.¹ Turkish leaders emphasized that the EMP could not be an alternative to Turkey's ultimate aim of full membership in the Union. In the economic sphere, Turkey was supportive of the Union's goal of establishing a Mediterranean Free Trade Area. As for soft security issues, it was particularly keen on international co-operation against terrorism and illegal drug trafficking.

In general, Turkey favours a multilateral approach in addressing regional problems. Currently, the most pressing issue on Turkey's agenda is its relationship with Iraq. Turkey strongly supports clearing the region of weapons of mass destruction and the fight with terrorism. However, it is also very concerned about the repercussions of a military operation in Iraq. Turkey suffered considerable economic losses in the aftermath of the Second Gulf War in 1991. Moreover, it had to deal with a very serious refugee crisis, when Saddam attacked his own people in Kurdistan after the war. In addition to these direct consequences, the political vacuum that emerged in Northern Iraq in the aftermath of the war served as a fertile ground for cross – border operations by Kurdish terrorist groups.

In the wake of the military operations in Iraq, Turkish leaders are particularly concerned that a long-lasting transition period and chaos in the aftermath of the war, might cause broader regional instability and an increased wave of terror. They are also concerned about negative economic impact and the possibility of another major refugee crisis. Moreover, Turkey is very keen on protecting the territorial integrity of Iraq because of its concerns regarding the possibility of an independent or a federated Kurdish state in Northern Iraq.

2. EU Enlargement and Turkey

Turkey's role within the Euro-Mediterranean framework will also be defined by the broader context of its long-standing relations with the Union and its goal of EU membership.

In the last months of 2002, two issues with serious implications for the European Union dominated the political agenda in Turkey. First came the crushing election victory of moderate Islamic politicians who present themselves as 'Muslim Democrats'. Then, the countdown towards the Copenhagen Summit started, where a firm date for Turkish accession negotiations was to be determined. Yet another rebuff at the gates of Europe in the wake of the summit tinged electoral elation with disappointment and caused mixed feelings in Turkey. Now the question is what course will Turkey take in the aftermath of the Copenhagen Summit and where will this European odyssey take it and the European continent?

On the eve of the Copenhagen Summit, the Turks made a determined effort to set a firm date to start accession negotiations before the completion of the next wave of Enlargement. Both government and opposition, as well as business circles and civil society, have been united towards this goal and there is also strong public support. Erdogan, the party leader, toured the European capitals to promote the Turkish case. Despite reluctance in the Franco-German camp, his contacts in Britain, Italy, Spain, Greece, and Belgium were quite encouraging. The United States also firmly backed Turkish membership. Given the strategic importance of Turkey as a much-needed ally in a possible military campaign against Iraq and a good model for the Muslim world, the American president and his senior officials lobbied intensively for Turkey in European capitals. Sometimes they did so, even at the cost of vexing some reluctant Europeans.

At the Copenhagen Summit of 12-13 December 2002, European leaders initiated the Union's biggest Enlargement to date, taking in ten more countries by May 1, 2004. As for Turkey, the Union decided that a review would be undertaken in December 2004 to assess its progress in fulfilling the Copenhagen criteria. Theoretically, if Turkey is successful, negotiations could start 'without further delay' – not before 2005. Thus, while the Turkish leaders managed to secure a firm 'rendez-vous date', the Copenhagen decision was not quite what they had hoped for and, in the wake of the summit, there was a bitter aftertaste.

Despite the disillusionment, however, there is also relief for Turkish-EU relations have been finally put on an 'irrevocable path.' In a bid to alleviate Turkish fears that the newcomers, particularly Cyprus, might block its way, the 25 countries of the enlarged Union issued a joint statement endorsing Turkey's accession process. Nevertheless, on the European side, while the

Copenhagen criteria are in the limelight, there are additional concerns regarding Turkey's size, weak economy, troublesome neighbourhood and cultural differences. European leaders are also preoccupied with the problem absorbing the financial and bureaucratic burden of the current Enlargement process. Moreover, they need to deal with the intricate dynamics of domestic politics and competing interests among various European powers as far as Turkish accession is concerned.

Turkey is aware of the serious political and economic obstacles on its path towards EU membership. Their resolution is essential for its democratic consolidation and domestic economic recovery. The process of accession will be neither quick nor easy, however, and there are challenging tasks awaiting the Turkish leaders and their people in the coming years. Although they may have been somewhat disheartened by the Copenhagen decision, it is crucial that they maintain the momentum of the political and economic reform process and give an impetus to the implementation of the newly adopted laws adjusting Turkey to European norms. The outgoing government introduced thirty-four important constitutional changes on previously taboo issues such as granting educational and broadcasting rights to the Kurdish minority, and abolishing the death penalty at a very sensitive time – for the future of jailed Kurdish leader Abdullah Öcalan was still undecided. The new administration has unveiled a fresh reform package to enhance democracy and individual liberties. It has vowed to eliminate torture and formally lifted the fifteen-year state of emergency in the southeast. Emergency rule was imposed there in 1987 to curtail Kurdish separatist activities and it provided extraordinary powers for investigations and the detaining of suspects. People in the region welcomed the end of the emergency as a sign of a return to normalcy. More than a thousand gathered in Diyarbakir city centre, singing and dancing in celebration.

Improving human rights and democracy, and particularly implementing the decisions concerning the rights of the Kurdish minority will be a major test for the new government. Another sensitive issue it needs to tackle is reducing the military's role in politics. Given the Islamic roots of the party and the strong sentiment in Turkey in favour of the army as the guarantor of the secular state, it is also in the interest of the Justice and Development party to reduce the political influence of the army indirectly – via Brussels and its demand for political change! Moreover, addressing other sensitive issues, such as enhancing religious freedoms or tackling the highly controversial headscarf problem, will be much easier for the new government within a European framework.

In addition to addressing the political problems that are highlighted by the Copenhagen criteria, urgently focusing on strengthening the economy by giving impetus to economic reforms will be a priority. A major investment in the education of its young population will surely yield high returns for Turkey in the long run and will also significantly contribute to Turkish-EU relations. While many Europeans are currently apprehensive about the size of Turkey, a young, well-educated population could translate into an asset in a rapidly aging Europe.

In the field of foreign affairs, Turkey will be hard pressed up to December 2004. Two issues will have important repercussions for its relations with the European Union – Cyprus and the bilateral problems between Turkey and Greece concerning the Aegean.

Until recently, because of Cyprus and bilateral problems regarding the Aegean, Greece has been one of the major centres of opposition to Turkish membership of the Union. Mr. Erdogan has already proposed a more moderate approach towards the future of the divided island. Consequently, Greek Prime Minister Costas Simitis was the first foreign leader to congratulate him on his election victory, and Mr. Erdogan made Athens one of the first stops in his tour of European capitals.

Turkey has some major concerns, particularly regarding territorial issues in Cyprus, but the United Nations proposal for a settlement presents a window of opportunity that both sides should take seriously. The Copenhagen decisions, however, which include the admission of a divided Cyprus while the Turkish application is still undecided, will make a speedy resolution of the Cyprus dispute highly unlikely. In short, Turkey has a challenging period ahead of it, during which it needs to overcome numerous domestic and international obstacles on its path to Europe.

3. Turkish Approach to the ESDP

One important issue, which affects the future of the Euro-Mediterranean security, has been the Turkish approach to the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP). In the finalization process of the ESDP, Turkey has been very reluctant to give up the rights that it had acquired within the old Western European Union (WEU) framework, which was absorbed two years ago into the European Union. During the Cold War, Turkey served as a pivotal actor in NATO's Southeastern flank strategy. Turkey retains its strong interest in European Security arrangements and in ensuring itself a continuing and pre-eminent role in NATO as a Southern region country. Unlike the other EU member countries of the region – Spain, Portugal, Italy, and Greece – Turkey has a high stake in maintaining the institutional status quo, especially since the ESDP excludes Turkey from its decision-making mechanisms.

In strategic terms, the implication of ESDP is that the EU member countries of the Southern Region will look first to Brussels and try to link their positions with the European mainstream. They would be reluctant to take positions which would be at variance with other European countries, even if this might lead to further divergence on defence co-operation issues with the United States. On the other hand, because of its isolation regarding European security and defence issues, Turkey will seek closer co-operation with the United States and Israel.

As an associate member of the WEU, Turkey enjoyed participation in important WEU activities including participation in the bi-weekly meetings of the twenty-eight ambassadors, having five officers on duty in the defence planning cell, and the representation of the Turkish parliamentarians during the bi-annual meetings of the WEU Assembly. Although Turkey was excluded from decision-making in the WEU Council and from the collective defence clauses of the WEU treaty, a compromise was found for the activities of the Combined Joint Task Forces (CJTFs). When the utilization of NATO assets was required by the CJTFs, Turkey would have had the right to fully participate in the WEU decision-making process.² Moreover, the problem of the status of the WEU during a possible military conflict between Turkey and Greece was resolved by the decision

that the collective defence clause would not be applicable in conflicts between NATO members³

During the Washington NATO Summit in April 1999, the Strategic Concept, which defines NATO goals and strategies, was updated in order to “equip the alliance for the security challenges and opportunities of the 21st century and to guide its future political and military development.”⁴ Within this context, Turkey reiterated the necessity of its agreement to any decision of the NATO Council regarding the use of alliance assets for European purposes. Consequently, the Turks enforced a revision in the formulation of NATO's New Strategic Concept, in which this right is implicitly expressed by reference to a case-by-case basis for alliance decisions. Accordingly, “arrangements for the release, monitoring, and return or recall of NATO assets and capabilities” were to be “made available, on a case-by-case basis to support WEU-led operations.”⁵ Moreover, NATO-EU relations were to be structured around already-existing mechanisms between NATO and the WEU.

However, during the December 2000 Nice Summit of the EU, changes in EU decisions over the Washington Summit in 1999 caused a major disappointment in Ankara. Not only were there no references to shaping the new security and defence strategies according to the previous mechanisms of the WEU, but the non-EU members of NATO had also been totally excluded from the decision-making structures. In 1995, the WEU Council of Ministers had decided that, in case of a complete integration of the WEU into the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), “the participation of associate members in the further development of the ESDP would have to be maintained and even improved vis-à-vis their present status through appropriate arrangements to ensure their involvement and association with the CFSP.”⁶ However, due to the Union's categorical refusal to allow non-members to participate in its decision-making process, even on a partial basis, how such a goal could be achieved was unclear. Consequently, Ankara argued that non-EU members of NATO should not automatically be expected to comply with political decisions that had been taken without their participation.

Among the WEU associate-member countries, Turkey has been the country most adversely affected by this restructuring process, for it is located in a very volatile area. According to the reports of the French Defence Institute and the International Strategy Institute in Switzerland, Turkey is surrounded by thirteen of the sixteen “hot spots”, such as Kosovo, Syria, Cyprus or Chechnya), which are prone to conflicts that could affect European security.⁷ Being quite distant from the hot spots, Norway agreed just to participate in the decision-shaping mechanisms. Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic also went along with the EU decision in anticipation of their full-membership in the EU in the near future. The fact that these former Warsaw pact countries would be granted European Union membership before Turkey and would get more influence in European security affairs than a long-standing NATO ally, is also rather exasperating for the Turks. In the end, Ankara's adamant insistence “led to a collapse of the NATO consensus on command sharing and planning arrangements with the EU in December 2000.”⁸

Turkish concerns were expressed by Admiral Nahit Senogul as “(1) danger of the recent EU initiative to undermine the impact of NATO and the Transatlantic link and to erode NATO's deterrence power; and (2) the possibility of EU-initiated

operations and other activities to adversely affect Turkey's security."⁹ Within this framework, Turkey was particularly concerned over the possibility that if tensions in the Aegean or in Cyprus were to escalate, intense pressure from Greece might result in a confrontation between the European Rapid Reaction Force and Turkey. Consequently, to achieve a viable compromise, Turkey has to be assured that such a scenario would be avoided. Turks argue that as the EU defence policy takes its final shape, giving non-EU NATO countries "an opportunity to clarify and to decide on a case-by-case basis how they interpret the collective defence implications of the NATO treaty for EU-led security operations" has become essential.

The long-lasting deadlock between Turkey and Greece served as a stumbling block for the ESDP. This deadlock was finally resolved through a compromise during the Copenhagen Summit in December 2002. The Council decided that "the 'Berlin plus' agreements and the implementation thereof will apply only to those EU member states which are also either NATO members or parties to the 'Partnership for Peace,' and which have consequently concluded bilateral security arrangements with NATO."¹⁰ Thus, by excluding Cyprus and Malta from EU military operations conducted using NATO assets, a breakthrough was achieved in providing EU access to NATO capacities and assets. The Union will now be permitted to utilize NATO logistics and have access to the NATO planning base in SHAPE. NATO secretary General Lord Robertson underlined the importance of this breakthrough by stating, "This is a milestone in the history of relations between NATO and the EU."¹¹ This development serves as a critical turning point for the ESDP, which will enable the Union to have a stronger capacity for crisis management and will also contribute significantly to the enhancement of co-operation regarding Euro-Mediterranean security.

4. Turkish-Greek Relations and Cyprus

What are the repercussions of these recent developments concerning European security architecture for the Mediterranean region and more specifically for Turkish-Greek relations? In terms of its relations with Greece, Turkey has concerns over the shifting balances within NATO and the future of Mediterranean and Aegean security. Since Turkish and Greek entry into NATO, both countries enjoyed an equal status within the alliance, despite some problematic periods. Turkey has played a key role in achieving Western security as a staunch NATO ally. However, Greek inclusion in the ESDP as an EU member, while Turkey is being excluded, will adversely affect the balance between Turkey and Greece in NATO. Ankara is very concerned that, as an EU member, Greece might use its status and powers within ESDP to isolate Turkey from European defence and security. The tilt in this delicate balance, which the alliance had tried to guard so carefully even during the most problematic periods, would not only be detrimental for security co-operation in the Aegean and Mediterranean, but would also hinder the recent Turkish-Greek rapprochement.

Greeks and Turks try to maintain a fragile and often tense relationship against an extremely complicated Balkan backdrop interwoven with ethnic conflict and historical animosities. In the period immediately after the First World War, the far-sighted initiatives of Atatürk and Venizelos enabled Turks and the Greeks to establish peaceful relations in the aftermath of one of the bloodiest wars in history.

While bilateral relations significantly improved from the 1930s to 1950s, two major conflicts in the 1960s resulted in the deterioration of the relations: the Cyprus crises and competing claims in the Aegean. It is ironic that, after Turkey and Greece became NATO allies, instead of enhancing their relations within the NATO framework they were unable to maintain even the level of peace and co-operation that they had achieved during the 1930s.

Turkish-Greek conflict over Cyprus and Aegean issues made the "troubled alliance" between these two countries the Achilles' heel of NATO's south-eastern flank and NATO and the United States had to ensure the security of this critical region, while at the same time maintaining a delicate balance between two indispensable allies who were often at odds with each other. For instance, NATO's, and particularly the United States' role, as an "honest broker" enabled it to efficiently diffuse the Kardak-Imia crisis of 1996 and the S-300 missile crisis of 1998.¹² The changing dynamics of the post-Cold War era offer new opportunities for economic and political co-operation between Turkey and Greece. In this process, the United States, along with NATO and the European Union, are the key actors that can serve as potential catalysts for Greek-Turkish reconciliation.

One recurrent approach to Turkish-Greek problems was to attend to general hostilities that reach crisis proportions, and to give only secondary importance to resolving underlying differences. Moreover, in such instances, the parties often have to deal with very complicated issues in a highly charged environment. Thus, the margin for decision-making and instigating co-operation has been rather narrow. Moreover, the conflicting sides instead of directly dealing with each other, almost staged a show for third parties – the US, the EU and the UN – in order to obtain support for their uncompromising positions. One key factor in Greek-Turkish detente would be to break this habit of trying to conduct bilateral relations through third parties, particularly through Brussels. This by no means implies a diminishing significance for the US and the EU role in the enhancement of Turkish-Greek relations. What it really means is that the cumbersome "triangular relationship" needs to be replaced with genuine bilateral negotiations within a constructive political framework, supported by the United States and the EU, particularly through economic "carrots."

One of the major stumbling blocks to Turkish-Greek co-operation has been how disputes are used in both countries for domestic political gain by polarizing public opinion. A significant development occurred with the political initiatives of the Turkish and Greek foreign ministers (Mr. Cem and Mr. Papandreou), which gained further impetus with collaboration in the aftermath of the summer 1999 earthquakes. This was particularly significant since the citizens of both countries were long accustomed to hostile and confrontational rhetoric. It is quite ironic that these natural disasters, combined with a more constructive approach from both sides, led to increasing hopes for co-operation along the major political fault line of the Eastern Mediterranean.

It would be very unrealistic to expect that deep-rooted political problems, such as Cyprus, can be quickly resolved. However, by developing a network of relations through collaboration in areas like business, media, and tourism a more conducive environment for specific proposals for the Aegean and Cyprus would be provided. Thus, at one level the governments should commit to real change by

supporting private sector exchanges in the areas of commercial, environmental, and development co-operation. At another level, the parties must target a mutual understanding through compromises essential to accommodating each others' legitimate interests in dealing with their major problems. Only then can the United States and the European Union put their full weight into the balance to enhance co-operation.

In this process, both NATO and the European Union should try to maintain the delicate balance between Turkey and Greece and should also avoid marginalizing Turkey in the newly emerging security structures in Europe. Such a move would be detrimental for the future of the Turkish-Greek detente and Mediterranean security.

5. Turkish-Israeli Relations

When the end of the Cold War and the collapse of the Soviet Union radically changed the strategic dynamics in the Middle East, it also created a window of opportunity for improved relations and co-operation between two major actors in this region: Turkey and Israel. The initiation of the Middle East peace process and the signing of the Oslo Agreement in 1993 created a conducive environment for the enhancement of relations. In the meantime, as Tom Hundley from the Chicago Tribune points out, "the United States has been quietly encouraging the budding romance, seeing it as a natural alliance of the region's only democracies and as a valuable firewall for its policy of containing the most troublesome states in the region: Syria, Iraq, and Iran."¹³

Two months after the signing of the Oslo Agreement, the Turkish Foreign Minister visited Israel and Turkey and Israel quickly established full diplomatic relations. In 1996, the signing of the defence and co-operation agreement signalled the emergence of new strategic co-operation. While relations in military co-operation, trade, and tourism flourished, this new partnership proved to be mutually beneficial. For Israel, which tries to survive in an extremely hostile neighbourhood, to have a powerful Muslim country as its ally is very helpful in breaking through its isolation. Moreover, Israel gains a lucrative market for its weapons industry. The access to the large and rapidly expanding Turkish consumer market is also desirable for Israel. For instance, Turkish-Israeli trade which was almost non-existent in 1990, reached \$1.6 billion in 1997.¹⁴ Moreover, for an arid country like Israel, Turkey can serve as a major water supplier and the negotiations are already underway regarding this issue.

As for Turkey, first of all, Israel serves as a reliable source for advanced military technology which Europe and the us are often willing to provide, albeit with strings attached. Second, the strategic co-operation with Israel enables Turkey to exert more pressure on Syria, which proved very critical in ending Syrian support for Abdullah Ocalan, the leader of the PKK, Kurdish terrorist group, and leading to his subsequent capture. Finally, the improvement of Turkish-Israeli relations means increased Jewish support for Turkey in Washington. As the former US Ambassador to Turkey, Morton Abramowitz, states:

For Israel, having a nearby friendly Muslim state in a sea of hostile Arab ones has been a matter of political and psychological importance. In the second half of

1990s, Israel-Turkey relations took a great leap forward, far in excess of what had ever been imagined by either state or by the other states in the region, or by United States. This impressed many American Jews.¹⁵

The Jewish lobby provides a favourable influence in Washington on some important Turkish interests, such as military sales and Baku-Ceyhan pipeline project, which results in a more sympathetic political hearing for Turkey. For instance, in 1998 the Jewish lobby supported the Turks in the Congress in order to unfreeze the sale of two frigates to Turkey.¹⁶ The American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) and American Defence League (ADL) also support the Baku-Ceyhan project, particularly by stressing its significance as a crucial step in containing Iran.¹⁷ High-level representatives of most of the prominent American-Jewish organizations such as The American Jewish Committee (AJC), the ADL, the American Jewish Congress and the Council of Presidents have visited Turkey with major delegations. For example, an American Jewish Committee (AJC) leadership delegation visited Turkey in 1998 and had meetings with high-level Turkish government and military officials. Moreover, after discussing the possibility of Turkey's exporting water to Israel, the AJC delegation visited the South-eastern Anatolia project.¹⁸ After the devastating 1999 earthquake, there was an outpouring of support for Turkey by Jewish groups, with AJC alone donating more than \$500,000. In addition to assisting the reconstruction of schools, AJC provided relief funds to the American Red Cross and the Turkish Jewish community. The American Jewish Congress also worked actively to provide humanitarian assistance to earthquake victims.¹⁹ The most recent gesture by the Jewish lobby was to send a letter to President Bush, requesting support for the economic crisis in Turkey.²⁰

Although Turkish-Americans work closely with the Jewish lobby and its assistance is particularly helpful in counteracting the negative influences of the Greek and Armenian lobbies, as Orhan Kaymakçalan, the president of the ATAA emphasizes:

Turks need to realize that even our friends cannot be with us a 100 percent of the time. We need to respect each other's sensitivities and use each other's capital wisely. And we must realize that nobody can do the job for us.... Getting the support of the Jewish lobby in the us is very important, but will never substitute the need for creating a more effectively organized and engaged Turkish community.²¹

However, the escalating tensions in the Arab-Israeli conflict also had an adverse impact on Turkish-Israeli relations by negatively influencing Turkish public opinion towards Israel. Under the new moderate Islamic Justice and Development party government, relations might be further strained.

Notes

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6. Conclusion

Turkey is a critical actor for Euro-Mediterranean security. Due to its vital security interests, it has so far focused its attention mainly on the hard security issues of the Eastern Mediterranean such as the Cyprus issue, the Aegean disputes, the Arab-Israeli conflict, bilateral relations with Israel and, most recently, the impending war in Iraq.

While Turkey has a limited engagement within the EMP framework, it also strongly favours co-operation on soft security issues, particularly combating international terrorism and illegal drug trafficking. As indicated by its response to the Iraqi crisis and the previous conflicts in the Balkans, Turkey also promotes a multilateral approach in dealing with regional conflicts.

In the post-Cold war period, there are a number of emerging security and co-operation mechanisms in the Mediterranean particularly within the NATO and the EU framework. It is crucial that there be a high degree of coordination and complementarity among them. For a security arrangement which would enhance Western security without causing major fault-lines in the NATO alliance, EU operational objectives and strategic goals need to take into account the aims, contributions, and strategic significance of the non-EU participants. Turkey has clearly indicated through its contributions during the conflicts in the Balkans and the Gulf War that it has a great potential to contribute to military and non-military missions.

In volatile areas like the Balkans, where Bosnia-Herzegovina, Kosovo and most recently Macedonia have become hot spots, Turkey plays a significant role in peacemaking and peacekeeping operations. Within this framework, a Turkish-Greek collaborative effort supported by the ESDP and NATO might serve as the driving force for the establishment of a long-lasting peace in the Balkans and the Mediterranean. However, in order to be able to achieve this goal, the parties need a more equal stance. The developments concerning Turkey's integration to the Union have also important repercussions for the Cyprus issue and Turkish-Greek disputes over the Aegean, as well as Turkey's role in the Euro-Mediterranean security in general. European powers require a politically and economically stable neighbourhood to supplement their security architecture. By excluding Turkey they would be missing a major pillar in building this edifice, thus dooming it to collapse. For the enhancement of European security, Mediterranean co-operation, and bilateral relations between Turkey and Greece, Turkey's integration to the Union will play a critical role.

EuroMeSCo Briefs are published with the support
of the European Commission by the EuroMeSCo Secretariat at the

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