

COMPARATIVE STUDY OF PEACE NEGOTIATIONS

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COMPARATIVE STUDY OF PEACE NEGOTIATIONS

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## DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

I, Orhan Yetim, certify that

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## ABSTRACT

### Comparative Study of Peace Negotiations

This study aims to investigate the mechanisms that support the success of peace negotiations. Two main factors are the focus of this work, which are third-party intervention and payoffs of parties. When third-party interventions are combined with payoffs of parties in peace negotiations, cooperation and communication among parties have increased, which supports the success of peace negotiations. Due to certain similarities including ethnic roots of insurgent organizations, their way of organizing and electoral systems, the peace negotiation with IRA that Conservative Party initiated offers an important case that can be compared with Resolution Process in Turkey. Lack of third-party intervention and changes in payoffs motivating parties to defect from negotiations caused problems in disarmament, legal roadmap and incorporation of the opposition issues. Supported by electoral victory of Labor Party, third-party interventions through creating commissions, setting binding deadline and conducting meetings highly contributed the solution of these problems and the signing of Good Friday Agreement in 1998. On the other hand, Turkey had suffered from lack of third-party interventions with regards to disarmament, withdrawal, legal reforms and harsh nationalist critics. The impact of regime change in Turkey on Resolution Process is also addressed as a main reason for declining any third-party intervention in 2013 although AKP government demanded a coordinator from the U.S for ensuring the trans-national collaboration in PKK problem in 2009.

## ÖZET

### Barış Süreçlerinin Karşılaştırmalı Çalışması

Bu çalışma, barış müzakerelerinin başarısını destekleyen mekanizmaları araştırmayı amaçlamaktadır. Bu çalışmanın odak noktası, üçüncü taraf müdahalesi ve tarafların çıkarları olan iki ana faktördür. Barış görüşmelerinde üçüncü taraf müdahaleleri tarafların çıkarları ile birleştğinde taraflar arasındaki iş birliği ve iletişimi arttırarak barış görüşmelerinin başarısını desteklemektedir. İsyancı örgütlerin etnik kökenleri, örgütlenme biçimleri ve seçim sistemleri gibi bazı benzerlikler nedeniyle Muhafazakar Parti'nin IRA ile başlattığı barış görüşmeleri Türkiye'deki Çözüm Süreci ile karşılaştırılabilecek önemli bir örnek teşkil etmektedir. Üçüncü tarafların müdahalesinin olmaması ve tarafları müzakerelerden çekilmeye motive eden değişimler, silahsızlanma, yasal yol haritası ve muhalefetin dahil edilmesi konularında sorunlara yol açmaktadır. İşçi Partisi'nin seçim zaferi ile desteklenen komisyonlar oluşturarak, bağlayıcı süreler belirleyerek ve toplantılar yaparak oluşturulan üçüncü göz müdahaleleri bu sorunların aşılmasına ve 1998 yılında Hayırlı Cuma Anlaşması'nın imzalanmasına büyük katkı sağlamıştır. Üçüncü bir gözün eksikliğinden dolayı Türkiye'deki Çözüm Süreci silahsızlanma, geri çekilme, yasal reformlar ve sert milliyetçi eleştirilere ilişkin ciddi sorunlar yaşamıştır. AKP hükümetinin 2009'da PKK sorununda koordinasyonu sağlamak için ABD'den bir koordinatör talep etmesine rağmen, Çözüm Süreci'nde herhangi bir üçüncü gözün müdahalesini reddetmesinin ana nedeni Türkiye'deki rejim değişikliği çerçevesinde ele alınmaktadır.

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

As The Uppsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP) report on conflicts shows that 141 intrastate conflicts ended during the Cold War while 147 battles terminated between 1990-2005. While the victory of one party over the other is more common way to end a conflict during Cold War, peace negotiations have substantially replaced it in post- Cold war period in which soft power became a main means<sup>1</sup>. But peace negotiations do not always result in peace agreements and stable peace environment

While some peace talks result in an agreement and end of an armed conflict, or transform the nature of the conflict, others are failed in dialogue period ,and even cannot reach an agreement and return to hard power. The peace process which started upon the declaration of ceasefire by Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), insurgent groups in Sri Lanka, in 2002 could not produce a settlement for parties and stopped when LTTE suspended its participation. Despite latter attempts to revive the process, the armed conflict again began to flame up between Sri Lankan government and LTTE. The incumbent's military campaign significantly damaged LTTE and restricted its military capacity in Tamil region. The level of violence and death in Sri Lanka reached its level before 2002 ceasefire<sup>2</sup>. On the other hand, after the period following massive tsunami in 2004, the peace talks between Indonesian government and GAM, insurgent group in Indonesia, which launched war against

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<sup>1</sup> Pettersson, T., & Öberg, M. (2020). Organized violence, 1989–2019. *Journal of Peace Research*, 57(4), 597–613. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022343320934986>

<sup>2</sup> Amrutkar, P. (2012). Ethnic Conflict and Conflict Management Process in Sri Lanka. *The Indian Journal of Political Science* 73(4), 745–56. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41858881>  
Uyangoda, J. (2007). Ethnic Conflict in Sri Lanka: Changing Dynamics (M. Alagappa, Ed.). East-West Center. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/resrep06506>

Indonesian government ended up with the signing of peace agreement that ended the armed conflict in the country. GAM, then, disbanded its military campaign and convert itself to a legal entity. The level of deaths had incrementally decreased <sup>3</sup>.

Different results of peace negotiations raised a scholarly significant question: ‘why do some peace negotiations succeed and others fail?’. The literature provides various answers to this question ranging from cost of war (Fearon, 1995; Reiter, 2009), incentives to defect (Byman, 2002), ripeness (Zartman, 2007) spoiler problems (Stedman, 1997) to informational problems (Kirschener, 2010) and third-party intervention (Walter, 2002). The mechanisms for each category is contingent upon characteristics of cases. In democracies, for example, third-party intervention could happen through including different political parties to negotiations such as in Northern Ireland (Mac Ginty & Darby, 2002) and conducting meetings with parties (Moolakkatu, 2005) while in cases where armed conflict happened between two groups, rather than between governments and insurgents, third-party intervention includes using military precautions and leverages for example, in Bosnia.(Clemens, 1993; Rendon & Fernandez, 2021). Moreover, absence of effective mediation in Sri Lanka (Bouffard & Carment, 2006) or lack of external guarantor in Turkey (Ünal, 2015) contributed the failure of peace processes in both countries. In addition to external factors like third-party intervention, internal dynamics are quite influential on negotiations. Military stalemate between Salvadorian government and insurgents increased their commitment to the negotiations (Ebner, 2019) or capacity of political figures in Northern Ireland (Goddard, 2012) while electoral defeat of political parties in negotiations like in Turkey (Hakyemez, 2017) and constitutional crisis in Sri

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<sup>3</sup> Kingsbury, D. (2005). A Mechanism to End Conflict in Aceh. *Security Challenges*, 1(1), 73–88. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/26459021>

Craig Thorburn. (2012). Building Blocks and Stumbling Blocks: Peacebuilding in Aceh, 2005–2009. *Indonesia*, 93, 83–122. <https://doi.org/10.5728/indonesia.93.0083>

Lanka (Banerjee & Manoharan, 2003) increased the incentives to defect during peace negotiations. To do so, various experiences that had been acquired as a result of different armed conflicts should be examined in critical lens and compared with each other for finding significant variables those contributed the success of peace talks more than others.

Both U.K and Turkey had suffered from twenty-years-long armed conflict in their territories. The ethnic conflict between Protestant British and Catholic Irish people had centuries-long history<sup>4</sup>. Despite number of attempts of British government, the problem could not be solved until Good Friday Agreement in 1998 in which Irish Prime Minister and American Senator G. Mitchell had intervened as a third-party. As a result of the start of the dialogue between British government and IRA through political representatives of the latter, Sein Fein, in 1994, the ethnic conflict in the Northern Ireland was turned into non-violent political contest.

On the other hand, while having roots in the Early Republican period, PKK had been active since 1978 and realized its first armed attack to state forces in 1984. There were many attempts of Turkish state in 1993, 1999 and 2009 but PKK problem in Turkey could not be solved out. Although the peace negotiations which started in 2013 raised many people' hopes for political resolution, it collapsed in 2015 following AKP's defeat in the general election and PKK's raising power in Turkey's Southern borders.

The success of Northern Ireland peace process is vastly studied. For some authors, content of Good Friday Agreement has answers for the success. Power-sharing institutions and consociational provisions (O'Leary & McGarry, 2004) in the agreement made the Agreement beneficial for both sides. The Strand II and III that

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<sup>4</sup> Neumann, P.R. (2003). *Britain's Long War: British Strategy in the Northern Ireland Conflict, 1969-98*. New York:Palgrave Macmillan

envisaged institutions governing South and North Ireland and U.K- Republic of Ireland appeased the concerns of both Unionists and Republicans; therefore, make them to commit the Agreement (Goddard, 2012). The timing also appears as a significant factor influencing the success of the negotiations. Both governments and IRA perceived that they cannot get upper hand over each other through military means. Mutually hurting stalemate in 80s paved the way for negotiations as an alternative solution (O'Kane, 2006; Pruitt, 2007). Not content but the timing is claimed to contribute the success. Also, effective management of spoilers who are trying to sabotage the peace process due to conflict interests by moderates is claimed to main reason behind the success (Goddard, 2012).

The failure of Resolution Process is also discussed by some authors. Cost of war has decrease for PKK to continue armed struggle in Turkey. PKK's autonomy in Northern Syria both triggered the government's security concerns (Özkahraman, 2017) and ease the supply of arms. PKK's rising military presence in Kobane threaten the government and cause the arming of two side (Bayramoğlu, 2015). The electoral changes during the process has an impact on the governing party. Bayramoğlu's analysis of changes in vote from AKP to HDP and anti-peace party MHP increased the cost of the negotiations for AKP and motivate it to defect. Hakyemez (2017) also stresses the importance of AKP's loss of election on the negotiations. Also, limited number of studies refer to the lack of third-party intervention but do not elaborate on how this absence of third-party interacts with national actors in the context (Kadioğlu, 2020; Çiçek, 2018).

IRA and PKK have many common characteristics. Their first attacks to state forces happened around 1980s. The clash between state forces and armed insurgents was almost fifteen-years-old when the first peace attempts were made in the U.K

and Turkey. Considering the period between first attacks and peace attempts, military stalemate in both cases is claimed to happen in close time periods. Secondly, they both claimed to be the representative of ethnic minorities rather than religious or cultural minorities, Irish and Kurdish people respectively. The both armed insurgencies occurred under democratic regimes. Therefore, they have also tie with political parties which have close ties and can get contact with insurgents, which are Sein Fein and HDP. Insurgents' ties with ethnic minorities and political parties enable them to get political leverage on government parties. This factor, for example, is absent in autocratic regimes. Lastly, both IRA and PKK have transnational ties with people in different countries and have related diasporas. IRA's relation with the Republic of Ireland has similar effects on peace negotiations as Northern Iraq and Syria have on Resolution Process in Turkey.

Despite many similarities, which will be discussed later, the results of two peace process highly varied. For both to understand the success in Irish problem better and designate the weaknesses of the peace process in Turkey, the comparative study of peace negotiations that happened in U.K and Turkey could be very essential and illuminating. While there has been many factors affecting peace processes discussed in the literature, this study will focus on the importance of third-party intervention and change in actors' payoffs , both of which increase cooperation among parties and contribute the success of negotiations.

### 1.1 Rationale for research

This research is mainly motivated to give a better insight into the failure of the peace process in Turkey. By comparing it with one of successful peace processes in the World, I hope to analyze the weaknesses of the peace process so that next attempts in

Turkey could be structurally stronger, and contribute the literature on resolutions of armed conflicts. Moreover, in comparison to works on Northern Ireland peace process such as (MacGinty & Darby, 2002), those on Resolution Process rarely benefit from newspapers. Considering the fact that the peace negotiations have happened in a long period of time, the flow of events obviously matter. In the scope of this thesis, flows of events in both peace process are effectively be traced through The Guardian and Cumhuriyet newspapers. I have covered 1960 news for Turkish case, including historical parts, and 450 news for British case. The repetitive themes in news could point out possible problems between parties. Whether and how these problems are addressed, even solved, is a necessary inquiry for analyzing the factors affecting the success and failure of peace negotiations.

## 1.2 Methodology

### 1.2.1 Comparative case studies

Very limited number of studies has been done between Irish and Turkish cases. Kadioğlu (2017) provides a significant lens in the perspective of root-level organizations' roles in both negotiations. But his analysis is relatively lacked of roles of primary actors such as insurgents, political parties and third-parties. Significant similarities between the cases enable us to control many factors and measure the importance of others and micro dynamics. Among the limited number of successful cases, IRA appears to have most characteristics in common with PKK. The comparison can provide substantial insights for success and failure in negotiations by shedding light to micro mechanisms through which third-party intervention in the scope of domestic payoffs of the parties can contribute peace processes by increasing

the cooperation and collaboration among parties through day-by-day tracing of newspapers.

Close inquiry of newspaper is the focus of the methodology used in this thesis. For Irish Case, I have read every news in The Guardian between January 1994 and May 1998 in online resources. Not to be repetitive, I mostly focus on time periods that were relatively less pointed out in books and articles in the literature. For example, the period between January 1994 to January 1996 in which disarmament was the main discussion point needed more attention because the repetitive themes in statements of parties and deadlock on the issue must be investigated further to point out the importance of the intervention of Irish Republic and Mitchell reports on its solution. In addition to newspapers, I have mostly benefitted from main works on Northern Ireland peace process for structuring the narrative.

The creation of the main narrative in the thesis happened through the reiterated process between collecting new data by reading newspapers and compiling common points of books and articles by cross-checking their narratives. Going back and forward among data obtained from newspapers and narratives was also combined with vast literature on peace processes and armed conflicts. As a result of this long tripartite process, I could be able to create my own narrative that makes analytical sense in comparative manner.

For Turkish case, historical chapters are mostly depended on main works in the literature. Particularly, the part about the establishment of PKK is descriptive rather than exploratory and argumentative. I support this part with news in order to strengthen use of primary sources in the thesis. For example, although I have read in many books that Turgut Özal called PKK as bandits, I have not detected the exact date and full statement of him in the literature. Then I have searched it in *Hürriyet*

achieve and use it in the chapter. Rather than using news for argumentation, they are mostly used for supporting historical chapters and exploratory purposes. For Ceasefires in 90s and Imrali period, I have focused on main incidents that are pointed out by significant books and articles. For critical discussions, I have focused on news in a given period in detail again. For example, to clarify what Öcalan demanded from the government in 1999 and MHP's role in the process, I have read all the news in Cumhuriyet between January 1999 to January 2003. This inquiry enables me to both understand the significance of electoral pressure on incumbent parties during political negotiations and possible concessions that parties demanded from each other.

Moreover, for Resolution Process, I have read the news in Cumhuriyet, due to easy access to all pages online, between January 2013 to December 2015, the period that contains all the important incidents. Firstly, I have read all the news, including all pages, create my narrative, and note the related news down for further investigation. Then I have compared the sequence of events in Turkey with that in Northern Ireland. That enables me to detect very similar problems and statements, for example about disarmament as a precondition, and how these peace negotiations evolve into different ends over time throughout peace negotiations despite similarities. Close inquiry of these two periods via newspapers both reveals the importance of sequence of events and micro-dynamics through which we can observe functioning of bigger factors such as third-party intervention.

Overall, this methodology enables me to support my argument in two ways. Firstly, I can show the similar problems and statements of parties at the very beginning of peace processes. In addition to historical commonality and similar political context between IRA and PKK, for example ethnic ties and electoral power,

its reaction to incumbent parties demanding decommissioning and abstaining from concessions also mark the similar circumstances in the processes. For example, both Conservative Party in the U.K and AKP in Turkey insistently demanded disarmament as a precondition. Discussions over disarmament created deadlocks in both contexts. Secondly, this similar positions at the beginning through the analysis of the sequence of events enable me to detect significant points during negotiations and its relation to my thesis. For example, while third-party is an important factor affecting the trajectory of peace processes, it should not be assumed that its presence by itself proves its effectiveness. In other words, to show the effectiveness of third-parties, I should firstly detect the problems that third-parties offer a solution to. The problems in the processes can be best captured, I think, through the close investigation of the sequence of events. So, sequences offer me a unique opportunity to fill mechanisms between third-party interventions which increase the cooperation and success of peace negotiations. For example, I have detected the problem of disarmament and demonstrate how third-party intervention by George Mitchell and Irish Taoiseach, helped its solution. George Mitchell is the American politicians who was authorized to monitor and support the British peace process. His intervention was accepted, and demanded, by Conservative government. Moreover, due to both historical ties and geographic proximity to Northern Ireland, The Republic of Ireland has always a say on peace processes in the U.K. Through political dialogue, suggestions and reforms in the Republic of Ireland, Irish Taoiseach John Bruton had supported the Northern Ireland peace process.

As the nature of the research question requires, this study is based on qualitative research methods. Through close inquiry of two cases, how the interplay between third-party interventions and payoffs impacts the success of peace

negotiations is discussed. However, small-N qualitative works are sometimes criticized for suffering from selection bias (King, Keohane and Verba, 1994). But, small-N qualitative method enable us to choose small number of cases that have sufficient similarities for meaningful comparison (Mahoney, 2007). With extensive engagement with cases, qualitative analysts are able to detect cases that could ensure the minimum level required for conceptual homogeneity (Goertz & Mahoney, 2005) and less likely to ignore key variables (Mahoney, 2007). Close investigation of IRA and PKK, as well as British and Turkish contexts, reveals the similarities in both context, which enables me to compare to them. While taking the differences into account and engaging with rich contexts, I can investigate how third-party interventions and payoffs can aid the success of peace negotiations by increasing the cooperation between parties involved in the negotiations. In this sense, this study is claimed to be theory-testing and exploratory.

### 1.2.2 Case selection

Both IRA in the U.K and PKK in Turkey have a long story of armed conflicts. While IRA is claimed to aim at the merge of Southern and Northern Ireland, therefore the united Ireland, PKK's goal is to create the united Kurdish state in the east of Turkey, Northern Iraq and Syria, as well as some parts of Iran. Both organizations have ethnic roots in the countries. IRA claims to fight for the rights of Irish identity in Northern Iraq while PKK claims to struggle for those of Kurdish identity in Turkey. Both the U.K and Turkey have electoral systems through which ethnic minorities' struggle for rights could turn into a political pressure on incumbent parties. Therefore, these ethnic conflicts have inevitable political aspects. As expected, these armed conflicts have political representatives in the countries. Sein

Fein is the political representative of IRA and BDP-HDP is that of PKK in Turkey. Such relations between political parties and armed organizations consolidate their political nature. Also, both conflicts have cross-border ties, which makes them 'transnational'. Irish people living in the Republic of Ireland and IRA's ties in the country resemble the relation between Northern Iraq and Syria, and PKK. Kurdish population living in Northern Iraq and Syria makes PKK problem in Turkey transnational. In this aspect, both it can be claimed that both conflicts need instruments that are beyond the scope of nation-states. The interventions of Irish Prime Minister and U.K's acceptance of a body governing the relation between South and North Ireland suggest that transnational nature of the Northern Ireland problem is accepted. On the other hand, in Turkey, this transnational tie could not be successfully operated during Resolution Process and mostly exploited to bypass the political representatives of PKK in Turkey despite the significant historical benefits of transnational actors on Kurdish issue. For example, Barzani's intervention in late 90s produced short-term ceasefires.

Although the reasons above make these two cases comparable, I think, some contextual differences should not be ignored. Firstly, PKK has more activity in rural areas compare to IRA. Especially in 90s and early 2000s, most of PKK attacks happened in rural areas. IRA rarely conducted attacks on rural areas, it mainly aimed at big cities. After 2007, PKK started to increase its activity in metropolitans and use suicide bombers, which makes PKK and IRA more comparable. It also affects the conflict transformation strategies of Turkey and the U.K. Therefore, the demands such as non-disarmament raised by IRA and PKK appeared to be more similar. Secondly, while both countries have electoral systems in which regular elections happen, Turkey have gone through different stages and turned into a competitive

electoral regime. AKP's first tenure witnessed an improvement in civil liberties and a challenge to tutelary democracy. But after 2011, political power monopolized in the hands of the executive and political rights began to deteriorate after 2014 (Öniş, 2015; Esen & Gumuscu, 2016; Esen & Gumuscu, 2020; Kalaycıoğlu, 2015; Özbudun, 2015). Because peace processes are aimed at an improvement in civil and political rights, such a transition to competitive authoritarian regime had hampered Resolution Process in Turkey. Despite these differences, Turkey and the U.K are suitable cases for comparison for the peace processes conducted with PKK and IRA, respectively.

### 1.2.3 Data collection

In this research, both primary and secondary sources are applied. For historical background of both ethnic conflicts, important books, articles and publications are reviewed. Their common points are accepted as reliable and used for historical narrative. For the peace processes, the newspaper those are chosen constitute main resources and are read day by day to follow the trajectory of the processes better. For Turkish case, Cumhuriyet and Hürriyet are chosen due to easy access to their online achieves. Similarly, The Guardian and Irish Times are used for following incidents happened in U.K.

Day by day analysis of peace processes led to compilation of vast number of materials. These materials are used for detailed analysis of cases and make detecting important variables easier. While the newspapers have ideological tendencies, not comments but only contents of news are used.

### 1.3 Chapter outlines

In literature review, possible answers for why some negotiations are failed are investigated in general. Time factor, rationality of insurgents, spoiler problem and third-party assistance are detected as main reasons for the failure (Zartman, 2007; Kydd & Walter, 2002; Neumann, 2007; Stedman, 2007; Hampson, 1997; Cetinyan, 2002). Also, how Turkish case is particularly studied in the literature and what are the reasons for its collapse are discussed. I have operationalized what third-party assistance is and under which conditions changes in payoffs to defect happen. These are the factors according to which I can conclude usefulness of third-party assistance and detect changes in payoffs. For example, if a political party in office loses an election, then they are motivated to defect from the process because it threatens their survival in office. Likewise, if insurgents' military capacity increases, they become motivated to defect from the negotiations.

The main body of the thesis is divided into four chapters after the introduction and literature review. In Chapter 3, I have investigated the historical background of IRA and prior attempt of negotiations starting from its foundation to beginning of peace negotiations in 1994. The first serious attempt was done by Conservative government in 1974. The government' trying to devolve power back to Northern Ireland and establish power-sharing institutions undermined by Unionists. Nationwide protests, workers' strikes and Unionist deputies who withdraw their parliamentary support back in the Parliament blocked the execution of Sunningdale. Another significant move was done by Conservative Thatcher government. In order to put an end to Northern Ireland problem, she attempt to sign an agreement with the Republic of Ireland to boost the cross-border operations about Northern Ireland. Unionists again adopted a hardliner approach to Anglo-British Agreement and try to

prevent its application. The historical part enables us to see the political dynamics of British case and historically-important veto players, hardliners, and factors that motivated parties to defect in the conflict. Moreover, how intervention of third-parties started and contribute the negotiations can be better addressed.

In Chapter 4, dialogue, negotiations and final agreement periods are examined in detail through data obtained in newspapers. Main problems between IRA, its political representative, and Conservative governments are disarmament, lack of framework and insufficient concessions given by the government. Although many interventions by G. Mitchell and Irish Prime Minister solved deadlocks and contribute the negotiations, decreasing parliamentary majority and Unionist pressure made it hard for Conservatives to give concessions to IRA and take legal steps in the Parliament. Under these conditions, fragile process was further destabilized by bombing attacks done by IRA. The change in the government from Conservative to Labor Party reduced Unionist pressure and vast Parliamentary majority enabled Labors both to take legal actions and give concessions for IRA. Combined with third-party assistance, Labor Party was able to finalize the peace negotiation. To show the interplay between third-party assistance and factors that make defecting costly for parties, this chapter's focus is on newspapers and interviews done with political figures in the U.K by other authors in the literature. The deadlocks and how they were solved out or why Conservatives could not solve particular problems can be detected through detailed analysis of events.

In Chapter 5, the historical background of PKK is discussed under four main periods: establishment, early attempt in 90s, Imrali period and Oslo period. Through discussions of these periods, hardliners, concessions and third-party intervention are analyzed. Early attempts by Özal and Erbakan happened as a result of increasing cost

of PKK attacks and with the help of third-parties. For Özal's move, Talabani was the one who put pressure on Öcalan on ceasefire and mediate between them. While Talabani's assistance worked and Öcalan declared a ceasefire for indefinite period of time, the talks ended after PKK's attack and Özal's death. Prior attempt were prevented by either pressure from their parties and hardliner parties or bureaucratic actors such as army and Constitutional courts. Similarly, in Imrali Period, negotiations between the government and Öcalan improved to the point that PKK started to withdraw its forces outside Turkish borders. But both military officers' intervention and hardliner MHP's call for early election stopped the negotiations. What PKK demanded, how governments reacted and how negotiations are failed is analyzed further to understand the dynamics of Resolution Process better. Without analysis of past experiences, what factors make peace processes costly for political parties in a particular case, Turkey, cannot be effectively detected. For example, in the U.K anti-peace parties did not legally involve in coalitions. But in Turkey coalition partners' leverage against each other appeared to be a significant factor which makes peace processes costly as happened in 2002 after MHP's pressure on the coalition. Moreover, withdrawing outside Turkish borders is an important concession given by PKK to show its commitment while in Irish case the withdrawal is what IRA demanded from British government, not concession that IRA is supposed to give. So, important concessions that demanded by both governments and insurgents are contingent upon historical trajectory despite many similar claims such as amnesty, release of prisoners and democratic reforms.

In Chapter 6, the evolution of relations between AKP and PKK and previous attempts of openings have been examined. AKP government changed the traditional security-based approach to PKK problem and start to name it as Kurdish problem.

With various openings, AKP aimed at advancing democratic rights of minorities while consolidating its political power against the Army and Judiciary, two main veto-players in Turkish context. While AKP government's initial approach to Kurdish problem was more inclusive in terms of international player, the government had a nationalist turn just before the beginning of Resolution Process. During Kurdish Opening in 2009, AKP government had welcomed, and demanded, international interventions by the U.S and Iraq for better solution of Kurdish problem. As the government eliminated veto players, get rid of institutional checks and concentrate political power, its approach to Kurdish issue appeared to have more nationalistic tones. Authoritarian tendencies was seemed to feature nationalist discourses and undermine third-party interventions. The evolution of AKP governments are insightful for understanding the absence of third-party during Resolution Process and contextual difference with the United Kingdom.

In Chapter 7, dialogue and negotiation attempt between 2013-2015 are investigated through detailed analyses of newspapers day by day. Repetitive points that caused deadlocks in the process are detected and how they were addressed in the negotiation with IRA are compared. Lack of third-party assistance, despite its advantages in prior attempts in Turkey, made the process fragile due to lack of dialogue, elections agenda, monitoring problem and lack of frameworks. Under these conditions, rising military power of PKK in Northern Syria and AKP's loss of election and reactions from the party further motivated both side to defect from Resolution Process. To find out the deadlocks during the peace negotiations, how they are solved or cannot be solved and detect changing payoffs during 2-years process, detailed analysis of events in Resolution Process should be done.

Other cases that could support the main thesis are recommended. For example, negotiations with LTTE in Sri Lanka was failed despite third-party intervention. While disarmament and framework problems were solved, early call for election by President caused the overthrow of the government and anti-peace party in Sri Lanka became the part of new coalition. How negotiations are going under third-party assistance but hardliner pressure can be analyzed in Sri Lanka case. Negotiations with FARC is suggested for further researches to test the typology suggested in the thesis.

## CHAPTER 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW

Works on wars and armed conflicts have broadly emphasized two sources of inefficiency as reasons for the failure of termination; informational problems and commitment problems (Fearon, 1995). The former arises when the bargainers have private information about military capacities of the other party and misinterpret it. Because of the lack of the reliable source of information, actions of parties are changed depending on private information that they have, which ended in inefficient and unexpected results. The latter means that either or both of the parties cannot credibly commit themselves to uphold the negotiations (Mattes & Savun, 2009). The reasons why parties could not commit themselves can result from various problems including time factor, rationality of parties, changing incentives, spoilers and absence of third-parties.

Peace negotiations mostly commenced as results of long-standing military confrontations. Exhausted parties then started to look for an alternative solution to ongoing conflicts. The point where two parties consider any other option than military means is named as ‘maturation point’. At this point, the parties due to economic and social burden of fighting became matured enough to renounce violence. This period named ‘ripe moments’ by William Zartman (2001) is the convenient time for the start of peace talks because parties of the negotiations can credibly commit themselves to process and are motivated to give concessions for each other. Such movements also appear as right moments for third-party intervention. Utilizing commitments of parties, third-party can contribute the process with suggestions and dialogue.

Two parties, governments and IRA, had reached the level of mutually hurtling stalemate in which both sides accept the fact that they cannot gain military victory against each other (Pruitt, 2007). In 1980s, both IRA and British officials' declaration support the claim that the parties are aware of the military deadlock in the process. But ripeness movement is also criticized by some authors. O'Kane argues that the ripe movement is not clear for parties in Northern Ireland peace process. During negotiations, the military clashes between IRA, Loyalist and British forces had happened. From this perspective, one cannot conclude about ripeness during the negotiations (O'Kane, 2006).

However, for some writers, rationality of insurgents are also important factor determining the maturation point. They differentiate between terrorists who are using violence for specific political ends and terrorists who do not pursue certain ends but mostly use violence for expressing its entity (Hoffman, 2017). For example, Al-Qaeda is considered as irrational while ETA is seen as rational by some writers (Neumann, 2007). Drawing on Neuman's classification of old and new terrorism, Al Qaida seems to stand against rational terrorist conceptualization. Therefore, when to start negotiation with terrorists is also depended on rationality.

The content of peace agreements is also claimed to be an important factor that makes agreements acceptable for both parties and process successful. Consociational arrangements in the Agreement made it acceptable both for Unionists and Republicans (O'Leary and McGarry, 2004). Not only power-sharing institutions in Northern Ireland but also between Irish and British government made the agreement possible. Particularly, through provisions in Strand II and III, cooperation between the Republic of Ireland and the U.K, as well as between the former and Northern Ireland had been increased, which both appease the demand of Republicans

and ensure anxieties of Unionists (Goddard, 2012). Such content of the Agreement is claimed to contribute the success of Northern Ireland peace process. But this approach is also criticized in the literature. While the Sunningdale Agreement in 1973 included similar institutions, it was harshly declined by Unionists and the government stepped back upon the reactions (Belloni & Shelley, 2005). Therefore, despite similar content, Sunningdale Agreement did not produce the results that Good Friday have produced.

Spoiler problem is a common problem that could be observed in many processes. Spoilers are usually defined as people whose interests are in conflict with ongoing peace negotiations. There are various reasons for spoilers' motivations ranging from ideological to economic ones. Stedman specified three types of spoilers, which are limited, greedy and full spoilers (Stedman, 1997). Every type requires its specific management methods. For example, coercion is the option for coping with full spoilers while inducements is for limited spoilers.

Stedman also states that change among different types of spoilers is possible. For example, a change in the behavior of a leader can alter the whole party. However, this change cannot answer why spoilers do not usually prevent the start of negotiations but hamper while negotiations are improved. Pearlman offers credible answers for explaining the change in the motivation of spoilers. For example, change in the internal balance of power or expected rise in their capabilities could motivate them to hamper peace negotiations. Therefore, the party who initiated a negotiation does not necessarily keep its commitment. Some structural changes can motivate parties to defect during negotiations. Therefore, stability can provide fertile ground for moderates to keep the negotiations and instability undermines their power and hamper peace negotiations. For example, in Thailand, political instability decreased

the capability of government to deal with those who opposed to peace negotiations (Stedman, 2000).

However, spoiling activity is also done by hardliners during the process. Hardliners are people who prefer violence over negotiations as a means for solving armed insurgencies. On contrary, moderates or soft-liners prefer negotiations and diplomacy over use of violence. To prevent moderates' attempt for negotiations, hardliners can both apply to spoiling activities or use their power to end ongoing processes. Hardliner's veto power, therefore, is significant factor affecting the result of peace processes. Especially when the trust between moderates of two parties is low, hardliners are more likely to achieve their aim of terminating peace negotiations. By persuading that the moderates are weak or assassinate moderate figures, hardliners could hamper the negotiations and motivate parties to defect (Kydd & Walter ,2002). Moreover, if keeping peace alive becomes more costly for hardliners, they are motivated to turn to arms (Werner & Yuen, 2005). So, changes that impower the strength of hardliners could possibly harm negotiations. The success of Northern Ireland peace process could be the ability of moderates to restrict the capabilities of hardliners (Goddard, 2012). The literature mostly stresses the spoiling activities of insurgents and opposition movements. But spoilers in the party which started the peace negotiations are narrowly studied. As Pearlman (2008) states "...actors choose to negotiate or spoil the peace based on the expected utility of each strategy for improving their position in an internal balance of power". So, changes in payoffs that threaten internal power of parties motivate parties to defect from the process.

Another important factor affecting the results of peace negotiations is the presence of third- party assistance. As Hampson states clearly "peace settlements that

enjoy high levels of third-party assistance and support during the entire course of peacemaking and peace- building process are arguably more likely to succeed than those that do not ” (Hampson, 1996: 13). In the comparative study of IRA and ETA, Woodworth stresses the importance of a third party which tries to find a common ground between two parties and act as a confidential source of commitment. He writes “The Basque diaspora has no equivalent of Washington to act as an honest broker. Nor is there any Basque equivalent of the Irish Republic to act as a democratic persuader” (Woodworth, 2019: 47). Diasporas can both as spoilers or supporters of peace negotiations. For the latter, they usually financially support pro-peace parties, join negotiations and increase the cost of defection. The influence of Irish diaspora on the peace negotiation is quite important to persuade Irish people (Basr & Swain,2008; Guelke, 1996).

Time to intervene for third-party is important. As Zartman argues, ripe moments are convenient time period for third-party intervention. Otherwise, intervention could hamper ongoing relation between parties.

In addition to its collaborative function, third-parties could contribute peace processes by increasing the cost of defection (Çetinyan, 2002). Third-parties, especially states, could stabilize the bargaining process and pose a threat to parties in case either of them defects from the negotiation. It is mostly the case when the third-party has a credible position in the eyes of actors and is a strong player such as United States. A possible reaction from international community can led parties to move on the process. Moreover, inclusion of a third-party into the process denote for the recognition of insurgents, which motivates them further to adhere to peace negotiations. International recognition of insurgents, by itself, is an important motivation for them to keep the peace accords. Moreover, third-parties highly

influential on the bargaining structure and by increasing the communication between parties, they contribute the prevention of occurrence of commitment problem (Pugh, 2009; Ruggeri et al., 2013). In cases where third-party intervention is absent, difference between discourses of parties, lack of framework and low speed of taking steps could be observed.

However, some authors argue that third-party intervention is less influential by itself but should combine with internal factors. Ebner (2019) studies the influence of interplay between international and domestic factors on the outcome. In his analysis of El-Salvador, he points out the importance of third-party intervention and shifts in domestic factors such as military stalemate between parties. Likewise, while accepting the importance of third-party intervention, Mukherjee points out the role of domestic institutions such as electoral systems. Compare to third-party assistance, domestic institutions play greater role for sustaining peace. In Northern Ireland, for example, the application of D'Hondt system ensures the concerns of Republicans and support the survival of the peace (Mukherjee, 2006).

Third-parties' influence on domestic actors are not also uniform. In his analysis of El-Salvador, Nicaragua and Guatemala, Gleditsch & Beardsley (2004) shows that parties in different countries react to the third-party intervention in different ways. For example, while rebels in El-Salvador appear to be influenced more by the third-party, the government in Nicaragua is more likely change its reactions depending on the third-party. Therefore, the effects of third-party on domestic actors should be examined in historical trajectory of particular country.

In addition to general literature on intra-state wars and terrorism, various explanations for the failure of Resolution Process are also offered in the literature. Ünal (2015) claims that internal and regional security problems and their affects into

domestic politics which are harmful for the ruling party, AKP, are the main reasons for the failure. In his analysis of context, content and conduct, he points out important points in the process such as lack of truth commissions, lack of external guarantor to monitor the process and full disarmament as a precondition. In a similar way, Özkahraman (2017) investigates the roots of the failure in security problems. Regional dynamics and changing power relations in Syria favoring PKK are the main reasons for the process according to him.

According to Bayramoğlu (2015), Kobane incidents and increasing threat for public order created mistrust between the governing party and PKK, which ended up with arming of two sides. Another important factor for the failure was the general election in 2015. His analysis of vote change in the election demonstrated increasing support for anti-process party, MHP, and HDP. AKP, which lost the majority in the Parliament for the first time, was harmed by taking the risk of initiating political negotiations with PKK.

Similarly, Yılmaz approaches Solution Process with the lens of international dynamics. Both the beginning and end of the solution highly depended on changing allies in the Middle East. Both PKK's focus on Rojava rather than Turkey and AKP's strive for the leadership in the region made the way for Resolution Process. So, domestic power relations favoring PKK in Syria and change in the U.S's strategic partners in the Middle East hampered the peace process in Turkey. Considering the dependence of Resolution Process on international dynamics, lack of regional and international actors increased its fragility and caused the failure of the process.

Hakyemez (2017) focuses more on internal dynamics. According to her, lack of legal roadmap and legislative framework caused the end of the process. Abstaining from offering definite legislative status, AKP increased its bargaining

power during negotiations while undermining its commitment to the process. Also, she points out that the peace process was failed after the loss of AKP in the general election of 2015. However, Çiçek in his book called *Süreç* offers a broad analysis of similar experience of peace processes in the World and investigate peculiar sides of Solution Process in Turkey. Beside international dynamics, Çiçek (2018) draws our attention to lack of third-party intervention, power-sharing institutions and political subjectivity.

Resolution Process, Çözüm Süreci in Turkish, is not only studied as single case study but also in comparison with successful peace processes. Özkan (2018) compares peace negotiations with PKK and FARC. He offers three main reasons for the failure of the former: favorable regional dynamics, weakened terrorist organizations and well-structured agenda for negotiations. Rising territorial power of PKK in Syria, increased military capacity and indefinite roadmap in Turkey lead to the failure. On the contrary, FARC became quite weakened as a result of military operations and negotiated legal framework for post-conflict period contributed the successful peace negotiation happened in Colombia. Moreover, Kadioğlu (2020) in his book offers an important comparison between IRA and PKK by focusing on roles of peace and conflict resolution organizations, named P/CROs, and civil society mobilizations. Unlike most of the studies, Kadioğlu adopts bottom-up approach to the peace process. According to him, affective intervention and contributions of root-level organizations contributed the success of the peace process in U.K while lack of them undermined the Solution Process. The framework offered in the book centered on PCOs and lacked of roles of main parties in the process, AKP, HDP and PKK.

Despite important number of studies on Resolution Process in Turkey, comparative study on IRA-PKK through the lens of political actors has been still missing. Moreover, most of the studies are lacked of detailed analysis of the process. Because peace processes happen in relatively long period of time, usually 3-4 years, examining the changes during the process are of great importance. In comparison to works on Northern Ireland, newspapers are rarely referred in Resolution Process. The flow of events in media actually shows important clues for deadlocks and solutions. Particularly repetitive themes in newspapers address conflict over which governments and insurgents cannot agree.

In parallel with Ebner (2019)'s stress on domestic and international factors and Pearlman (2008)' approach to changes in internal balance of power, I focus on the interplay of third-party assistance and changes in payoffs of parties that could favor defection. If there is a potential for alternative ways other than violence, parties may favor a negotiated settlement that includes some power-sharing. During the sharing, the most usual problem is the rooted distrust that two parties have towards each other. Mutual distrust has shaped the strategies adopted by two parties for advancing their interests, namely their payoffs. Main interest of incumbent parties is to increase their vote share and stay in power. For this end, they are motivated to keep negotiations alive unless it is detrimental for their survival as an incumbent party. On the other hand, insurgent groups feel threatened when armed forces are advancing their military capabilities vis a vis insurgent or the incumbents challenge insurgents' legitimacy and undermine their social roots. So, for incumbent parties, payoffs to defect increase if it faces the threat of losing its power in general election, municipal elections or by-elections, serious reactions from its party or coalition partner, faces electoral threat from insurgents-related political parties. For the

insurgents, the payoffs to defect increase if military power of the state increases in relevant territories, the opponents of the insurgents are supported by the state, insurgents' military capacity significantly increase.

Moreover, conflicts between insurgent groups and states are asymmetric wars in the sense that one party has significantly more military power and capacity to reach equipment compare to the other. Use of unconventional methods such as guerilla warfare and weapons like suicide bombers balances the power gap between the insurgents and armed forces of states. So, when insurgents start to demobilize and disarm, it becomes extremely costly for them to take the arms and mobilize again in case the states do not keep their promises. Therefore, disarmament and demobilization as prerequisites usually block the transition from dialogue to negotiation period because it decreases incentive of insurgent groups to continue in the process. Shaped by deep distrust, insurgents hesitate to leave their weapons to authorities. An independent commission that insurgents and government both can trust appears as an important alternative. Moreover, lack of dialogue between incumbent parties and insurgent organizations caused deadlocks and ambiguity. While insurgents are waiting for political reforms for minority rights and remorse law, governments might expect disarmament as a sign of goodwill. The lack of coordination and dialogue between parties of peace processes make them vulnerable for changes in political contexts. As deadlocks slow processes down, processes are influenced more by elections, critics of opposition and abrupt developments. Both to accelerate the process and prevent misunderstandings, functions of third-parties are essential. By getting touch with both sides, conveying their mutual expectations and incorporate opposition to processes, third-party interventions can boost the cooperation and highly contribute success of peace negotiations.

Third-parties responsible for monitoring and mediating execution of the promises appear as a crucial way for credible commitments particularly on disarmament and demobilization issues and pave the way for reliable negotiations. Third-party factor can execute the duty of monitoring, present a framework for peace-agreements, get contact with two parties, conduct meetings, pose a binding threat and solve the deadlocks. So, according to these criteria, I do not describe Wise Men Committee as a third-party due to lack of functions that third-party is supposed to execute. On the other hand, Irish Taoiseach and George Mitchell's intervention appear to ensure the criteria.

I aim to trace third-party intervention and changes in payoffs through the factors above. But payoffs are not clear-cut categories and every factor does not constitute significant changes sufficient for the failure of peace negotiations. Qualitative inquiry of changes in payoffs can offer us to understand the effects of a change. For example, the electoral loss of an incumbent party during a peace process could end the process while decreasing vote share in local elections does not create the same result. So, to grasp how elections shape ongoing peace processes, I have qualitatively analyzed them in a given context. Engaging with contextual differences and similarities enables me to qualitatively examine the effects of changes in Turkey and U.K. However, payoffs of parties do not indicate an absolute and homogeneous interests. Rather, I have employed the concept of payoffs to understand the complex set of relations among incumbent parties, trans-national developments, insurgents and insurgents-related political parties. Through extensive use of news along the processes, I hope to describe these complex relations. Payoffs are not set by parties pursuing their interests but arise as a result of their relation with contextual changes.

For example, as a result of a general election, a party could update its own policies during a peace process to keep its constituents.

Employing the concept of payoffs, I aim to break the monolithic description of interests of parties, draw attention to complex relation between parties and contextual developments. Rather than calling periods as ‘close payoffs’ or ‘far payoffs’, I prefer to name periods as ‘payoffs getting close’ and ‘payoffs getting far off’. When payoffs are getting close, the political environment seems to be fertile for increasing cooperation among parties. Third-party interventions can utilize these periods and contribute highly to the success of peace processes.

The interplay between parties’ positions, payoffs, and third-party assistance contributes the result of peace processes. Through the investigation of newspapers and sequence of events, I try to clarify the micro-level dynamics linking third-party intervention and payoffs in political contexts.

## CHAPTER 3

### HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF IRA

#### 3.1 Establishment

The conflict between Irish Catholics and British Protestants dates back to long period of time. Ideologically- motivated narratives of the Republics mostly mark two points in Ireland history as a watershed. First one is Norman Invasion in 1170. Republicans supporting this date consider the British conquest of the land as the origin of the conflict. The other one is the Plantation of Ulster at the beginning of sixteenth century. Arrival of English-speaking community created an alien culture in Northern Ireland and the difference between natives and newly-arrived community had been deepened in time.

Besides these two dates, partition of Ireland in 1921 marks also an important period for the conflict. During the First World War, Irish Independence movement had already started. Irish nationalist demanded a full independence from the United Kingdom. Armed rebellions in different regions had damaged the U.K in the time of the World War. Moreover, in 1918 election, pro-independence Sein Fein party got into power and pursue secessionist policies. In 1919, members of Sein Fein boycotted the British Parliament and found an Irish Assembly called Dáil Éireann. This revolutionary Parliament combined with Irish Republic Army (IRA) launched steady armed attacks to British forces. The period between 1919 and 1921 is now named as Irish War of Independence. Government of Ireland Act 1920

the United Kingdom shattered by the financial, social and political burden of the World War passed the Government of Ireland Act in 1920 which recognized two self-governing territories, 26 counties in South and 6 counties in North-east. But the

solution could not appease the nationalist turmoil in the island. Irish Republic Army increased its guerilla attacks and communal violence reached its top level. As a result of this bloody conflict, British government and Irish representatives started to bargain and conclude a new agreement called Anglo-Irish Treaty in 1921. According to the agreement, Irish Free State was founded, British forces would withdraw from most of the Island, Ireland received a status of dominion like Canada and Northern Ireland retain its right to withdraw from Irish Free State. In 1922, Northern Ireland Assembly used its right to withdraw from Irish Free State.

After a long and bloody conflict, the Island arrived its status quo. While 26 counties in South, where Irish/Catholic population was majority, gained their independence from the U.K, six counties of north-east where 65 percent of total population was Protestant stated their will to remain the part of the United Kingdom. These six counties delegated their sovereignty to London while retaining a Parliament and autonomy on various issues. But IRA was still a threat for Protestant majority in Northern Ireland. Nationalist in Ireland and Catholic minority in Northern Ireland were seen as a potential threat by Protestants. As a response to that, Unionists who supported the status of Northern Ireland in the United Kingdom won every election until the direct rule in 1972. Majoritarian electoral system rather than proportional representation had a serious impact on this unbroken series of Unionist governments. Moreover, Unionist governments had appointed Protestants officers to critical positions including judges, magistrates and police chiefs. So, the state apparatus had been eventually occupied by Protestants. On the other hand, Catholics became an ignored minority as a result of their underrepresentation in governments and state institutions. Republicans who were supporting the unification of Ireland and Northern Ireland weakened and got repressed. It can be argued that this

Unionist-Republican dichotomy has always been a vital political contest through which Protestant-Catholic dispute unfolds itself as will be discussed in next chapters.

### 3.2 Sunningdale agreement: third-party present but payoff far off

Except low level of political opposition and communal conflict, Unionist governments starting from 1920s had not faced with any serious threat to their power until the early 60s. Civil right movements in late 50s created a world-wide atmosphere about equality and draw attention of international communities to minority rights. This wave of civil rights opened a new phase in Northern Ireland politics. Catholic minority started to demand for various internal reforms including a change in electoral system, equality in the allocation of jobs and houses. Although protestors adopted non-violent way of protesting like marches, civil forums and sit-in acts, communal violence was getting harsher and increasing. The demand for cultural recognition of Catholic minority and more equal access to political power triggered the national sentiments of Protestant majority. Prompted by rising Republican presence in public sphere, Loyalist paramilitary groups like Ulster Freedom Fighters (UFF) and the Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF) and Unionists increased their counter-reaction to reform movements. As a result of confrontations between two opposite groups, sectarian violence was going beyond the control of the Northern Ireland government.

Labor government headed by Harold Wilson was an important supporter of civil rights movements. Despite Conservative pressure, Wilson was able to adhere to internal reforms in Northern Ireland. But rising public disorder in the Island concerned the British parliament. In the summer of 1969, sectarian violence had

reached its top level and almost turned into civil war between Protestants and Catholics. Northern Ireland government headed by James Chichester-Clark was not able to deal with riots in Derry also called Battle of Bongside. As a result of that, the government called for a help from British government in 16 August 1969. British Army rolled into the Northern Ireland to repress the riots in the same day. Although British government called it as ‘limited operation’<sup>5</sup>, number of troops had increased in time and British presence in Northern Ireland became permanent.

Catholic minority welcomed the first arrival of British Army because they regarded the army as a protector of the minority rights from Protestant-dominated local police forces. But, British deployment in Northern Ireland proved the opposite. The army’s rough intervention to Irish neighborhoods and suppression of riots sparked off the grievance of Catholic minority. In such an environment, Provisional IRA, who considers itself to successor of IRA which won the Irish War of Independence in 1921, appeared as a savior of Irish/Catholic minority. Benefitting from the grievances of the marginalized minority, IRA<sup>6</sup> start to launch a guerilla war against British Occupation<sup>7</sup> in 1969.

In an unexpected way, the deployment of British Army did not appease the sectarian violence in the Island, on the contrary, it galvanized level of the violence. It was not a conflict between paramilitary forces or identity groups, but armed conflict between organized armed groups (IRA versus British Army). As IRA backed by Irish/Catholic minority intensified its armed attacks, British Army became unable to suppress them. In the meantime, general election was incoming in the United Kingdom. Rising level of violence and Unionists’ sitting with Conservative Party in

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<sup>5</sup> BBC ON THIS DAY | 14 | 1969: British troops sent into Northern Ireland

<sup>6</sup> Meaning PIRA

<sup>7</sup> Roche, P.J., & Barton, B. (Eds.). (1999). *The Northern Ireland Question: Nationalism, unionism and partition* (1st ed.). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429438615> p.15

the Westminster had heavily contributed the defeat of Labor Party in 1970 election. As a result of the election, Unionists gained an important leverage on Conservative Party.

Two weeks after the victory, British Army conducted a significant operation called 'Battle of the Falls'<sup>8</sup>. The army aimed to search for ammunition stores of IRA in an Irish Nationalist district. The conflict between nationalist youth and the army during the operation turned into an armed conflict between IRA and the Army. Although curfew was declared in the district, many civilians get wounded. Home searches by the soldiers raised the rumors of looting and mistreatment of Irish people. So, Battle of the Falls was considered as a watershed in the deteriorating relation between British Army and Irish/Catholic people. As a result of this conflict, IRA who argued to be the savior of vulnerable Catholic minority increased its prestige and consolidated its support from the minority.

While the military presence of British Army was rising, it could not be enough to defeat IRA. In the spring of 1971, the conflicts were still ongoing in a few cities. Northern Ireland government was so sapped and exhausted. James Chichester-Clark, Prime Minister and Head of Ulster Unionist Party, criticized the British government's reluctant attitude towards IRA. He considered all military activities as insufficient and resigned on 20 May<sup>9</sup> as a reaction. Brian Faulkner who was selected as new Prime Minister, pressed for internment and explain its necessity<sup>10</sup>. With the approval of British government, Faulkner introduced an internment which included arrests of hundreds of people from nationalist and Catholic background. Many people who had no connection with IRA were even detained. Irish/Catholic minority

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<sup>8</sup> Falls Curfew

<sup>9</sup> Roche, P.J., & Barton, B. (Eds.). (1999). *The Northern Ireland Question: Nationalism, unionism and partition* (1st ed.). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429438615> p.13

<sup>10</sup> Intergovernmental meeting, PRO/CAB128/48.

started to feel more alienated as a result of the internment. In parallel with that, level of recruitment in IRA and sectarian violence had significantly raised again.

After a couple of months, another tragedy erupted in 30 January 1972 called Bloody Sunday. This one had a legacy for the rest of Northern Ireland question. ( It was discussed even after Good Friday Agreement which finished the conflict in 1997 and David Cameron apologized for it in 2010). In 30 January Sunday, Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association organized a march for protesting the internment without trial. Protesters faced with a harsh reaction by the Army. British soldiers opened fire against the crowd and thirteen people were shot to death and many were wounded. Many people were injured while trying to escape from the soldiers. This mass killing had extremely alienated Irish/Catholic minority. Because Northern Ireland government cannot handle with rising sectarian violence and armed conflicts, British government had suspended Northern Ireland Parliament (Stormont) and introduced the direct rule from London in 24 March 1972. a Secretary of State, William Whitelaw, was appointed for affairs about Northern Ireland.

Although direct rule could harm the sovereignty rights of people living in Northern Ireland, it did not draw so much criticism from the Unionists. Direct rule was regarded as more efficient solution in dealing with IRA while weakening the control of local people. Whitelaw had continued the previous reform program about minority rights, appease the political atmosphere and struggle with IRA. After a couple of months, 26 June, IRA called a truce. Despite the short-lived truce which finished in 9 July, Whitelaw “attributed the ceasefire to Britain’s success in isolating the IRA from the minority”<sup>11</sup>.

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<sup>11</sup> Roche, P.J., & Barton, B. (Eds.). (1999). *The Northern Ireland Question: Nationalism, unionism and partition* (1st ed.). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429438615> p.15

In March 1973, British government had an early try to devolve the power back to Northern Ireland people. Official guide which included Northern Ireland Assembly whose members were elected by proportional representation, power-sharing executive and consultative body composed of the members of Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland. Though the proposal had caused a fragmentation in the Unionist, especially regarding consultative role of Republic of Ireland, all parties accepted to run in the next election of Northern Ireland Assembly. The election was held in 28 June and boycotted by the majority of Nationalists. The result showed more equal representation of minority in the executive and the legislative. Social Democratic and Labor Party called SDLP which represents the soft-liner section of Nationalists and Unionist UUP had won the majority of the votes. While leader of the Unionist, Brian Faulkner, was elected as Chief Executive, SDLP leader was elected as deputy chief executive. So, inter-communal executive was pretty ensured.

With concessions on all sides<sup>12</sup>, there occurred a pretty stable harmony between SDLP and UUP. While power-sharing in the executive was considered as an important step for the protection of Irish/ Catholic minority, it was not enough for SDLP. Consultative body composed of the members of Ireland Parliament and Northern Ireland Assembly indicated in the main proposal was demanded to realize. On the other hand, this article in proposal drew a significant opposition of hardliner Unionists and caused internal fragmentation in UUP. In other words, Faulkner, the leader of UUP, had gained an upper hand in the Executive in return for an increasing internal opposition in the party. So, the consultative body demanded by SDLP caused a new dispute both in the executive and the Unionists.

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<sup>12</sup> Roche, P.J., & Barton, B. (Eds.). (1999). *The Northern Ireland Question: Nationalism, unionism and partition* (1st ed.). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429438615> p.16

The talks on the consultative body called Council of Ireland started between British Prime Minister, Irish Prime Minister and three pro-agreement parties in Northern Ireland (SDLP, UUP and Alliance Party). On 9 December 1973, the agreement called later Sunningdale Agreement was issued. Then according to the agreed principles, the Council of Ireland is consisted of two bodies. Council of Ministers, the first body, is consisted of fourteen members from Irish and Northern Irish executives and has executive functions and consultative roles. On the other hand, second body called Consultative Assembly is composed of sixty members from Irish and Northern Ireland Assemblies.

Had already been very skeptical about any joint-authority with the Republic of Ireland, the Unionists felt quite threatened by the scope<sup>13</sup> and functions of Council of Ireland. Their fear was echoed by SDLP councilor Hugh Logue who publicly declared that the council of Ireland “the vehicle that would trundle unionists into a united Ireland”<sup>14</sup>. Critical attitudes of Unionist opposition started to be supported by Loyalist paramilitary groups in the streets. Political atmosphere in Northern Ireland started to resemble the period before Direct rule.

Unionist opposition in UUP started to seize the power in the Unionist Council and harshly question the leadership of pro-agreement Brian Faulkner. On the other hand, Conservative Party started to be criticized by the Unionist and they approached Sunningdale Agreement as a betrayal by Conservative Party. Conservative union with Unionist parties in Westminster was ended. . The final blow to Conservative Party and Brian Faulkner leadership had done as a result of general elections held in February 1974. For the first time, Northern Ireland parties run the election without sitting with Conservative Party in Westminster and 1970 election

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<sup>13</sup> CAIN: Events: Sunningdale Agreement, December 1973 (ulster.ac.uk) 8th principle

<sup>14</sup> CAIN: Chronology of the Conflict 1974 (ulster.ac.uk)

appeared as the last election in which UK-wide parties could get a vote from Northern Ireland.

The result of the election was devastating both for Conservative Party and Brian Faulkner. For the former, Conservative Party had lost the majority as a result of eleven seats won by Unionist rejectionists. They did not anymore sit with Conservative Party. For the latter, there appeared an extreme pressure on Faulker's leadership because he lost the control of members of Parliament. So, he was forced to resign by Unionist rejectionists.

The executive seemed to lose the control in Northern Ireland as a result of hung parliament. Benefitting from instability in the Parliament, Loyalists captured the control of streets and settle barricades. Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF) carried out bombing attacks in Dublin and Monaghan to deter any interference by the Republic of Ireland in internal issues of Northern Ireland<sup>15</sup>. On the other hand, Unionists organized the working class of Protestants and call for a strike. As indicated, "The Ulster Worker's Council strike (begun 15 May 1974) precipitated Sunningdale's collapse"<sup>16</sup>. Pressure of the Unionists on both local and central government had reached its top level at the end of the month. Then, Faulkner eventually resigned in 28 May which signified also the collapse of inter-communal executive. Anti-agreement Harry West became his successor in UUP. The Northern Ireland Assemble was prorogued for four months. So, Sunningdale Agreement came to end and Direct Rule from London resumed.

Sunningdale Agreement points out an early attempt for Northern Ireland conflict. Almost all of the principles such as inter-communal executive, proportional

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<sup>15</sup> Roche, P.J., & Barton, B. (Eds.). (1999). *The Northern Ireland Question: Nationalism, unionism and partition* (1st ed.). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429438615> p.17

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid* p.17

government and Council of Ireland constitute the main tenets of Good Friday Agreement in 1998. In that sense, Sunningdale Agreement is argued to be 'failed Good Friday'. The reasons for its failure can be listed: 1) Unionist rejectionists had an important leverage on Conservative Party and won eleven of twelve seats in Northern Ireland in 1974 election, leading to overthrow of Conservative government 2) The support of Irish nationalists could not be ensured 3) Majority government could not be formed, which caused an indecisive attitude taken against Loyalist paramilitary forces and Unionists. Overall, first serious attempt of peace negotiations by British government, Conservative government, resulted in the end of Parliamentary coalition of Conservative and Unionists parties in Westminster, rising interference of Republic of Ireland and more support from Catholic minority for IRA due to failed political solutions.

Overall, because it was the first serious attempt of British governments to offer political solution to Northern Ireland, it is important to show threats to possible political negotiations. Sunningdale Agreement marks two important points regarding the historical legacy of Northern Ireland problem. Firstly, third-party intervention does not directly lead to successful political solution. Unionists appeared to have a credible electoral threat to Conservative government and use its parliamentary whip for overthrowing it. Retreat of Unionist Parliamentarians caused a hung parliament and nationwide political instability. Secondly, not only IRA but also Loyalist forces should be included in political processes. Without their inclusion, the level of violence became a critical factor that is harmful for political solutions. These reasons increased the cost of sustaining peace and caused the collapse of solutions. Sunningdale Agreement, despite some drawbacks, represents a case of third-party present, payoff far off.

### 3.2.1 Sri Lankan Case

Here I can address another important case of third-party present, payoff far off. In Sri Lankan case, while third party position was occupied by Norway and various host countries where the peace talks occurred, the payoffs were substantially changed. Ranil Wickremasinghe was elected as prime minister in the election of 2002 due to its pro-peace attitudes. As expected, he initiated the talks in 2002 with LTTE under active provision of Norwegian committee. Two parties officialized a Memorandum of Understanding and agree on ceasefire-agreement. They also accepted a monitoring committee, called Sri Lanka Monitoring Mission. Moreover, Sri Lankan government lifted its long ban on LTTE and enable formal negotiations. But negotiations did not take a long time due to fresh election called by the dissident President in April 2004. Under the pressure from its party which adopted a hardliner approach on LTTE issue, President Kumaratunga firstly declared a state of emergency and took the responsibility of three crucial ministries including the Ministry of Defense. He further formed an alliance with other political parties in which common denominator was anti-LTTE campaigns. Kumaratunga-led coalition won the election in 2004, which was a watershed in the peace negotiation. From this point, the incumbent became very depended on nationalist, or anti-talk, agenda.

Moreover, disastrous tsunami struck Sri Lanka and cause an enormous damage in the country. For the better organization of human power and economic resources reserved for post-tsunami development, LTTE and the government had agreed on Post-Tsunami Operational Management Structure (P-TOMS). But, as expected, this organization was strongly opposed by one of coalition partners, JVP, and it left the coalition in protest. Kumaratunga had to scrap P-TOMS. These

substantial changes inhibited the ability of parties to commit themselves to the peace negotiation. Then it was failed in 2006.

Similar to Unionists electoral leverage, JVP's position as a coalition ally hampered the peace process and finally cause its collapse. Unlike Unionists, JVP is a Leninist-Marxist party. Therefore, without context-based analysis, anti-peace parties and payoffs cannot be assumed. Despite Norwegian intervention and monitoring committee, the election as a result of which an anti-peace party gained an electoral leverage prevented the concessions that were supposed to be given by the incumbent party to proceed on negotiations. As in Sunningdale, third-party intervention did not suffice the success of political negotiations and payoffs that were far off due to fresh election and raising power of the anti-peace party prevented the ongoing negotiations.

### 3.3 Anglo-Irish agreement

Minority government of Labor Party could not manage to handle the process under these circumstances and called for a new election. General election was held in October, second election in 1974, and resulted in Labor Party victory with a majority of three seats. Although this narrow majority enabled Labor Party to form a majority government, it also made the government fragile to any opposition inside. If the government cannot secure its three-seats-majority, then it could become a minority government.

Labor policies until 1979 election mostly concentrated on the economic causes of Northern Ireland problem and approach the problem as an internal problem of UK rather than internationalizing it. The root of sectarian violence was thought to be economic backwardness of the region compare to other parts of UK. Therefore,

Labor government focused on increasing economic investments, improving social provisions and increasing security measures. Such efforts were thought to legitimize the active role of British government in the eyes of Northern Ireland people, particularly Catholic/Irish citizens.

In accordance with the strategical approach of Labor governments, Brian Barton writes “Thus, the number of troops in the Six Counties was reduced (by 6000 during 1972–76), and local policing services expanded (to over 10,000 Royal Ulster Constabulary and reservists in 1977) and their arms, equipment and organization improved. Simultaneously, steps were taken to stimulate the Ulster economy, to eradicate the causes of disorder and counteract its impact on investment”<sup>17</sup>. This new approach which was predicated on economic lens actually transformed the nature of Northern Ireland problem from political issue to criminal problem. As a result of that, special category status of PIRA members, which gained in 1972 negotiations, was repealed. In response, IRA members in prison initiated a campaign by not wearing official prisoner cloths and undertaking hunger strike<sup>18</sup>. Despite limited public interest in UK, hunger strike contributed the internationalization of Irish question by raising human rights questions in international public opinion.

The failure of Sunningdale Agreement and criminalization of Northern Ireland problem caused a huge disappointment among the minority. While Unionists accepted the survival of Direct Rule from Westminster, Catholic/Irish minority was not proposed any guarantee of their political rights. Westminster also was not able to initiate a new political agenda for the problem. Under these circumstances, Republicans were forced to reassess their strategy. They firstly became aware of the fact that this fight cannot result in a quick victory but seem to be a ‘long war’.

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<sup>17</sup> Ibid p.19

<sup>18</sup> Ibid p.19

Secondly, military campaign cannot generate the expected result unless it is combined with political campaign. To fulfill that, Republicans began to adopt a new approach called 'twin-track' ( this approach was also adopted in Good Friday negotiations in a different way).

According to this new approach, while new guerilla methods were introduced in armed struggle such as underground cells, new battalions and special training programs, political appeal to marginalized Irish/Catholic minority mainly through Sien Fein was given primary importance. Successful implication of twin-track approach created a different episode in the history of Sein Fein. It became an active political party which enabled party officials to consolidate its Christian/Irish constituents and create its own party system, not an organization that only tried to legitimize and support IRA attacks.

However, in addition to high inflation, negative effects of Labor policies regarding Northern Ireland problem also contributed the overthrow of the Labor government in 1979. Labor Party lost its majority of 3 seats and had to form a coalition government firstly with Liberals and then with the Unionists. This enforced political marriage (Labor- Unionist) alienated the Northern Ireland Nationalists in the Parliament further. This political choice cost Labor Party a lot in voting in the Parliament. When Thatcher triggered an early election by tabling the motion of no confidence in March 1979 in which Labor government lost 310 to 311 votes<sup>19</sup> as a result of two Northern nationalists who abstained from voting.

In 1979 election, Conservative Party ousted his opponent and form its government with parliamentary majority of 43 seats. This election also marks the beginning of 18-years consecutive Conservative governments. Margaret Thatcher

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<sup>19</sup> Ibid p.19

was selected as a prime minister and signal for the incoming Thatcher revolution with her speaks.

Thatcher's government attitudes towards Northern Ireland resembled the policies of preceding governments. It was still considered as an internal problem and approach through economic developments. Devolution attempts were also continued as a political mean to solve the problem. First attempt came in early 1980 under the international pressure of the U.S. Local politicians were gathered in a conference to discuss the feasibility of regional government in Northern Ireland. UUP, Unionist Party, harshly declined to join the conference and contributed the collapse of the conference. The second attempt came in 1982, but this time SDLP, moderate Nationalist party, refused to participate. Despite two attempts, common ground between Nationalist and Unionist could not be found.

This political deadlock in dialogue channels and agenda-setting created a fertile ground for Sein Fein' achievements. Changing their strategical manner in late 70s, Sein Fein, political representative of IRA and Republican movement, became an important political actor trying to consolidate Irish constituents while remaining to support military campaign. A famous Sein Fein member succinctly conveyed their strategy "Will anyone here object if, with a ballot paper in one hand and an Armalite in the other hand, we take power in Ireland?"<sup>20</sup>. This new strategy was then formulated as armalite/ballot box strategy which prevailed along 1980s until Good Friday Agreement.

Thatcher had witnessed many problems and crisis during her first term including Falkland War and economic recession. Despite all, Conservative Party under Thatcher's leadership managed to win the election with the parliamentary

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<sup>20</sup> *ibid* p.20

majority of 144 seats. Consolidating its parliamentary power, Thatcher was able to adopt more decisive attitude toward Northern Ireland. But, Republican-Unionist limited the available policy options. While Republicans refused the veto right of Unionist and demand for cross-community ruling body, Unionist insisted on majority rule and consent principle, two opposite demands which cannot be fulfilled at the same time.

Financial burden of PIRA attacks and political instability in Northern Ireland became quite drastic for the government. Security-related problems had inhibited both domestic and foreign investment and caused indirect economic burden in the state while deployment of the Army was a reason for direct financial burden. In addition, Northern Ireland problem paved the way for increasing international pressure and deteriorating foreign relations overall.

While Conservative Party conduct a meeting in Grand Hotel, PIRA had carried out bombing attacks. This was the final straw for security concerns and increased the pressure on the government to deal with PIRA problem. Ultimately, reinforced by vast parliamentary majority, Thatcher took a radical step on Northern Ireland issue. Bypassing Unionist and Republican parties, Thatcher and Irish Taoiseach (prime minister) Garret FitzGerald signed an agreement called later Anglo-Irish Agreement in 15 November 1985.

In the scope of the Agreement, Anglo-Irish Intergovernmental Conference in which ministers and representatives of both states could meet in regular basis was established, consultative role of Irish Republic was recognized and consent principle was accepted. The last principle stands for the recognition that Northern Ireland remains as a part of the United Kingdom as long as majority of the people living

there wish it. This principle was thought as a means to attract Unionist support while new consultative role of Irish Republic was desirable for Republicans.

All the expectations from Anglo-Irish Agreement proved to be wrong. Sein Fein, Republican Party, denounced the Agreement and claim that the Agreement was signed to marginalize Sein Fein. The agreement was seen as a betrayal by the Unionists. On the other hand, Unionist harshly criticized the consultive role of Ireland Republic and the government's ignoring their opinion. Following declarations regarding the Agreement, mass demonstrations, which were called ' day of action', had started in Northern Ireland. Unionist protests included the refusal of paying tax, disturbing the working of councils and boycott talks with British ministers<sup>21</sup>. The last blow of the Unionist protest came with the resignation of 15 MPs in Westminster. Their resignation aimed to put pressure on Thatcher government for by-election. As Thatcher said "Our concessions alienated the unionists without gaining the level of security cooperation we had a right to expect"<sup>22</sup>.

However, political reactions were also followed by military campaigns. Loyalist forces began to attack Catholic citizens and carry out bombing attack in Dublin in 1986 to deter interest of Republic of Ireland in Northern Ireland. On the other hand, PIRA had intensified its military attacks on British forces. Considering the overall consequences of Anglo-Irish Agreement, it can be argued that the agreement could not produce the expected results. But, despite the reactions, Intergovernmental conference was not repealed and had convened 30 times until 1989<sup>23</sup>. Thatcher's government, due to its vast parliamentary majority, could be able

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<sup>21</sup> Ibid p.25

<sup>22</sup> Ibid p.25

<sup>23</sup> Ibid p.25

to sustain its power as an incumbent. Incoming election in 1987 offered an important opportunity for Conservative Party to restore its legitimacy in Westminster.

Thatcher won her third consecutive electoral victory in Westminster with a parliamentary majority of 50 seats. This notable victory of Conservatives drove other parties to reconsider their electoral strategies. Although armalite/ballot box strategy produced important results for the Republican movement, it became got stuck as a result of consolidated Conservative government and military stalemate in 1980s. This political deadlock which produced electoral inefficacy was noticed by major nationalist parties, SDLP and Sein Fein. So, the leader of SDLP, John Hume, and that of Sein Fein, Gerry Adams, had met for discussion of the possibility of common nationalist ground between them. While they agreed on many issues including right to self-determination and Unionists' veto right, Adams's view on armed struggle differed from Hume's. Adams still insisted on the continuation of armed struggle as a strategic leverage against British governments, Hume was skeptical about the use of physical force due to its devastating affects both on Catholics and Protestants<sup>24</sup>.

However, Unionists keep at their protest which started right after Anglo-Irish Agreement against British ministers. But, compare to reactions given for Sunningdale Agreement, they could not achieve considerable success this time. It appeared that Unionist started to lose their influence on Conservative Party due to vast parliamentary majority and consecutive victory of Conservative governments. Therefore, Unionists left the strategy of protesting and joined British-initiated Brooke-Mayhew talks started in 1990 when the functioning of the Agreement was suspended.

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<sup>24</sup> More Catholics were died compare to the deaths in the Troubles.

Besides paving the way for Unionists' involvement, the meetings, Brooke and Mayhew talks produced substantial results for Northern Ireland problem. Firstly, three-strand agenda was introduced and adopted in the talks. First strand deals with the internal institutions of Northern Ireland including devolved government. Strand two was about the relation between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland while Strand three was on the relation between Great Britain and the Republic of Ireland. For all of these strands, the principle that nothing is agreed until everything is agreed was accepted. Although Brooke-Mayhew talks attempted to create a fertile ground for discussion between Unionists and SDLP, neither agreement was reached nor any solution was accepted.

Sein Fein condemned the talks because parties involved in physical force were not invited, including loyalist groups. IRA exploded a bomb in London to get an upper hand in future talks but it marginalized the group in Brooke-Mayhew talks further. On the other hand, loyalist paramilitary forces increased their attacks on Catholic minority. In 1992-93, loyalists had murdered more people than republicans. In response, Republicans began new military campaign. Compare to the last period of 80s, level of violence in Northern Ireland was considerably rising in the first half of 90s. This level of violence caused an increase in the antipathy that citizens had felt towards paramilitary groups. The result of the election in 1992 clearly denoted the decreasing electoral power of Sein Fein whose votes fell to ten percent and the leader, Gerry Adams, lost its seat. This political conjecture resulted in Hume-Adams document in which Anglo-Irish-Agreement-like demands were made. Republican movement basically demanded that British government should facilitate the unity of Northern Ireland and Republic of Ireland by persuading unionist majority. This

radical demand was answer by so-called contrary document called *Downing Street Declaration*.

In 15 December 1993, British prime minister and Irish Taoiseach were met to discuss Northern Ireland issue. They mostly approve the principles of Hume-Adams document and declare that people of Northern Ireland have right to self-determine their future and it should depend on majority of the people. By this declaration, Britain actually abstained from taking the role of persuader of Irish unity but facilitator of the decision made by the majority of Northern Ireland people.

The declaration was seen as an important change in traditional British policy on Northern Ireland and celebrated by the leader of Sein Fein, Gerry Adams. Almost a month later, Gerry Adams was given a visa and Clinton appeared for the first time as a mediator of Northern Ireland problem. With other compromises and policy changes<sup>25</sup>, there appeared a substantial pressure on PIRA to declare a ceasefire, which resulted in the end of military operations declared by PIRA in 31 August 1994.

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<sup>25</sup> Roche, P.J., & Barton, B. (Eds.). (1999). *The Northern Ireland Question: Nationalism, unionism and partition* (1st ed.). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429438615> p.32

## CHAPTER 4

### NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN 1994-1997

Before moving on to negotiations, under which conditions Conservative Party had entered the talks should be investigated further to construe the weakness of negotiations. United Kingdom had gone through the long series of Conservative Government starting from 1979 election under Margaret Thatcher's leadership. Despite being able to stay in power, Conservative governments were on a weakening trend until 1983 election in which Conservatives formed a government with the majority of 144 seats.

In 1992 election, the last election before the start of peace talks, Conservative Party was able to remain in power with the majority of ten seats, which was pretty close gap. Compare to Thatcher's government that had signed the Anglo-Irish Agreement in 1985, Major's governments had a quite low bargaining power vis a vis both the Unionists and Republicans. The former had a historical leverage on Conservative Party and pose a potential threat of drawing its electoral support back and press for vote of no confidence in the Parliament as happened in Sunningdale Agreement. Considering the weakening electoral majority in the Parliament, it could be observed that Conservative Party started to look for a coalition ally and its policies would be shaped by possible ally options.

Throughout 80s, while U.K had initiated many military operations and social policies to impede the social legitimacy of Irish Republican Army among Catholic minority, considerable progress could not be made. IRA responded harshly to these by not only bombing attacks in major cities but also political propaganda. Both U.K and Northern Ireland had been economically hampered as a result of unsecure

environment created by the conflict. So, both parties, U.K government and IRA stepped in 90s under the exhausting psychology of war and military stalemate. That's is the main reason why substantial talks initiatives had been made at the beginning of 90s, such as Mayhew-Brooke talks.

#### 4.1 Third-party present but payoffs far off

The period starting from the declaration of the ceasefire by IRA to next general election in 1997 is marked by significant third-party interventions by G. Mitchell and Irish Taoiseach and insufficient payoffs for the parties. While third-party assistance was able to offer credible solution for disarmament problem, increase cooperation among parties and outline fundamental principles of negotiations, those interventions fell short to sustain the progression of negotiations. On the other hand, this period of negotiations encountered with decreasing parliamentary majority of Conservative government, less concessions given by Conservative government in return and increasing power of anti-peace Unionists. So, third-party assistance in this period did not suffice to transform the nature of the conflict but highly contribute the process.

The attempts in 90s brought results in 31 August 1994 when IRA declared a ceasefire<sup>26</sup>. In IRA perspective, ceasefire could be utilized to create the pan-nationalist front with Irish Republic and SDLP who were supporter of non-violent means for the solution of Northern Ireland conflict. A week after the ceasefire, pan-nationalist bloc gave its first public image. Irish Prime Minister, the leader of SDLP, John Hume, and the leader of Sein Fein, Gerry Adams had met in Dublin and shook hand publicly. In 16 September, broadcasting ban on Sein Fein was lifted and Irish

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<sup>26</sup> (September 1, 1994). IRA STATEMENT. The Guardian (London).  
<https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:3TDH-OCT0-006X-B0FS-00000-00&context=1516831>.

Prime minister made a statement regarding the constitutional arrangements between South and North Ireland. So, ceasefire was very welcomed by Irish nationalist front and opened a new era for non-violent means, namely negotiations.

#### 4.1.1 Framework Documents

Unionist and Conservative government were not as pleased as the nationalists, but suspicious<sup>27</sup>. Unionists tended to consider the ceasefire as a tactical move not a “*moral change of hearts*”<sup>28</sup>. As one DUP member succinctly summarized the meaning of ceasefire to Unionist block, “it is more like a comma rather than a full stop”<sup>29</sup>. So, Unionists were quite skeptical about ceasefire and rejected the possibility of talks with Sein Fein. Their beforehand attitude also blocked the way to multi-party talks in which all political parties were supposed to join. On the other hand, while welcoming its declare, British government had the similar question marks about ceasefire<sup>30</sup>. Without being sure about its permanency, the government avoided initiating formal talks with Sein Fein. In 21 October, John Major made a speech in Belfast and raised the question of ‘permanency of the ceasefire’ for the first time. He publicly declared his ‘working assumption’ that the ceasefire was meant to be permanent<sup>31</sup>.

First meeting with Sein Fein representatives happened in 9 December<sup>32</sup>. But the meeting was quite ineffective due to different demands of two parties. British

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<sup>27</sup> Stephen Bates, Political Correspondent. (September 1, 1994). POLITICIANS GIVE A WARY WELCOME. *The Guardian* (London).

<sup>28</sup> Macginty, R., Ginty, R. M., & Darby, J. (2002). *Guns and Government: The management of the Northern Ireland peace process*. Palgrave Macmillan Ltd. p.29

<sup>29</sup> *ibid* p.29

<sup>30</sup> Martin Woollacott. (September 1, 1994). COMMENTARY: THE PROMISE OF PEACE. *The Guardian* (London).

<sup>31</sup> David Sharrock In Belfast. (October 22, 1994). MAJOR SETS SINN FEIN TALKS DATE; Ban on Gerry Adams lifted and border curbs removed. *The Guardian* (London).

<sup>32</sup> David Sharrock In Belfast. (December 9, 1994). SINN FEIN ANNOUNCES HARDLINE TEAM FOR TALKS; Three delegates ex-IRA members. *The Guardian* (London).

government avoided authorizing any meeting with ministers but only with officials and demand IRA to call its ceasefire ‘permanent’ and take a step on decommissioning as a way to its good faith. On the other hand, while ignoring the demands of the governments, IRA pushed for a meeting with ministers, release of prisoners and immediate start of all-party talks<sup>33</sup>. The demands of two parties made compromise almost impossible. So, the first meeting could not produce a positive result that was expected to and show the large gap between the agendas of British government and Sein Fein. This lack seemed to be enough to create a deadlock in the process.

Because the talk between government officials and Sein Fein proved to be ineffective, Irish and British Prime Minister had met to speed up the process. The meeting produced the first serious document in the process called *Framework Documents* and it was the first third-party assistance in this period. Prime Ministers agreed on basic principles that would be followed throughout the peace negotiations. Both governments expressed their intention to give more power back to Northern Ireland government that is accountable to Northern Ireland people and readopted three strands<sup>34</sup> approach<sup>35</sup>. This approach symbolized the acceptance of transnational character of Irish problem, which meant that British government accepted that the Republic of Ireland had a say on the Northern Ireland problem. In addition to arrangements about internal political structure of Northern Ireland, it also considered its relation with Irish Republic. Because of sharing its border in South, Northern

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<sup>33</sup> David Sharrock In Belfast. (December 10, 1994). NORTHERN IRELAND MAKES HISTORY. *The Guardian* (London).

<sup>34</sup> Strand 1: internal affairs of Northern Ireland. Strand 2: The institutions governing the relation between Northern Ireland and Republic of Ireland. Strand 3: The institutions governing the relation between British and Irish governments

<sup>35</sup> Michael White, Political Editor. (February 22, 1995). MOLYNEAUX SEEKS POWER-SHARING ASSEMBLY; Unionist parties aim to avoid being seen as blocking peace process. *The Guardian*

Ireland has always been open to the effects of political changes in the Republic of Ireland. It is also important for IRA because the south border can easily be utilized for carrying human resources and military equipment. In this sense, the relation between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland resembles the geographic and ethnic ties between East of Turkey and Kurdish Autonomous Region in Iraq. Unlike Turkish case which will be later discussed in detail, trans-national nature of Irish problem had been considered during negotiations.

Framework Documents are quite encompassing in terms of its subjects. British and Irish government had discussed not only political arrangements and electoral reforms that can be done in Northern Ireland but also financial funding in negotiations. Broad perspective adopted in the documents demonstrated the key role of Irish government in the negotiations. On the other hand, Conservative government's strategy of finding a middle way between Unionist fears and Republican's demands shows itself in Framework Documents. While British government tried to draw the support of Republicans, it also gave an assurance to Unionists bloc by insisting on the fact that Northern Ireland is a part of the United Kingdom<sup>36</sup>. But documents also opened the way for unification of Northern Ireland and Republic of Ireland, which was the dream target of Republican movement, by stressing decisive role of Northern Ireland people on the choice of the unification. This shows us the hesitant attitude of Conservative government and lack of payoffs which can motivate the government to ignore Unionists pressure and commit the negotiations better.

Despite speeding up the process, Framework Documents could not generate enough enthusiasm and had limited practical affects. Firstly, Republicans were

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<sup>36</sup> Article 3 in Framework Documents

troubled with the portray of Northern Ireland as a part of the United Kingdom because they expect Britain to leave Northern Ireland in a short period of time. But, on the contrary, Framework Documents accepted the British presence and not call for its withdrawal. Secondly, Unionists were not also satisfied and quite skeptical about the unification. They consider the documents as a price that British government should pay in return for IRA ceasefire<sup>37</sup>. Unionist response was not only for British government but also for their parties. It was the beginning of events which ended up with the change in party leadership in UUP, main Unionist party<sup>38</sup>. Lack of reaction by party members to possible negotiations with IRA and its political representative Sein Fein (SF) got reaction from the root and caused a change in leadership later.

While the effects of Framework Documents still echoed among the followers of two blocks, Unionists and Republicans, one of watersheds in the process came up in Northern Ireland Secretary Patrick Mayhew's visit to the U.S. In his speech on March 7<sup>th</sup>, he clearly manifested British government's demands for substantive talks with IRA. Firstly, IRA has to show its willingness to disarm. Secondly, it has to agree on how to implement decommissioning. And lastly, he emphasized the need for "actual decommissioning of some arms"<sup>39</sup> before the start of substantive talks.

The principles that Mayhew put forth, which were called 'Washington 3', clearly expressed the stance of British government on decommissioning. Although the demand for disarmament implicitly raised before, it became a precondition after Mayhew's statements. British governments apparently insisted not only on

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<sup>37</sup> Roche, P.J., & Barton, B. (Eds.). (1999). *The Northern Ireland Question: Nationalism, unionism and partition (1st ed.)*. Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429438615> p.33

<sup>38</sup> David Trimble won the party leadership in September 1995

<sup>39</sup> <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/washington-3-the-condition-too-far-washington-3-the-condition-too-far-1599797.html>

Martin Walker In Washington And David Sharrock In Belfast. (March 8, 1995). IRA ARMS SURRENDER NEED ONLY BE 'TOKEN' Compromise offer by Mayhew to get Sinn Fein into talks. *The Guardian* (London).

commitment to disarmament in principle but also its actual implication. However, Republicans clearly rejected the principles and regarded them as a pointless excuse of British government not to start the substantive talks with Sein Fein<sup>40</sup>. Peace process seemed to be stuck at decommissioning problem.

On May 10<sup>th</sup>, peace process was revived following news about first official talk between a British minister and Sein Fein at Stormont, Parliament building of Northern Ireland. It was the first talk between a state official and Sein Fein after 1921 Treaty negotiations<sup>41</sup>. It was thought that British government ceases to push for demands on decommissioning and start all-party talks. But it proved to be wrong soon<sup>42</sup>. Michael Ancram, British minister in charge in the meeting, clearly stated that the talks were 'exploratory' rather than being substantive, and reiterate the demands on decommissioning one more time. "Mr. Ancram stressed that for Sinn Fein to move into substantive political dialogue there would have to be progress on IRA decommissioning in three areas: an agreement to progressive disposal of arms; agreement on the way it would take place; and some decommissioning to indicate IRA goodwill"<sup>43</sup>. On the other hand, IRA representatives did not negotiate decommissioning issue and repeat their own demands. They mainly pushed for immediate start of all-party talks, amnesty for IRA prisoners and the end of British military presence in Northern Ireland in a short period of time. So, two sides could not compromise and the meeting could not produce any new result.

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<sup>40</sup> Macginty, R., Ginty, R. M., & Darby, J. (2002). *Guns and Government: The management of the Northern Ireland peace process*. Palgrave Macmillan Ltd. p.31

<sup>41</sup> Ibid p.31 ( But CAIN said it was 23 years)

<sup>42</sup> Jonathan Steele In Moscow And David Sharrock In Belfast. (May 10, 1995). MAJOR CALLS ON SINN FEIN TO DROP RHETORIC AS OPEN AGENDA IS LAID FOR TALKS. *The Guardian (London)*.

<sup>43</sup> David Sharrock In Belfast. (May 11, 1995). 'SATISFIED' SINN FEIN STUDIES PLAN FOR WEAPONS DECOMMISSIONING. *The Guardian (London)*.

Decommissioning problem and lack of agenda between the government and Sein Fein seemed to be beyond the capabilities of two sides to find a common ground by themselves. Repeated problematization of these issues by parties and inability to take a step by any of them proved a need for third-party assistance.

On May 17<sup>th</sup>, Patrick Mayhew, Secretary State for Northern Ireland, attended an investment conference in the U.S. The leader of Sein Fein, Gerry Adams, was also invited to the conference. The two informally met both in the conference and the hotel where Mayhew had stayed. Although Adams regarded the meeting as a positive step that could move the process forward, Mayhew restated insistent British stance by saying “I won't negotiate with a party associated with a paramilitary organization that won't give up its arms”<sup>44</sup>. British government seemed to stick to decommissioning precondition and thus maintain its Unionists support in Westminster. This policy could not carry the peace process forward and British government could not respond to demands of Sein Fein.

On July 3<sup>rd</sup>, Patrick Mayhew took one step further which both indicated a Unionist tendency in British government policies and a pressure on Sein Fein for decommissioning. Upon the order of Mayhew, former British soldier, Lee Clegg, who was accused of killing an eighteen-year-old girl was released. He was sentenced to life imprisonment because of the murder. Unionists campaigned for his release because they thought he was doing his job in a checkpoint. But nationalists harshly criticized his excessive use of lethal force and the judge's decision settled a resentful nationalist crowd. The incident turned into a symbol for hostility toward British forces in Northern Ireland.

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<sup>44</sup> <https://www.nytimes.com/1995/05/25/world/gerry-adams-and-briton-discuss-ulster-peace-in-washington.html>

Upon the release of Lee Clegg, many riots happened in nationalist areas while Unionists were happy for correction of a wrong decision<sup>45</sup>. Timing of the release denotes for a strategic move of British government. Unionists started to feel quite secure about the peace process as a result of Conservative Party's skeptical attitude towards Sein Fein and IRA ceasefire. On the other hand, Republicans were very annoyed of the decision. Sein Fein regarded it as a threat to peace process and blamed the government<sup>46</sup>. Making such a move also gives the clue of Unionists leverage on Conservative government.

In the same month<sup>47</sup>, one more meeting was arranged between Patrick Mayhew and Gerry Adams. It was the first official talk between them besides the informal talk in the U.S. Despite the expectation, the two could not compromise. Sein Fein was disappointed of failed attempts of British government and its insistent position on decommissioning. Gerry Adams regarded the process as "...doomed to collapse"<sup>48</sup>. Until a foreign intervention to process, it seemed to be so gloomy for both sides.

#### 4.1.2 Joint Communique and Mitchell Report

"The Irish government felt that British insistence on prior decommissioning was allowing a unique opportunity to slide away" writes Roger to depict the period since July 1994. The main reason appears to decreasing parliamentary majority of Conservative government and structural problems about decommissioning and

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<sup>45</sup> <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-9012351/Wrongly-jailed-soldier-calls-Troubles-veterans-protected-alleged-historic-offences.html>

<sup>46</sup> Owen Bowcott. (July 5, 1995). OLD SUSPICIONS RESURFACE AFTER DAY OF RIOTING; Owen Bowcott in Belfast on the frustration and anger over the release of Private Clegg. *The Guardian* (London).

<sup>47</sup> July 27th

<sup>48</sup> Macginty, R., Ginty, R. M., & Darby, J. (2002). *Guns and Government: The Management of the Northern Ireland Peace Process*. Palgrave Macmillan Ltd. p.39

agenda. In 1995, Conservatives lost its four Parliamentarians. Two of them had died and Conservatives lost the by-elections. The other two defected to other parties. Alan Howarth defected to Labor Party and was the first Parliamentarian who defected directly from Conservative Party to Labor. Emma Nicholson defected from Conservatives to Liberal Democrats by criticizing its party as ‘being too Conservative’<sup>49</sup>. Such developments both signaled the opposition inside Conservative Party ( not necessarily about negotiations) and increase its need for an ally in the Parliament to ensure its incumbency. Under such domestic conditions, to spirit up the peace process, Irish government and British government announced a meeting again in November and published Joint Communiqué. It was the first attempt to solve decommissioning problem out; therefore, the document was one of benchmarks in the whole peace process.

According to Joint Communiqué, decommissioning issue started at the same time with all-party talks. This strategy was named ‘ twin-track' approach. Thus, decommissioning could not be used as an excuse for delaying all-party talks. An independent international body was created as a responsible institution for monitoring decommissioning and advise both governments on that issue. In the document, the duties of the committee are stated as “Identify and advise on a suitable and acceptable method for full and verifiable decommissioning; and report whether there is a clear commitment on the part of those in possession of such arms to work constructively to achieve that”<sup>50</sup>. Senator George Mitchell was selected<sup>51</sup> to chair that international body<sup>52</sup>.

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<sup>49</sup> <https://newspaperarchive.com/politics-clipping-jan-01-1996-1771759/>

<sup>50</sup> British and Irish Governments. Joint Communiqué, 28 November 1995

<sup>51</sup> Patrick Wintour. (November 29, 1995). LAST-DITCH ARMS COMPROMISE SAVES IRISH PEACE; February target date set for talks after Bruton's dash to London. *The Guardian* (London).

<sup>52</sup> Article 10

Foundation of the international body was the key to the problem of decommissioning issue. Firstly, because of being a party to the peace process, British government or any related institution could not effectively undertake the monitoring duty. They could not be independent and not gain Republicans' trust. Therefore, international independent body gave the true signal to Republicans because, as stated in the document, the international body can determine its own duties and responsibilities. This enable the body to carry on its activities independent of Conservative government. As will be discussed later, Wise Men committee whose members are selected by AKP is thought to act as a third-party in the process. However, Wise Men committee's close tie with AKP damaged its independence and decrease its credibility in the eyes of other parties. Secondly, the chairman, U.S Senator George Mitchell, was quite favorable to Republicans. Due to strong lobbying capacity of Irish people living in the U.S, IRA was always a proponent of U.S intervention to Northern Ireland problem. So, George Mitchell could secure the commitment of IRA to peace process. Lastly, because laying down arms was strategically irreversible step for IRA (because it has been always extremely difficult for insurgents to take the arms back due to scarce sources), postponing decommissioning secured the fears of Republicans and motive them to commit to the process.

The communique marked an attempt to offer reasonable solutions to delay disarmament to sustain the peace talks. Because of not renouncing decommissioning as a precondition, it was not able to produce significant results for the process and criticized by Unionists who considered it as a concession<sup>53</sup>. Mitchell was authorized

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<sup>53</sup> David Sharrock Ireland Correspondent. (November 30, 1995). LONDON-DUBLIN TALKS DEAL 'A FUDGE' Unionist and Sinn Fein leaders find common ground in denouncing the late-night agreement as changing nothing on decommissioning. The Guardian (London).

to prepare a report about decommissioning and present it to both Irish and British governments. Conservative government gained a time for handling decommissioning problem because giving concessions to IRA began to trigger unrest both in Unionist and Conservative constituent. Two days after the declaration of Joint Communiqué, U.S President Bill Clinton visited Northern Ireland, which symbolized both U.S support to peace process and his intention to intervene. Internationalizing Northern Ireland issue was in Republicans' favor and therefore IRA was pleased with ongoing situation. So, the peace process was revived up one more time with the advance help of Irish government and the U.S.

In 1995, both the government and IRA did not take significant steps and could not negotiate basic reforms due to decommissioning problem. While Conservative government's concessions disturbed Unionists, its persistent attitude on decommissioning was the main instrument that was used for maintaining Unionist votes and parliamentary backing. Nonetheless, political balance between Conservative Party and Unionists started to change and it worried the government for the incoming election<sup>54</sup>. The new year, 1996, commenced with good news on the peace process. British government, Irish government and Sein Fein met at Stormont on January 17<sup>th</sup>. It was signaling the start of preparatory talks which was the first step for substantive talks(formal negotiations). One week after the meeting, international commission consisted of George Mitchell, former Finnish Prime Minister H. Holkeri and General John de Chastelain (Owen, 2002: 40). published its first report at the end of two-months discussions with political parties, British and Irish governments.

The report mainly recommended that all-party talks and decommissioning should be carried out simultaneously (Oberschall, 2007: 169). It meant the rejection

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<sup>54</sup> David Hencke Westminster Correspondent. (January 18, 1996). UNIONISTS 'TO DITCH TORIES IN AUTUMN'. *The Guardian* (London).

of British government's insistence on decommissioning before the all-party talks. The report envisaged an independent commission called Independent International Commission on Decommissioning (IICD) specifically authorized for decommissioning. The commission was headed by De Chastelain. Mitchell report also suggested main principles of the negotiations. One of them was the commitment of parties to democratic and peaceful means as a solution of problems. Any party who was related to physical use of force would be expelled from negotiations. In other words, any statement made by Sein Fein members or IRA's attack during negotiations could cause the expulsion of Sein Fein. Moreover, the principles also included the phase called total disarmament of all paramilitary organization. Not only IRA but also Loyalist forces that were pro-state paramilitary forces fighting against IRA and conducted attacks on Catholic minorities. Therefore, disarmament was not described as unilateral necessity for IRA, but bilateral including British government's duty to disarm pro-state forces.

The report also suggested confidence-building measures. The state should terminate its surveillance and targeting<sup>55</sup>. While leaving their arms, IRA members might be open to be targeted by state officials and blacklisted. Decommissioning could be hampered if the state tries to benefit from strategic benefits against IRA by detecting its members and equipment. Therefore, the report also draws attention to subject in the principles of "The decommissioning process should not expose individuals to prosecution"<sup>56</sup> and "information obtained as a result of the decommissioning process should be inadmissible as evidence in courts of law in either jurisdiction"<sup>57</sup>. Such detailed and confidence-building measures put forward in

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<sup>55</sup> Article 52nd

<sup>56</sup> Article 47th

<sup>57</sup> Article 48th

the report aimed to increase the motivation of IRA members to leave their arms ( increasing its payoffs motivating them to commit the process) and present solution for structural problems such as how the process should be carried out. In Turkish case, the legal scope of remorse law was restricted and there was no route determined for how leaving arms by PKK should be processed.

Although the report also clearly suggested the removal of decommissioning as a precondition, British government chose to focus on another principle which stressed the importance of elections in confidence-building between two sides<sup>58</sup>. Rather than decommissioning advices, Conservative Government gave priority to elections. Considering the well performance of Unionist Parties in the last election, elective body for all-party talks seemed to be dominated by Unionist members, which restricted its functioning and weakened its position as confidence-building measure. An SDLP negotiator summarized Republican opinion on British government's response to Mitchell report with these words "*they scrambled Mitchell*"<sup>59</sup>. Although Conservative Party did not give priority to suggestion of decommissioning, it was still bounded by the report and focus on elections. Therefore, not being inevitable, third-party suggestions still had a certain level of obligation for parties because they accepted its presence during the negotiations. On the other hand, while third-party intervention contributed the solution of main problems via the report, it could not stabilize the fears of political parties under the pressure of incoming elections.

However, the end of IRA ceasefire was approaching and the organization did not announce its extension. In early hours on February 9<sup>th</sup>, IRA made a statement in

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<sup>58</sup> Michael White And David Sharrock. (January 25, 1996). FURY OVER MAJOR'S ULSTER SOP; Sinn Fein slates PM for backing Unionists' poll call. *The Guardian* (London). IrIRA

<sup>59</sup> Macginty, R., Ginty, R. M., & Darby, J. (2002). *Guns and Government: The management of the Northern Ireland peace process*. Palgrave Macmillan Ltd. p.34

which Unionists and Prime Minister John Major were accused of wasting a unique opportunity to solve Northern Ireland problem. Following the statement, IRA exploded a bomb in London's Canary Wharf<sup>60</sup>. It had shocked British government and paralyzed the peace process for a time. The attack did not aim to end the process, to the contrary, it was to speed the process up. The attack was thought to be an instrument used by IRA to pressure on Conservative government. DUP member reflected the same idea as "this was 'not a simple abandonment of the ceasefire'; instead, it was 'specific and targeted to apply pressure on the British government to open up all-party talks'"<sup>61</sup>.

#### 4.1.3 All-party talks

The attack did not end the process and increased the pressure on British government. On February 28<sup>th</sup>, British Prime Minister and Irish Prime Minister declared June 10<sup>th</sup> the beginning of all-party talks<sup>62</sup>. Representatives that could join the talks were selected by their parties among members in an elective body called Forum for Political Dialogue. Members of the Forum were elected through a specifically designed electoral system which enabled small parties to run election better. The Forum did not have any administrative or legislative power. The idea of Forum and its election procedures was finalized by Mitchell and the committee. The principle of 'nothing is agreed until everything is agreed'<sup>63</sup> was adopted. The principle motivated

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<sup>60</sup> Kevin Toolis. (February 10, 1996). BOMB THAT BLEW HOPE AWAY; Last night's bomb signals the loss of one of the greatest historic opportunities to bring peace to Ireland and represents the triumph of the Republican's rejectionist faction, writes Kevin Toolis. But the collapse of an IRA ceasefire is not unprecedented event.. *The Guardian* (London).

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid* p.34

<sup>62</sup> Patrick Wintour And David Sharrock. (February 29, 1996). MAJOR GIVES GROUND IN FIXING DATE; Patrick Wintour and David Sharrock on implications of yesterday's announcement. *The Guardian* (London).

<https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:3TDG-XCP0-006X-B4Y6-00000-00&context=1516831>.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid*. P.33

all parties to join the talks because they can use their veto power and prevent the consensus on any topic that is detrimental for their interests. Therefore, even Democratic Unionist Party was not supporting the talk, they joined the election. Electoral process proposed by the third-party motivated political parties and increased the inclusivity of the talks. In Resolution Process, non-involvement of MHP and CHP to the talks due to lack of electoral process hampered the inclusivity of the process and its credibility in return. On April 16<sup>th</sup>, British government passed the legislation that determined the election for the Forum in 30 May 1996<sup>64</sup>.

On April 28<sup>th</sup>, Michael Ancram<sup>65</sup> made a statement regarding the incoming election in Northern Ireland. He clearly stated that in order to join all-party talks, Sein Fein must accept to be bounded by Mitchell principles and IRA must restore the ceasefire. In other words, British government raised new preconditions for the entrance of Sein Fein to all-party talks. But, despite the forthcoming election, there was no ceasefire declared by IRA.

The election of Forum for Political Dialogue was held in May 30<sup>th</sup>. Unionist parties won 24.2 percent and 18.8 percent votes, UUP and DUP respectively. In Republican bloc, while SDLP secured 21.4 percent of votes, Sein Fein took 15.5 percent of votes. The votes of other parties were ranging from one to six percent. Overall results of the election showed an increasing support for Sein Fein<sup>66</sup> but Unionists parties were still dominant as securing majority of seats. The leverage of Unionist bloc on Conservative became more decisive due to its electoral veto power

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<sup>64</sup> Patrick Wintour, Chief Political Correspondent. (April 17, 1996). MAYHEW POLL MOVE EASES PATH TO TALKS; Downgrading of Ulster forum role offers inducement for Sinn Fein. *The Guardian* (London).

<sup>65</sup> Political Development Minister at the Northern Ireland Office (NIO)

<sup>66</sup> June 1, 1996). LEADING ARTICLE: WE CAN GET THERE IF WE TRY. *The Guardian* (London). <https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:3TDG-X1N0-006X-B3JC-00000-00&context=1516831>.

in the Forum, which decreased the payoffs motivating Conservatives to commit to the process. Particularly considering the well performance of DUP, anti-peace process Unionist party, the future of the Forum did not seem promising.

Although the election was held, IRA had not declared any ceasefire yet. In the first days of June, the organization announced that IRA rejected any precondition for all-party talks including decommissioning and consider ceasefire as “*remote in the extreme*”<sup>67</sup>. All-party talks began on June 10<sup>th</sup> and first meeting was held on June 14<sup>th</sup>. Because of lack of ceasefire that IRA was supposed to declare, Sein Fein was excluded from talks. The meeting was chaired by G. Mitchell and committee members. Unionists gave their first opposition to Mitchell’s chairmanship. Ian Paisley, the leader of DUP, and party members left the talks to protest Mitchell’s position. He depicted this protest in his book as “but two were so opposed to my serving as a chair that they stormed out in protest” (Mitchell G. , 1999: 54). He tried to persuade them to come back by meeting with Unionists leaders in person and find out common ground for further discussions.

The response from IRA was not late. One day after the exclusion of Sein Fein from all-party talks, IRA exploded a bomb in Manchester and caused massive damage in the city. It was the second bombing attack of IRA throughout the peace process. The attack was blamed by British government, Irish government and U.S President Bill Clinton. Civilian injuries were the main reason for large-scale blame for IRA. On June 19<sup>th</sup>, IRA published a new statement, which summarized IRA’s perspective on the peace process and British government:

The British Government has spent the last 22 months since August `94 trying to force the surrender of IRA weapons and the defeat of the republican struggle. We are still prepared to enhance the democratic

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<sup>67</sup> <https://www.irishtimes.com/news/ira-statement-dismisses-possibility-of-ceasefire-and-rules-out-decommissioning-1.55809>

peace process. We appreciate the efforts of those who have made a genuine contribution but if there is to be a lasting peace, if the conflict is to be resolved in Britain and Ireland, then the British Government must put the democratic rights of all of the people of Ireland before its own party-political self-interest.<sup>68</sup>

As can be understood from the statement, decommissioning problem was still intact despite huge progress and could not be dealt with by Conservative government. On the other hand, all-party talks were stuck by procedural problems and Orange Parade<sup>69</sup> that caused a widespread violence and disorder in Northern Ireland. In certain respects, it resembles the celebration of Nawroz in Turkey. As Orange Parade did, Nawroz also causes different confrontations in Turkey during negotiations. But, while Orange Parade is for supporting British presence in Northern Ireland, Newroz is seen as separatist celebration. The parties of two events seem to be reverse. So, all-party talks were suspended until September. The peace process seemed to go through troubling times. British government's insistent policy on decommissioning and IRA's harsh responses created a deadlock in the process. IRA avoided from any concession given on decommissioning issue to maintain its military capability and bargaining power against British government. On the other hand, decreasing majority of Conservative Party made it more dependent on Unionists votes and MPs, and therefore, limited the policy options that were available to the government. Decreasing parliamentary majority was mostly resulted from the MPs who had died after the election. 9 MPs had died and 4 MPs defected to other parties after 1993. Conservative Party had lost all the seats in the by-elections between 1993-1997 and as a result of that, Conservatives had already lost

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<sup>68</sup> <https://web.archive.org/web/20210207110440/https://www.irishtimes.com/news/text-of-ira-s-statement-1.60042>

<sup>69</sup> Orange Parade is a order associated with Ulster Loyalist and British Unionists. It is opposed to Republicanism in Northern Ireland. Therefore, every year during the order, there happens a conflict between Unionists and Republicans.

the majority before 1997 election. As Irish Times headlines put it “Talks process going nowhere as dying government marks time”<sup>70</sup>.

Following Orange Parade, SDLP left the Forum and refused to attend in September. Given that Sinn Féin was also excluded before, there was no Republican party left in the Forum, which highly decreased the representative nature of the Forum and hindered the peace process by blocking exchanges among parties. On October 7<sup>th</sup>, IRA carried out two bombing attacks on one headquarters of the British Army located in Northern Ireland<sup>71</sup>. It caused serious human injuries and a devastating effect on buildings. The relation between the British government and IRA was deteriorating since the end of the ceasefire, but it came almost to a breaking point after the last attack. Many started to believe that only a British general election could revive this worsening peace process<sup>72</sup>. Considering the waning parliamentary majority that the Conservative Party had in Westminster, expectations for a new election proved to be true.

All-party talks continued without the attention of the main Republican parties, SDLP and Sinn Féin. Lack of communication with IRA and its political partner ended up with futile efforts of Unionist parties, the British government and other small parties. Due to a Christmas break, the talks under such circumstances were interrupted. On January 13<sup>th</sup>, the talks at Stormont commenced again. But, under such conditions, multi-party talks could not produce any useful results for the peace process. On the

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<sup>70</sup> Macginty, R., Ginty, R. M., & Darby, J. (2002). *Guns and Government: The management of the Northern Ireland peace process*. Palgrave Macmillan Ltd. p.35

<sup>71</sup> David Sharrock in Lisburn. (October 8, 1996). BOMBS AIMED AT OLD TARGETS; Defeats on the mainland may have prompted the desire for a coup on home ground to sustain the propaganda image. *The Guardian* (London).

<https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:3TDG-WKT0-006X-B268-00000-00&context=1516831>.

<sup>72</sup> <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/ira-take-blame-for-lisburn-blast-1357451.html>

other hand, IRA increased its pressure on Conservative party and increased its activities. On February 12<sup>th</sup> , IRA killed a British soldier in a checkpoint<sup>73</sup>.

Forthcoming general election put the peace process into the background and political parties had already started to prepare their election campaigns. So, multi-party talks were adjourned to June 3<sup>rd</sup>. But it did not mean the end of IRA attacks. On April 3<sup>rd</sup> , suspect packages that were placed by IRA caused a massive gridlock in main motorways in the U.K and public disorder due to congestion<sup>74</sup>. Two days after this action<sup>75</sup>, Grand National horse race was cancelled upon the notice of possible bombing attacks by IRA. The area where the race was planned to take place was evacuated<sup>76</sup>. It highly increased the level of insecurity felt by British people.

Overall, the period starting from the ceasefire of IRA had witnessed third-party assistance and considerable progression on topics like disarmament, agenda, talk and reforms, it could not enough to transform the violent nature of the conflicts, on the contrary, the level of violence was increased at the end. Conservative government could not take enough step to motivate IRA to commit to the ceasefire and the peace process. Its decreasing parliamentary majority due to defections made it more open to Unionist pressure both in the Parliament. Also, the well performance of DUP in the Forum appeared to dominate all-party talks in the absence of Sein Fein. On the other hand, because of not getting enough concessions, IRA terminated its ceasefire and could not credibly commit to the process. Its bombing attacks also

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<sup>73</sup> <https://www.irishtimes.com/news/young-soldier-was-smiling-as-sniper-s-bullet-struck-1.42646>

<sup>74</sup> OWEN BOWCOTT. (April 4, 1997). IRA bomb threats paralyse M-ways ; Provos blamed for roads shutdown. *The Guardian* (London).  
<https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:3TD8-P630-002D-64DB-00000-00&context=1516831>.

<sup>75</sup> April 5th

<sup>76</sup> David Sharrock Ireland Correspondent. (April 7, 1997). HOAX BOMB KEY TO IRA HOPES TO WALK TIGHTROPE AND KEEP ALLIES. *The Guardian* (London).  
<https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:3TDG-VVP0-006X-B4VS-00000-00&context=1516831>.

prevented the inclusion of Sein Fein to political negotiations. So, third-party interventions proved to be effective but not enough for major transformation. The next period indicates the interplay of third-party assistance and convenient payoffs for the negotiations.

#### 4.2 Third-party present and payoffs close

Highly-expected general election generated an outstanding outcome for the peace process. In May 1<sup>st</sup>, Labor government was elected with a high parliamentary majority of 80 seats. Tony Blair became the new prime minister of U.K and Marjorie (Mo) Molam was appointed to the secretary of State for Northern Ireland. Labor victory in the general election marked a vital milestone in the peace process mainly for two reasons. Firstly, the general election constituted an impetus for the decelerated process and showed the public support of parties' attitude in multi-party talks in terms of vote change. For example, Sein Fein was highly motivated as a result of two seat that the party won in Westminster compare to no seat in 1992 election. On the other hand, DUP had lost one of its three seats that were gained in 1992. Secondly, as Brian writes, "the Labour Party leader Tony Blair had more room for maneuver than the previous government"<sup>77</sup>. It is resulted from vast parliamentary majority won by Labor Party compare to dwindling majority of Conservative government<sup>78</sup>. Moreover, Labor party could pursue its own policies on Northern Ireland less depending on Unionist votes. Historically, Conservative Party had close relationship with Unionist bloc and it had hampered the radical steps that could be taken by Conservative Party during the peace process. The constituents of

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<sup>77</sup> Ibid p.36

<sup>78</sup> It was a minority government before the election of 1997.

Labor Party was more likely to concession given to IRA compare to Conservative Party in historical context.

Marjorie Mowlam rapidly set to work on Northern Ireland. During her visit to Derry, second largest city in Northern Ireland, she clearly pointed out the importance of decommissioning issue while calling it as “secondary to actually getting people into talks”<sup>79</sup>. On the other hand, Martin McGuinness, a MP of Sein Fein, called for confidence-making measurement that should be taken by British government and emphasis the future of preconditions that had blocked the advent of the peace talks<sup>80</sup>. The government took serious step to establish the confidence that was broken at the end of 18-months-process . Reforms in the internal structure of police services, equal opportunity in employment, especially in the state and celebration of special days were addressed. These concessions motivated IRA to commit to the process and Sein Fein to join all-party talks.

On May 16<sup>th</sup>, Tony Blair had visited Northern Ireland in his first trip as Prime Minister and signaled the start of explanatory talks with Sein Fein and state officials without any precondition for decommissioning<sup>81</sup>. While his visit to Northern Ireland raised the republican hopes, Blair also tried to appease the annoying Unionists. He explicitly stressed the importance of Northern Ireland as a part of United Kingdom as long as the majority of people living in Northern Ireland want it to be as such<sup>82</sup>. By

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<sup>79</sup> GEORGE, JACKSON(1997, MAY 10), Decommissioning secondary to inclusive talks. *Irish Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.irishtimes.com/news/decommissioning-secondary-to-inclusive-talks-mowlam-1.70812>

<sup>80</sup> MARK BRENNOCK. (1997, MAY 10). Sinn Fein calls for British to authorise talks with officials. *Irish Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.irishtimes.com/news/decommissioning-secondary-to-inclusive-talks-mowlam-1.70812>

<sup>81</sup> David Sharrock Ireland Correspondent. (May 17, 1997). PEACE IN THEIR TIME? Sinn Fein accepts Blair talks offer. *The Guardian* (London). <https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:3TDG-VPC0-006X-B1SG-00000-00&context=1516831>.

<sup>82</sup>The Guardian(2007). The full text of Tony Blair’s speech in Belfast. Retrieved December 14th,2021, from <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2002/oct/17/northernireland.devolution>

reemphasizing consent principle, Blair tried to find a midway between Republicans and Unionists for incoming multi-party talks.

In mid-June, the precondition of decommissioning was dropped by Labor government and paved the way for the entrance of Sinn Féin to multi-party talks. This was a crucial step in the peace process. Considering the fact that “the interparty talks, begun in June 1996, had, in Major’s phrase, become ‘stuck’ – mainly on the arms issue”<sup>83</sup>, one major problem was solved out by Labor government, which both increased the confidence in Labor government and hopes for the peace talks.

Even though the precondition was moved away, decommissioning was still an important issue that should be regulated. Irish and British prime minister had met to discuss the decommissioning of IRA and issued a document regarding the proposals on decommissioning<sup>84</sup>. Both governments had agreed on the necessity of an independent international body who should be responsible for monitoring the decommissioning and mechanisms that are used in this process as suggested in the Mitchell Report before. The Decommissioning Act legislated in both the Republic of Ireland and U.K. prepared the legal ground of the commission. Parliamentary acts increased the legitimacy of the process and motivated parties to commit. Intervention of the Irish Republic to this issue also contributed to the confidence-building strategies of the Labor government. Moreover, Prime Minister’s advisers clearly stated that decommissioning was not a precondition but a parallel process to multi-party talks<sup>85</sup>. Labor’s vast majority enabled them to ignore the Unionist trend in the Parliament and,

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<sup>83</sup> Roche, P.J., & Barton, B. (Eds.). (1999). *The Northern Ireland Question: Nationalism, unionism and partition* (1st ed.). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429438615>, p.35

<sup>84</sup> (June 25, 1997). ANGLO-IRISH PLAN RAISES HOPES OF IRA CEASEFIRE. *The Guardian* (London). <https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:3TD8-P3D0-002D-63SP-00000-00&context=1516831>.

<sup>85</sup> David Sharrock Ireland Correspondent. (June 24, 1997). BLAIR'S FINAL OFFER TO SINN FEIN; Anglo-Irish deal on arms disposal. *The Guardian* (London). <https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:3TD8-P3H0-002D-641H-00000-00&context=1516831>.

combined with the assistance of international commissions, offer a way to solve decommissioning problem.

The first challenge to ongoing dialogue between Republicans and Labor government was Orange Parade that created a widescale problem in every year. Mass protests had started upon the march of Protestant crowd through the Catholic neighborhoods. Republicans reacted harshly to the march and fierce riots happened in Catholic-dominated areas. IRA militants had involved the protests and raised the level of violence with grenades attacks and gun battles. Despite the ongoing turmoil<sup>86</sup>, on July 9<sup>th</sup>, Labor government promised for the meet between Sein Fein representatives and government ministers in case IRA declared a ceasefire. It clearly showed the insistent attitude of Labor government on the renewal of peace process. After many concessions and reforms, the pressure on IRA to declare a ceasefire started to become unbearable.

On July 18<sup>th</sup>, David Hume, the leader of SDLP, and Gerry Adams had met and issued a joint document<sup>87</sup> in which they welcomed the steps taken by Labor government, particularly decommissioning issue, and state their confidence on the peace process under these circumstances. First step taken by Labor Party was responded in the same way by IRA. Two days after the document, IRA declared the second ceasefire, which stands for revival of the peace process. September 15 was determined as a start of multi-party talks. If IRA ceasefire was proved to be true by the independent party, Sein Fein could enter the talk. While Republicans were satisfied with the news, Unionists were quite skeptical about the process. Ian Paisley,

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<sup>86</sup> Stuart Millar, David Sharrock And Michael White. (July 10, 1997). MORE TROOPS HEAD FOR ULSTER; Northern Ireland braces for weekend of 'catastrophic' violence over Orange marches deadlock. *The Guardian* (London).

<https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:3TD8-P250-002D-60Y9-00000-00&context=1516831>.

<sup>87</sup> See the full document <https://cain.ulster.ac.uk/events/peace/docs/ha180797.htm>

the leader of DUP, described the talks as madness<sup>88</sup> and withdraw from the talks beforehand<sup>89</sup>. Compare to the period of Conservative incumbent, the effectiveness of Unionist power to shape the advent of the process was quite low.

On August 26<sup>th</sup>, Independent International Commission on Decommissioning (IICD) was established as envisaged in the document issued by British and Irish Prime Ministers. The body was responsible for monitoring disarmament of paramilitary forces. Three days after its establishment, Secretary State for Northern Ireland publicly declared that IRA ceasefire is verified and Sein Fein is allowed to enter the talks<sup>90</sup>. Then Sein Fein signed up the Mitchell principles and took its place in Stormont. On the other hand, despite the boycott of DUP, UUP<sup>91</sup> decided to enter the talks. Its presence was important for talks to be 'multi' and include a party from Unionist bloc. UUP, therefore, represented the soft-liners of Unionist bloc and claimed to be the defender of Unionists rights in talks. Third-party intervention and moderate government boosted the power of moderate-Unionists.

Shortly after the beginning of the talks, the meet between Gerry Adams, President of Sein Fein, Martin McGuinness, Vice President of Sein Fein, and Tony Blair, Prime Minister had occurred. It was the first official contact of a Prime minister with Sein Fein official. The meeting functioned as a confidence-building step taken by Labor government and welcomed by Republicans. This official talk

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<sup>88</sup> Macginty, R., Ginty, R. M., & Darby, J. (2002). *Guns and Government: The Management of the Northern Ireland Peace Process*. Palgrave Macmillan Ltd. p.37

<sup>89</sup> Stuart Millar, David Sharrock And Michael White. (July 10, 1997). MORE TROOPS HEAD FOR ULSTER; Northern Ireland braces for weekend of 'catastrophic' violence over Orange marches deadlock. *The Guardian* (London).  
<https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:3TD8-P250-002D-60Y9-00000-00&context=1516831>.

<sup>90</sup> Michael White Political Editor. (August 29, 1997). SINN FEIN'S TALKS PLACE CONFIRMED. *The Guardian* (London).  
<https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:3TD8-NWB0-002D-61MT-00000-00&context=1516831>.

<sup>91</sup> Ulster Unionist Party

represented how much British government attached importance to the peace process. So, the talks had entered Christmas break under hopeful circumstances. The official talks with HDP could make the similar affect in Turkey but it happened relatively late.

First challenge in the new year came from the Loyalist, pro-state forces in Northern Ireland, prisoners who accused British government of giving so much concessions to Republicans. Withdrawal of Loyalist prisoners support to the peace process could trigger a widespread violence in streets and hamper the common ground reached. Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, Marjorie (Mo) Mowlam, stated that she would go into the prison and try to persuade Loyalists because they are important part of the peace process. As a result of her efforts<sup>92</sup>, on January 9<sup>th</sup>, prisoners renewed their support for the peace process. Insistent stance and speed of how British governments can solve the challenges created an assuring atmosphere.

British and Irish governments took a step to give an impetus the newly-started talks in Stormont. They issued a new document called Propositions of Heads of Agreement. The document mostly repeated the basic principles such as proportional representation, devolved institutions and equal representation<sup>93</sup>. But Sein Fein rejected the document. To persuade them, Tony Blair, Prime Minister, had met with Gerry Adams. Although they did not declare any common ground, the document seemingly did not create a problem between them anymore. Propositions of Heads of Agreement did not create a common ground among political parties but

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<sup>92</sup> JOHN MULLIN. (January 9, 1998). Inside the H-blocks: Maze prisoners offer lifeline to Mowlam; 'I found Mo Mowlam to be a capable and affable politician. In my eyes, she has more gumption than all the other secretaries of state put together' Michael Stone, serving six life sentences for murder. *The Guardian* (London).

<https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:3RSD-K9C0-0051-43T8-0000-00&context=1516831>.

<sup>93</sup>See the full text of the document <https://cain.ulster.ac.uk/events/peace/docs/hoa12198.htm>

denote persistent effort of two governments in the process<sup>94</sup>. The peace process seemed to more durable for inconveniences and parties were more committed.

On January 26th, multi-party talks in Stormont was transferred to Lancaster House in London. It showed the commitment of Labor government and how much significance it attached to Irish problem. It motivated parties further to compromise on a draft agreement. It also made the contact between British officials and Sein Fein representatives easier. On February 20<sup>th</sup>, there happened a striking problem in the peace process. Upon the death of two men which IRA was believed to involve<sup>95</sup>, Sein Fein was expelled from the talks according to Mitchell principle which supposed that any party which has a link with violence would be excluded from the talks. Sein Fein members seemed frustrated about the decision, which, in Roger's words, confirms how much Sein Fein wanted to be in the talks<sup>96</sup>.

On March 12<sup>th</sup>, Garry Adams, the leader of Sein Fein, met with Tony Blair, Prime Minister. The meeting confirmed the decent relationship between Sein Fein and the government despite the expulsion from the talks<sup>97</sup>. On March 23<sup>rd</sup>, when the deadline of the expulsion and Saint Patrick holiday was over, Sein Fein was entitled to enter the talks again. Despite its expulsion, IRA did not involve in any arm attacks. More concession, especially in terms of legal assurance, to IRA made armed attacks costly for them. Compare to its response to Conservative governments, IRA

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<sup>94</sup> JOHN MULLIN IRELAND CORRESPONDENT. (January 19, 1998). Killing rocks peace hopes; Blair meets Sinn Fein chiefs today. *The Guardian* (London).  
<https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:3RV3-YD50-0051-4129-00000-00&context=1516831>.

<sup>95</sup> JOHN MULLIN IRELAND CORRESPONDENT. (February 20, 1998). IRA blamed for farmhouse killing. *The Guardian* (London).  
<https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:3S34-YXB0-0051-44BC-00000-00&context=1516831>.

<sup>96</sup> Macginty, R., Ginty, R. M., & Darby, J. (2002). *Guns and Government: The Management of the Northern Ireland Peace Process*. Palgrave Macmillan Ltd. p.39

<sup>97</sup> JOHN MULLIN IRELAND CORRESPONDENT. (February 20, 1998). IRA blamed for farmhouse killing. *The Guardian* (London).  
<https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:3S34-YXB0-0051-44BC-00000-00&context=1516831>.

seemed to commit more to the peace process. Another impetus was injected by George Mitchell on March 26<sup>th</sup>. He set the deadline of April 9 for the multi-party talks.

On April 6<sup>th</sup>, Mitchell also gave his draft version of the Agreement to all party members. The draft was believed to fasten the process. But, on the contrary, UUP rejected the draft version. Even the deputy leader of UUP said that he wouldn't touch it with a 40-foot pole<sup>98</sup>. British and Irish Prime Minister had involved the talks and mediate UUP representatives. Moreover, Bill Clinton made a couple of telephone calls to support the talks as the deadline was approaching. As a result of 48-hours-effort<sup>99</sup>, the talks were brought to end and Good Friday Agreement was reached. Republican and Unionist representatives did not give a public image by shaking hand and did not make any serious declarations. While Gerry Adams left the talks without talking about the Agreement, the leader of UUP, David Trimble, just commented "we rise from this table knowing that the Union is stronger than it was when we first sat down".

Good Friday Agreement was distributed to every home in Northern Ireland. It has five main provisions. Firstly, the constitutional status of Northern Ireland would be decided by people living there. Secondly, Northern Ireland could be united with the Republic of Ireland if majority of people voted for it. Thirdly, Northern Ireland is now a part of United Kingdom. Fourthly, Northern Ireland people could define

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<sup>98</sup> Macginty, R., Ginty, R. M., & Darby, J. (2002). *Guns and Government: The management of the Northern Ireland Peace Process*. Palgrave Macmillan Ltd. p.40

<sup>99</sup> JOHN MULLIN AND STUART MILLAR. (April 10, 1998). High hopes, ragged results; THE DEAL: As the 22-month peace process reached its final hours, the mood flickered between optimism and despair. But though the gulfs remained, agreement was always possible. *The Guardian* (London). <https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:3SFT-7W00-0051-42W5-00000-00&context=1516831>.

themselves as both Irish and British (or both). Lastly, the Republic of Ireland abandoned its territorial claim on Northern Ireland.

## CHAPTER 5

### HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF PKK

#### 5.1 Establishment

In this chapter, second case, PKK, will be discussed and compared with the prior case IRA. The history of PKK will be examined under four main periods: its establishment, ceasefires (1993-1999), Imralı period (1999-2009) and then Resolution Process will be discussed in detail. The periodization is made depending on Çiçek's categorization because it shows the core values of the periods in a modest way. Historical narrative is achieved through synthesis of common points of famous writers and scholars with data obtained from newspaper Hurriyet and Cumhuriyet.

PKK is the terrorist organization that was founded by Abdullah Öcalan in Diyarbakır in 1978. The organization claimed to be the defender of Kurdish people's right to determine their political future and aim for an independent Kurdish state. In its founding paper, the organization strictly refused reformists views including autonomy and clearly state independence is the sole way. So, the organization adopted a revolutionary idea in its foundation. Moreover, the ideology was also influenced by far leftist ideas, mostly Leninism. PKK is the shortcut for Partîya Karkerên Kurdistanê which means Kurdish Workers Party. In that sense, PKK resembles the leftist revolutionary way of organizing that was also adopted by IRA.

First activities of PKK aimed at pro-government local tribal leaders who were considered as the main reason for backwardness in the region. On July 30, 1979, PKK attacked the house of famous tribal leader Celal Bucak who was also a

deputy of incumbent party (Justice Party)<sup>100</sup>. Bucak was injured and four people were dead. To retaliate against this attack, Bucak tribal attacked to another tribe called Milli that was thought to support PKK. This mutual attacks between two tribes diverted the attention away from PKK and make the media focus on conflict between tribes<sup>101102</sup>. On the other hand, PKK left its manifesto to Bucak's house and declare its presence to Turkish public in which it clearly indicated its aim as 'Independent Kurdistan'.

As opposed to initial attention given to the conflict between local tribes, PKK reached its aim and was noticed by Süleyman Demirel, the head of opposition party. He called the attention to attacks in the East and demand strict measures from Fahri Korutürk, the head of State. Demirel called the group as Apocular coming from the founder's name Abdullah Öcalan<sup>103</sup>. Apocular became the popular name used for PKK<sup>104</sup> and shadowed the nationalist aspirations of the organization.

At the end of the year 1979, as a result of the increasing military presence in the region and political pressure, Öcalan and senior staff of PKK escaped to Lebanon<sup>105</sup>. They got contact with Palestinian Liberation Organization and started to train their armed forces. However, Turkey was going through hard times due to high level of polarization in streets. Leftist and rightist groups fought against each other and politicians mostly engaged in forming political coalition. Under these circumstances, a coup d'état happened in September 12, 1980.

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<sup>100</sup> AP Milletvekili ve Ailesi İftar Sofrasında Tarandı. (31.07.1979). *Hürriyet*.

<sup>101</sup> Urfa'da Bucak Aşireti misilleme yaptı, iki kişi öldürüldü. (02.08.1979). *Hürriyet*.

<sup>102</sup> Bucak Aşireti 6 rehine aldı. (03.08.1979). *Hürriyet*.

Urfa'da aşiretler savaşı sürüyor: Bir köy basıldı 6 kişi kaçırıldı. (03.08.1979). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>103</sup> Demirel: Apocular Doğu'yu Kasıp Kavuruyor. (03.08.1979). *Hürriyet*.

<sup>104</sup> Devlet Bakanı Kılıç: Apoculara haraç verdiğim söylentisini bana husumeti olan Demirel çıkartıyor. (20.08.1979). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>105</sup> Demirel, E. (2005). *Geçmişten Günümüze PKK ve Ayaklanmalar*. IQ Kültür Sanat Yayıncılık

The coup had sweep both nationalists and leftist groups away and clean the political activities in the country. The army proclaimed martial law and divided Turkey into 13 martial law regions. Military rule made the strict measures and military operations easier. According to Özdağ, 1790 terrorists were arrested during military rule. PKK became inactivated day by day and channelized their forces in cities to mountains where guerilla war could be waged in more functional way.

PKK held its first congress in Lebanon July 15-25 1981. Senior staff recreated its military forces, prepare its political agenda and basics of ideological training. PKK's official newspaper called Serxwebun started to publish in Turkish for both spread decisions taken in the congress and propagate among Kurdish people living in Turkey. But short after its first congress, upon the occupation of Lebanon by Israel, PKK members had to leave the country. While the most possible alternative was the Northern Iraq, Turkey's pressure on Barzani complicated the situation. The problem was solved at the beginning of 1982 by Hafız Esad, the ruler of Syria. Esad persuaded Barzani for giving a permission to PKK militias to settle down in the Northern Iraq. As a result, first PKK group entered in Syria in August 1982<sup>106</sup>.

The second congress was held in Syria in 1984. Decisions that were taken at the end of the congress signified the intention of PKK to pursue militarily more active policies in Turkish border. Transition to democratic rule and loosing military power in Turkey possibly affected the decisions of PKK. On August 15<sup>th</sup>, 1984, PKK attacked Gendarmerie Commander in Eruh (Siirt) and Şemdilli(Hakkari), and killed one soldier. The first news about the attack appears on August 18<sup>th</sup>. In the news, the

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<sup>106</sup> N. A. Özcan (1999). *PKK Tarihi, İdeolojisi ve Yöntemi*. Avrasya Stratejik Araştırmalar Merkezi Yayınları. s.350-369.

organization is called as leftist separatist group without specifically calling it PKK<sup>107</sup>.

The attack is mostly considered as the first systemic attack done by PKK.

Despite this bloody attack, it can be claimed that PKK was not taken serious by both politicians and high-level military officials. The former called it as ‘looter’<sup>108</sup> while the latter called it as ‘bandit’<sup>109</sup>. As a response, military precautions had been increased and the state distributed weapons to local people in the East<sup>110</sup>. On October 8<sup>th</sup>, Özal, Prime Minister, addressed the attacks in Eruh and Şemdilli as conducted by ‘a handful traitors coming from abroad’<sup>111</sup>. Özal’s speech actually symbolizes the disregarding attitude toward PKK in 80s. Despite that, the government did not fully ignore the problem. Military operations had started after a couple of months<sup>112</sup> and diplomatic relations with neighboring countries began<sup>113</sup> to increase the inter-state coordination on the problem.

Güneş Operation had continued in 1985. Because the level of conflict between state forces and PKK raise, it started to draw more attention of the media. The famous news of the year was the interview done by Savaş Ay in PKK’s camps in Iran<sup>114</sup>. It increased the public awareness of PKK. On the other hand, the state started to take the problem more seriously. Counterterrorism and Operation Department was established<sup>115</sup> specifically for coordinating operations with Ministry of Foreign Affairs and National Intelligence Agency.

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<sup>107</sup> Ayrılıkçı Grupların Saldırısı: 1 Er Şehit. (18.08.1984). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>108</sup> Evren: Çapulcu Dersini Alacak. (30.08.1984). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>109</sup> Orgeneral Üruğ: Devlet Eşkiyaya Pabuç Bırakmaz. (25.08.1984). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>110</sup> Koruculuk sistemi in Turkish

<sup>111</sup> Özal: Bir Avuç Hain Gerekli Dersi Alacak. (08.10.1984). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>112</sup> Doğu’da Güneş Harekatı. (17.10.1984). *Hürriyet*.

<sup>113</sup> Halefoğlu Irak’ta sınır olaylarını görüşüyor. (15.10.1984). *Hürriyet*.

<sup>114</sup> Milliyet PKK’nın İran’daki karargahına girdi. (18.08.1985). *Milliyet*

<sup>115</sup> Teröre Karşı Yeni Örgüt. (28.09.1985). *Cumhuriyet*

The year 1986 commenced with the death fast of PKK militants in prison<sup>116</sup>. Military prosecutor gave the number of militants dead due to death fast in 1981-84 in Diyarbakır Prison. This retrospective speech also signifies non-transparent situation during the military rule. On March 17<sup>th</sup>, the army warned PKK that they must surrender. But first response of PKK was attacking on gendarmerie forces in Adıyaman and caused the death of four soldiers<sup>117</sup>.

The first diplomatic crisis happened in the same year. Turkish Military Forces, in response to PKK attacks in previous months, organized an air attack to the Northern Iraq on August 15<sup>th</sup><sup>118</sup>. The first reaction came from Kaddafi, the ruler of Libya. He clearly stated that the air operation was unacceptable and embarrassing<sup>119</sup>. Moreover, Iran condemned the air operation and claimed that villages where Kurdish people were living was bombed by Turkish Army<sup>120</sup>. These reactions actually demonstrate the international nature of PKK conflict. It cannot be evaluated as sole domestic problem. Responses, policies and supports of foreign countries significantly matter in coping the problem.

The year 1986 also marked PKK's Third Congress in which regular army called ARGK was founded and gave the signal of increasing rural conflicts in 1987. PKK began to aim at villages and state officials to break the legitimacy of the state in the East. First target was village protectors called Köy korucuları in Turkish<sup>121</sup>. By attacking village protectors, PKK tried to eliminate state forces and intimidate pro-state tribes. To decrease the infrastructural power of the state<sup>122</sup>, PKK also aimed at

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<sup>116</sup> Diyarbakır'da askeri savcı açıkladı. Hapiste 30 ölüm. (08.02.1986). *Cumhuriyet*

<sup>117</sup> Dört Askerimiz Şehit. (18.03.1986). *Milliyet*.

<sup>118</sup> Irak'ta Hava Operasyonu. (16.08.1986). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>119</sup> Kaddafi, Irak'daki operasyonu protesto için Evren ve Özal'a mesaj gönderdi. (20.08.1986). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>120</sup> Operasyonlara derhal son verilmesi istendi. İran'dan Kınama. (25.08.1986). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>121</sup> Vahşet: 10 Ölü. (25.01.1987). *Cumhuriyet*.

teachers and imams in villages<sup>123</sup>, also kidnapped many people to mountains and Iran border<sup>124</sup>. Rising number of attacks and violence increased the fear in the region.

Turkish state responded with military attacks and mobile military forces. Geographic structure did not favor military stations and garrison. Therefore, the army began to create mobile soldier groups in order to deal more efficiently with guerilla attack done by PKK. Also, cross-border operations, especially air strikes, aimed to cut the communication between camps in Iraq and PKK terrorist in Turkey. While the precautions significantly served the purpose, PKK attacks could not be stopped. On June 21th, PKK attacked Pınarcık Village and killed thirty people, sixteen of which were children<sup>125</sup>. This brutal attack drew so much attention both from the government and the public. Prime Minister, Turgut Özal, called PKK for laying their arms down. In his speech, he also addressed his incoming trip to Syria and talk about respecting national integrity of every state<sup>126</sup>. International dynamics have always been an important factor in coping with PKK terror. The speech also shows the traditional position that was taken by Turkish state towards PKK problem. Rather than opening a way for peace talks or negotiation, the state always prefers laying PKK's arms down as a precondition.

Despite the increasing military and political pressure on PKK, the attacks had been proceeded. One of watershed was PKK's attack on police office in Zeytinburnu<sup>127</sup>. As indicated in the news, it was the first attack done by PKK in

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<sup>123</sup> PKK Lice'de Köy Bastı: 2 Ölü. (22.05.1987). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>124</sup> Gercüş'te mayın tuzağı: 1 üsteğmen şehit oldu. PKK 13 kişiyi kaçırdı. (02.05.1987). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>125</sup> Vahşet: 16'sı Çocuk 30 Ölü. (22.06.1987). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>126</sup> Başbakan Pınarcık'ta 'Bu katliamı yapanları Allah da affetmez, biz de' dedi. PKK'ya teslim ol çağrısı. (09.08.1987). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>127</sup> 12 Eylül sonrası ilk baskında bir komiser muavini öldürüldü. Karakol baskını. (13.08.1987). *Cumhuriyet*.

İstanbul after the 80' coup d'état. This made tremendous impact on Turkish public and increased the fear in metropolitans.

Attacks proceeded on in the next year. PKK's terror appeared as an everyday problem with increasing attacks. PKK's presence was also to be accepted by the government. As the minister of interior affairs once indicated, "The bandit (addressing PKK) were dominating the night, now we are dominating"<sup>128</sup>. It reflects official recognition of how powerful PKK was at nights in the East. On the other hand, Mehmet Ali Birand went to Lebanon to do interview with PKK's leader, Abdullah Öcalan. It was an outstanding incident in Turkish media. Although the news was banned shortly<sup>129</sup>, it included an important information and hints on PKK. Most importantly, in contrast to its founding manifesto, Öcalan claimed that the object of PKK has never been 'taking any territory from Turkey'<sup>130</sup>. He claimed they were fighting for collective rights of Kurdish people and call for political dialogue<sup>131</sup>.

The year 1988 also marked the official recognition of PKK problem. At the beginning of the year, Mehmet Ali Eren, SHP deputy, claimed that there is 'Kurdish problem' in Turkey and Kurds are coerced in Turkish Parliament<sup>132</sup>. For the first time, the problem was given a name, Kurdish problem, and it paved the way for approaching the problem in political means rather than military means. It was actually first step for incoming political dialogue with PKK in 90s. In addition to that, Kurdish problem started to draw more attention from international arena. The U.S increased its pressure on Turkey. As understood from yearly-published reports, the U.S 's traditional approach to Kurdish problem was mostly shaped by 'human

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<sup>128</sup> Kırmızı Alarm. (22.05.1988). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>129</sup> Apo'ya yayın yasağı. (17.06.1988). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>130</sup> İşte Apo İşte PKK. (14.06.1988). *Milliyet*.

<sup>131</sup> Tarihi Bir Dönemece Geldik. (16.06.1988). *Milliyet*.

<sup>132</sup> Mecliste Kürt tartışması. (20.01.1988). *Cumhuriyet*.

rights' and quite in contrast to Turkish policies<sup>133</sup>. After a couple of months, there happened a new diplomatic crisis with the U.S. Upon the meeting of U.S officials with Talabani who signed an ally protocol with PKK, Turkey harshly criticized the meeting and declared that it raised important hesitations<sup>134</sup>.

Under these conditions, both domestic and international, PKK proceeded on its actions in following years. As Erdal İnönü said, PKK was getting stronger in Southeast Turkey<sup>135</sup>. PKK was getting more popular among Kurdish people and speed up its root-level organization. For the first time, military operations done by the state forces got reactions from local people. The army conducted an operation in Silopi and killed nine terrorists. According to local people, six of the killed were civilian, not PKK terrorist. The crowd marched to local government building and demanded for the punishment of who killed the civilians<sup>136</sup>. The police commenced fired on the crowd and detained many protestors. This incident actually showed that Kurdish problem cannot be solved only through military means and it began to have an impact on Kurdish community in some regions, both of which paved the way for the politization of Kurdish problem in 90s.

The new decade commenced with another important watershed in the politicization of Kurdish movement and PKK. On March 16<sup>th</sup>,1990, there was a funeral ceremony made for a PKK terrorist killed by the security forces one day ago in Nusaybin. The crowd wanted to march into the town center and they were stopped by security forces. There happened a clash between security forces and the crowd who responded with throwing stone to the forces<sup>137</sup>. To protest the security forces,

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<sup>133</sup> Washington ve Kürt Sorunu. (13.02.1988). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>134</sup> Ankara sessizliğini bozdu. Amerika'ya Talabani tepkisi. (15.06.1988). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>135</sup> İnönü'nün izlenimleri G. Doğu'da teröristler güçleniyor. (13.08.1989). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>136</sup> Silopi Rezaleti. (20.10.1989). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>137</sup> Nusaybin'de gergin gün. (16.03.1990). *Cumhuriyet*.

shopkeepers had closed their shops for a while<sup>138</sup>. All these incidents actually denoted the rising support for PKK in public. On the other hand, Mehmet Eren's speech on Kurdish language<sup>139</sup> deepened the Kurdish problem and open a new political debate on collective rights of Kurdish people.

However, Gulf War raised the strategic role played by Kurdish people in the region in the beginning of the year 1991. Political instability in Iraq paved the way for Kurdish tribes in the Northern Iraq to become politically more powerful. Leading actors in the region were Celal Talabani and Mesut Barzani. Being aware of this political vacuum, the government got into contact with Talabani to get his support for ongoing war with PKK. While Turkish government promised for political support<sup>140</sup>, Talabani explicitly indicated that he did not agree with Turkish government on PKK which Talabani described as a revolutionary organization<sup>141</sup>. After a couple of days, Birand did an interview with Öcalan. In the interview, Öcalan claimed that PKK does not have a separatist aim and demand amnesty for PKK members to put their arms down<sup>142</sup>. Amnesty as a demand of PKK appear in other negotiations and resolution process( will be discussed in next chapters) . Therefore, we can conclude that amnesty is an important bargaining instrument.

Developments in Iraq favored PKK's organization in Iraq and caused an increase in PKK's capacity of war<sup>143</sup>. It could be observed in PKK's attack in Solhan, Bingöl in which one district governor, kaymakam in Turkish, one prosecutor and local forest director lost their lives<sup>144</sup>. By targeting significant state bureaucrats,

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<sup>138</sup> Nusaybinliler Tedirgin. (17.03.1990). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>139</sup> Meclis'te Kürtçe Tartışması. (02.03.1990). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>140</sup> Denied by a speaker of Foreign Affairs later. Talabani sıkıntısı. (14.03.1991). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>141</sup> Talabani'ye destek. (13.03.1991). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>142</sup> Apo'dan Ateşkes. (24.03.1991). *Milliyet*.

<sup>143</sup> Saddam'dan PKK'ya Silah. (22.10.1991). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>144</sup> Bingöl'de Kanlı Baskın. (29.04.1991). *Cumhuriyet*.

PKK tried to threaten pro-state tribes and demonstrate its power. It also signaled the rising military capacity. Mesut Barzani gained an important leverage against Iraq government and pressure for autonomy, which resulted in Saddam's acceptance of the possibility of Kurdish autonomy in the Northern Iraq<sup>145</sup>.

General election in 1991 proved the raising trend of Kurdish nationalism in Turkey. 18 HEP<sup>146</sup> deputies were elected in SHP listings, which was an important electoral victory. In opening meeting of the Parliament, there happened political crisis which called 'Oath Crisis'. As a constitutional requirement, every parliamentarian should read the given oath in the Parliament. Some HEP deputies, for example Leyla Zana, refused to repeat the oath in a given way and tried to add new words as well as Kurdish phrases<sup>147</sup>.

On February 1<sup>st</sup>, Özal gave a speech and address a massive military operation which exterminated PKK terror. He also called PKK to surrender in return for general amnesty<sup>148</sup>. One more time, the pledge of amnesty appeared as an important instrument. But, Özal's speech did not inhibit PKK attacks, on the contrary, PKK terror seemed to be galvanized. On February 21<sup>st</sup>, PKK did a massive bombing attack to Istanbul Commercial Chamber<sup>149</sup>. By targeting an important commercial center in the most crowded metropolitan in Turkey, İstanbul, PKK actually showed its power and decline the surrender proposal of Özal.

The level of violence began to rise upon the call of PKK for Kurdish people living in Southeast Turkey to rebel<sup>150</sup>. PKK killed two village protectors and hang them to lampposts. It was brutal intimidation for pro-state local people. However,

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<sup>145</sup> Kürtler Saddam'la anlaştı. (19.05.1991). *Milliyet*.

<sup>146</sup> Pro-Kurdish Party that attended the election in SHP listings due to ten percentage threshold

<sup>147</sup> Kürtçe krizi. (07.11.1991). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>148</sup> PKK Vazgeçsin Af Çıkarayım. (01.02.1992). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>149</sup> Ticaret Odasına Kanlı Sabotaj. (21.02.1992). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>150</sup> PKK'dan Halka Ayaklanma Çağrısı. (05.03.1992). *Cumhuriyet*.

Newroz celebration in 1992 did not only happen in the East but also spread into big cities, for example İstanbul and İzmir<sup>151</sup>. But, the most striking clash occurred in Şırnak. PKK terrorists tried to capture the city and there happened 24-hours-long clash between the army and the terrorist. Şırnak Governor defined the situation as a ‘war’<sup>152</sup>. Bülent Ecevit, the head of DSP, called it ‘civil war’<sup>153</sup>. The revolt was suppressed after five days.

Although PKK’s attack in Şırnak was backfired, the attacks proceeded on. In response, Turkish army had conducted two air operations in the Northern Iraq. Prime Minister, Demirel, even talked about the possibility of military operations to Bekaa Valley<sup>154</sup>. But, firm attitude of the state could not stop PKK attacks. PKK tried to capture Şırnak again. Approximately 1000-1500 militants attacked the city, sabotaged electric transformers and forced people to stay at their houses. Şırnak became a battlefield<sup>155</sup>. The clash lasted forty hours. At the end, Şırnak was almost destroyed and the city was out of electricity for three days.

PKK lost many militants in Şırnak but did not stop their actions. Metropolitans were the new targets. PKK exploded a bomb in a ferry in İstanbul<sup>156</sup> and sabotaged Shell gas station in Diyarbakır<sup>157</sup>. Beside many operations, Turkish army launched a massive operation in the Northern Iraq and bombed PKK camps. According to the general staff, PKK had lost 2000 militants, which was a huge loss for the organization. On the other hand, Turkish army retreated without giving any loss.

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<sup>151</sup> Nevruz Kanı Durmuyor. (23.03.1992). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>152</sup> Şırnak’ta Büyük Çatışma. (24.03.1992). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>153</sup> Ecevit: İç Savaş Ateşini Yaktılar. (24.03.1992). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>154</sup> Demirel: Bekaa Dahil Müdahale Ederiz. (29.03.1992). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>155</sup> Şırnak’ta Savaş. (20.08.1992). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>156</sup> Uçak kurşunlandı, gemi yandı. (29.08.1992). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>157</sup> Petrol Tankları Kundaklandı. (01.09.1992). *Cumhuriyet*.

Overall, the year 1992 was marked by many bloody clashes between security forces and PKK militants. Despite huge number of loss and successful operations done by Turkish army, PKK did not cease its attacks during the year. But, at the end of the year, it became clearer that the problem cannot be solved in pure military means. So, military stalemate led to a search for alternative political solutions.

## 5.2 Ceasefires

The period starting from the foundation of PKK to first political contacts between governments and PKK in 90s has been discussed. PKK was seen as a group of bandits by both the army and governments at the beginning. But its increasing attacks drew the attention by time and it became the main political subject in 90s. The period starting with ceasefires opened a new era for PKK problem and political solutions emerged as an alternative solution to military warfare. These interactions in 90s and later could give the hints of why Resolution Process, called Çözüm Süreci in Turkish, failed. So, problematic subjects, promises and demands of both governments and PKK in 90s will be discussed in this chapter.

In 1992, PKK had done many attacks and attempt to capture a city called Şırnak twice. While Turkish military responded back harshly via both domestic and cross-border operations, the attacks of PKK continued. But, as a result of intensive warfare, PKK's military capacity, for example number of militants, had decreased at the end of the year. This military stalemate contributed the opening of era for political solutions. Öcalan sent a letter to Özal, the head of the state, via Celal Talabani. In his letter, Öcalan clearly stated that they are open to ceasefire, Kurdish problem should be solved in the Parliament and they want to leave terrorism as an

instrument<sup>158</sup>. Despite unfavorable statements from the government, Öcalan declared one-sided ceasefire on March 18<sup>th</sup>. Öcalan declared his intention to ‘sit at the table’, negotiate and convert PKK into a legal political party<sup>159</sup>.

Öcalan’s statements did not get anticipated reactions from the government. Demirel clearly said that the state cannot negotiate with terrorist’<sup>160</sup>. He also demand PKK to lay their arms. The same condition was put forward by the chief of general staff. He said ‘ PKK must come down from the mountains firstly’<sup>161</sup>. This demand of laying down arms is one of the main problematic subjects that could determine the result of any peace attempts. Starting from the first ceasefire in 1993, ‘laying down arms’ was put forward as a precondition in most of attempts of political solutions and became the symbol of traditional approach of Turkish state to PKK. Also, the response from PKK was pretty much similar. They do not put their arms down without any step taken by governments. The steps that PKK demanded are also quite similar when we compare political solution attempts.

Contrary to Demirel’s approach, Özal seemed to more open to political negotiations with PKK. He suggested a proposal of amnesty for PKK members. According to his formula, an independent committee will take statements of PKK member coming down from mountain. If they have not involved in any action, they can come back to normal life. If they involve in any action, they can also come back to normal life if they will not attend any action in following five years<sup>162</sup>. After a couple of days, Öcalan announced that the ceasefire extended for an indefinite period

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<sup>158</sup> PKK Pazarlık Peşinde. (14.03.1993). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>159</sup> Apo: Masaya Oturalım. (18.03.1993). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>160</sup> Pazarlığa oturmayız. (19.03.1993). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>161</sup> Önce dağdan insinler. (09.04.1993). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>162</sup> Özal’ın PKK’ya af formülü. (13.04.1993). *Cumhuriyet*.

of time<sup>163</sup>. Öcalan urgently demand general amnesty, lifting the ban on the media and cultural rights.

We have to point out two related issues here. Firstly, despite negative statements made by the government, particularly Demirel due to hardliners' pressure (Kirişçi & Winrow, 1997:138), Özal's position on Kurdish problem was quite modest. This conflict between the government and the head of state triggered commitment problem further. Unfortunately, the day after Öcalan's speech, Özal passed away. Secondly, general amnesty appeared as an important bargaining point and highly decisive on negotiations. However, the first attempt at political negotiation failed upon the attack of PKK militants to unarmed soldiers in Bingöl<sup>164</sup>. Öcalan called the attack as retaliation to operations done by Turkish military forces.

### 5.3 Imralı Period

Despite serious attempts in 90s, no substantial results could be achieved. But, at the beginning of 1999, upon diplomatic pressure of Turkey, Öcalan was captured in Kenya by Turkish Intelligence on February 16<sup>165</sup>. It shattered PKK seriously due to crucial position of the leader in the whole organization. This incident opened a new era for PKK problem in Turkey by enabling a direct dialogue between Öcalan and state officials. The capture of Öcalan was followed by nationwide protests and attacks by PKK militants. Particularly metropolitans had witnessed many blood attacks<sup>166</sup>. On the other hand, Turkish military forces continued their both domestic and cross-border operations<sup>167</sup>.

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<sup>163</sup> Apo'dan süresiz ateşkes. (17.04.1993). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>164</sup> PKK'dan Barışa Darbe. (26.05.1993). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>165</sup> Yargılanacak. (17.01.1999). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>166</sup> Terör dehşeti. (16.03.1999). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>167</sup> Kuzey Irak'ta on şehit. (11.04.1999). *Cumhuriyet*.

In his first trial, Öcalan refused the idea that PKK has separatist aims, on the contrary, supported the Turks and Kurds living together. Öcalan also claimed that PKK can abandon armed struggle if the state supports the idea<sup>168</sup>. Öcalan's speech in the trial signaled an incoming political solution to Kurdish problem. His capture increased the leverage of the state and pushed PKK to get into contact with state officials. On June 28<sup>th</sup>, Öcalan gave another speech during the trial. He accepted all the responsibility of misguiding PKK militants. But he also expressed his desire for transforming PKK into a political agent. For that to happen, he put forward some issues to be solved such as amnesty<sup>169</sup>.

On August 4<sup>th</sup>, Öcalan called for withdrawal of PKK militants to outside the border of Turkey<sup>170</sup> starting from September 1<sup>st</sup>. He thought the withdrawal triggered the negotiations for political solutions and reforms. First reaction to Öcalan's call came from Demirel, the head of state. He told 'the state's struggle does not end'<sup>171</sup>. He basically said the call did not make a fundamental change. It clearly symbolized the skeptical attitude of state officials to call<sup>172</sup>.

However, Öcalan's call got some reactions from the government that was trying to prepare an amnesty law for a while. When the head of state refused the draft and send it back to the Parliament, the government had a chance to widen the scope of remorse law in order to contain the legal status of PKK militants. But this triggered an important problem among coalition partners, DSP, ANAP and MHP<sup>173</sup>. That was the first hardliner action of MHP to block any step for political solutions with PKK. We'll observe the similar moves of MHP to shape political solution of

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<sup>168</sup> PKK dağdan incek. (04.08.1999). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>169</sup> Öcalan son sözünü söyleyecek. (28.06.1999). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>170</sup> Öcalan'dan PKK'ye barış çağrısı. (04.08.1999). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>171</sup> Demirel: Devletin mücadelesi bitmez. (06.08.1999). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>172</sup> Ankara PKK'ye ihtiyatlı. (07.08.1999). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>173</sup> Hükümette af çatlağı. (03.09.1999). *Cumhuriyet*.

Kurdish issue using its political leverage on incumbent parties. Until the election in 2002, MHP as a coalition partner had blocked many steps that could be taken for enabling negotiations and caused commitment problem in dialogues.

PKK was going through rough times and almost broke up. Without the leader, internal conflicts and contest for new leadership had appeared<sup>174</sup>. On the other hand, some militants started to apply for the amnesty and benefit from the remorse law<sup>175</sup>. On September 23<sup>rd</sup>, Öcalan declared that one group of PKK militants must surrender and leave their arms as a way to express their goodwill. Öcalan also claimed that if legal steps are to be taken, all PKK militants could surrender<sup>176</sup>. So, one more time, legal steps such as amnesty, remorse law and regulations about PKK militants appear as an important point for ensuring commitment between parties.

The argument that disarmament cannot be done before the negotiations is an important tenet of this thesis. In the beginning, this call of Öcalan seems to contradict with the argument because he demanded disarmament from PKK militants beforehand. But Öcalan's next declaration on October 6<sup>th</sup> clarified the issue. Öcalan announced that PKK is not in the phase of disarmament because the legal framework has not prepared yet<sup>177</sup>. So, disarmament was still a vital issue for negotiations. On the other hand, PKK militants that surrendered upon the call of Öcalan were arrested. Moreover, the Turkish general staff said that PKK militants must lay their arms in Turkey and withdrawing from Turkish border was not enough<sup>178</sup>. Lastly, the court decided death sentence for Öcalan<sup>179</sup>.

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<sup>174</sup> PKK'da rant kavgası. (17.09.1999). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>175</sup> 342 PKK'li başvurdu. (18.09.1999). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>176</sup> Silahımızla teslim olun. (23.09.1999). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>177</sup> Abdullah Öcalan çark etti. (06.10.1999). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>178</sup> PKK'liler Türkiye'de teslim olmalıdır. (06.10.1999). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>179</sup> Öcalan'ın ölüm kararı kesinleşti. (31.12.1999). *Cumhuriyet*.

Internal conflict in PKK had increased in the new year. Bayık began to contest for the leadership and PKK had divided into two camps<sup>180</sup>. This fragmental structure of PKK weakened the military capacity and military solution for PKK problem became more popular move for Turkish state. But, Öcalan's death sentence created another problem among coalition partners. Upon the pressure of European countries<sup>181</sup>, Öcalan's penalty began to occupy more place in Turkish political arena. While MHP pressured for blocking any reforms about cultural rights of Kurdish people and insist on death sentence<sup>182</sup>, Ecevit, prime minister and head of a leftist party, declared that he'll repeal death sentence<sup>183</sup>. Contrary to Ecevit's pro-EU policies, Bahçeli, head of MHP, was able to shape the direction of the coalition on issues relating to PKK<sup>184</sup>.

In addition to domestic developments, the government also increased its diplomatic moves on PKK problem. Turkey consolidated its collaboration with Barzani to control PKK actions in the Northern Iraq<sup>185</sup>. Despite these attempts, 9/11 attacks had significantly transformed the relations between Iraq and Turkey. Possible scenarios of U.S intervention to Iraq increased the fear of Kurdish state founded in Northern Iraq. Prime minister clearly stated that Turkey will prohibit the establishment of any Kurdish state in Iraq<sup>186</sup>. Considering other developments<sup>187</sup>, the fear of the government raised. After a couple of months, the relation between Northern Iraq and Turkey had deteriorated<sup>188</sup>.

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<sup>180</sup> PKK'den kopma beklentisi. (03.01.2000). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>181</sup> İdamı kaldırın. (25.02.2000). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>182</sup> AB tartışması alevlendi. (29.05.2000). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>183</sup> Ölüm cezasını kaldıracağız. (12.06.2000) *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>184</sup> Raporda Bahçeli'nin dediği oldu. (22.09.2000) *Cumhuriyet*. Söz verilemedi. (20.03.2001). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>185</sup> PKK ile mücadele sürecek. (09.05.2001). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>186</sup> Kürt devletine asla izin vermeyeceğiz. (12.01.2002). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>187</sup> CIA PKK'yi tehdit olarak görmedi. (12.02.2002). *Cumhuriyet*

<sup>188</sup> Barzani son kez uyarıldı. (07.09.2002). *Cumhuriyet*.

Possible U.S interventions elevated the importance of Kurdish leader in the region and increased the pro-EU tendencies in Turkish government. The leader of ANAP, a coalition partner, opposed the death sentence of Öcalan<sup>189</sup>. On the other hand, MHP refused the repeal of death sentence and cultural rights<sup>190</sup>. Under these circumstances, the position of third coalition partner, DSP, was critical. On June 14<sup>th</sup>, DSP tried to create a new draft to persuade other parties for remorse law which included the situation of Öcalan. To response attempts of coalition partners, MHP called for an early election<sup>191</sup>. This call for election by MHP was an important move to use political leverage in order for deciding PKK issue. MHP acted as Unionist parties in the U.K and tried to block concessions that could be given to PKK during negotiations. Like withdrawal of Unionist deputies from Conservative Parliamentary whip, MHP called for an early election because its power to shape the process started to slip down from its hands.

Overall, there are two reasons which make 'Imrali Period' important for the analysis of Resolution Process better. Firstly, the period included repetitive themes such as demands of parties and deadlock points. General amnesty and remorse law for PKK militants who surrendered appeared as an important point through which parties could ensure their commitment to the political process. Particularly the scope of remorse law and amnesty for PKK militants in prison were negotiation topics. Secondly, MHP appeared as an anti-peace process party in this period. As Unionist parties did, MHP used its political power in the coalition and shaped the course of peace process. The party was able to prevent possible steps that could be taken for

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<sup>189</sup> Öcalan'ın idam edilmesine karşıyız. (23.04.2002). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>190</sup> İktidarda AB uyumsuzluğu. (23.05.2002). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>191</sup> Bahçeli seçim dedi. (08.07.2002). *Cumhuriyet*.

ensuring the commitment of parties such as the repeal of death sentence and cultural rights. Resolution Process will be shaped by similar dynamics and that's why Imrali Period contains important clues for better analysis.

## CHAPTER 6

### EARLY STAGES OF AKP RULE

The dialogue started upon the arrest of Abdullah Öcalan had interrupted by early election called by MHP. MHP's uncompromising attitude towards Öcalan combined with worsening economic conditions created conflicts among coalitions members and resulted in an early election. Although the dialogue could not evolve into a political negotiation, it reflected the importance of anti-peace parties, MHP in this context, pressure of coalition partners and political reforms such as general amnesty. This new period began with the electoral victory of AKP in November 2002 election. The election created the formation of the first majority government since 1987 general election. AKP had won 310 out of 550 seats in the Parliament mostly as a result of political parties that could not pass the political threshold of ten percent. The new incumbent party was mostly known for its Islamic roots but at the same time, the program of the party clearly showed the party's commitment to democratic and liberal principles. With these traits, AKP contained a potential for the solution of PKK problem.

In this chapter, AKP government's pro-EU stance, democratic reforms and challenges from agents of tutelary regime will be discussed. AKP's democratic reforms both increased its capacity to solve PKK problem and undermine the power of the Army and Judiciary. Restricting the power of these institutions and initiating new democratic reforms also favor the pro-Kurdish parties. In this period, AKP's policies toward transforming tutelary regime created a political reproachment between AKP and pro-Kurdish parties. This reproachment created a unique opportunity for the solution of Kurdish problem in Turkey. Moreover, AKP

government adopted a trans-national approach to Kurdish problem and focus on increasing coordination with Iraq. The government demanded a coordinator from the U.S for better coordination on PKK problem. But, after the leak of Oslo talks and raising authoritarian, even anti-EU, stance tended to consider Kurdish problem as a national problem and hesitate to involve third-parties. To grasp this change, AKP's tenure since 2002 will be analyzed.

The new year, 2003, began with the invasion of Iraq by the U.S forces in March 20<sup>th</sup>, 2003. The voting regarding to whether to deploy Turkish Army in Iraq was rejected in the Parliament<sup>192</sup>. Despite AKP's pro-Western stance and majority in the Parliament, the bill could not pass. Nevertheless, American intervention to Iraq increased the military presence in the region and therefore restricted the warfare capacity of PKK.

AKP's first move regarding PKK problem was to grant Return to Home Bill in August,2003<sup>193</sup>. By creating an opportunity for former PKK members to leave their weapons and come back to their homes (Unal, 2016), AKP government aimed to accelerate the breaking up of PKK. Both because of the invasion of Iraq and arrest of Öcalan, PKK had going through difficult times and was at the edge of disintegration. In its convention in November, PKK changed its name into KONGRA-GEL and claimed to adopt non-violent means for its ends (Bal & Ozkan, 2006). Despite the change in the name, PKK still had the similar activities and goals (Cline, 2004). During this period, some groups including Osman Öcalan, the brother of Abdullah Öcalan, started to leave the organization.

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<sup>192</sup> Barış Kazandı. (02.03.2003). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>193</sup> Eve dönüşü köşkten onay. (06.08.2003). *Cumhuriyet*.

AKP government's policies regarding the full membership to EU paved the way for the improvement in identity rights in Turkey. First serious attempt was to amend the legislation number 2923 and opened the way for the education of Kurdish in public and private schools. It also enabled the Kurdish broadcasting and publishing (O'Neil, 2007). Such reforms almost proved its effectiveness in local elections in 2004. AKP won more than forty percent of all votes. Its performance in Eastern provinces was quite remarkable considering the fact that AKP had won in cities including Bingöl, Van, Bitlis and Siirt.

In addition to political and cultural reforms, military operation towards PKK camps were still going on although PKK declared ceasefire since 1999. Murat Karayılan announced that if the military operations by the state forces did not end, he would break the ceasefire. Upon this announcement, DEHAP, the political party that had a tie with PKK or KONTRA-GEL at that time, conducted a press meeting and call PKK not to break the ceasefire. The head of DEHAP met with Abdullah Gül, the minister of foreign affairs, and publicly call the extension of the ceasefire<sup>194</sup>. But the call did not achieve to generate a positive result. Karayılan, the head of PKK, refused the call and PKK had killed three village protectors in Tunceli three days after the call<sup>195</sup>.

On the other hand, the cooperation of Kurdish tribes in the Northern Iraq with the U.S created a power hub and significant opportunities for Kurdish identity at the absence of a political authority in the region. Turkish government started to accuse the U.S of ignoring PKK's activity and weapons supply from Iraq<sup>196</sup>. Moreover, Gazi

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<sup>194</sup> DEP'lilere üst düzey kabul. (12.06.2004). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>195</sup> PKK 'ateşkes'i kabul etmedi. (15.06.2004). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>196</sup> Terör silahları Irak'tan geldi. (16.08.2004). *Cumhuriyet*.

El-Yaver, Iraq's President backed by the U.S, warned Turkey not to intervene the domestic affairs of Iraq and give no promise about the struggle with PKK in the Northern Iraq<sup>197</sup>. Such conditions increased the insecurity that Turkish state felt about PKK<sup>198</sup>. This context clearly shows the trans-national nature of PKK problem in Turkey. Iraqi government's cooperation or non-cooperation have always important impacts on PKK problem in Turkey; therefore, the problem could not be grasped without taking cross-border developments into account. This new paradigm in the region had changed power relations by enabling PKK to reach the supply of weapons more easily and put pressure on AKP government to make more reforms.

AKP government sought for U.S help on PKK problem but, meeting between Turkish, Iraqi and American officials did not generate any positive development for Turkey. Even the operations of Turkish forces on Northern Iraq and extradition of Osman Öcalan, the brother of Abdullah Öcalan, were not welcomed by the U.S<sup>199</sup>. On the other hand, domestic politics were quite polemical. Public debate and statements of top-level bureaucrats on turban issue<sup>200</sup> put pressure on AKP government and restricted the playing field for incoming reforms.

European Union (EU) – Turkey relations began to be shaped by Kurdish issue. For the full membership, AKP government was pushed for cultural reforms. EU's firm statements<sup>201</sup> increased the pressure on AKP government. Despite some controversies with EU<sup>202</sup>, the government mostly followed the EU routes while keeping its conservative roots intact. On the other hand, a couple of intellectuals

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<sup>197</sup> El-Yaver taahhütte bulunmaktan kaçındı. (17.08.2004). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>198</sup> BM'ye Kerkük uyarısı. (18.01.2005). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>199</sup> Ankara: Öcalan'ı verin. (13.01.2005). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>200</sup> Yasalara uyun. (12 Şubat 2005). *Cumhuriyet*. Laiklik zorunluluk. (18.02.2005). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>201</sup> AB'den net mesaj. (22.04.2005). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>202</sup> Öcalan gerilimi. (23.04.2005). *Cumhuriyet*.

published a declaration and called PKK to disarm. Erdoğan, prime minister, set a meeting with these intellectuals for supporting their call. Erdoğan's statements following the meeting showed the importance of PKK problem in AKP's agenda.

Erdoğan clearly named the problem as 'Kurdish problem'. Renaming PKK problem as Kurdish problem was actually signifying the break from security-based model to PKK problem. Rather than focusing on warfare and weakening fighting capacity of PKK, the roots of the problem were addressed. Erdoğan stated that the solution of the problem laid in the commitment to democratic principles<sup>203</sup>.

Following these statements, positive feedbacks came from local people from the East of Turkey and the new approach narrated by Erdoğan was highly welcomed<sup>204</sup>. It should be noted here that this new approach was not only complied with AKP general agenda but also instrumentalized for weakening the tutelary attitude of the Army. In this period, commitment to democratic principle was beneficial for AKP because it both enabled AKP to increase its electoral support among Kurdish conservatives and consolidate its position against tutelary state apparatuses.

In his speech in Diyarbakır, Erdoğan defined Kurdish problem as 'the problem of all of us'. He repeated the necessity of democracy in the solution of Kurdish problem<sup>205</sup>. While the opposition criticized the speech of Erdoğan<sup>206</sup>, businessmen and E.U supported Erdoğan's promising words. European Council also recommended the formation of a committee to help the government to decrease the social-economic inequality among regions in Turkey. EU also noted down that the committee can also include representatives from IMF, World Bank and European

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<sup>203</sup> Erdoğan Kürt sorunu dedi. (11.08.2005). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>204</sup> Güneydoğu'da olumlu hava. (11.08.2005). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>205</sup> Kürt sorunu hepimizin. (13.08.2005). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>206</sup> Başbakan, Öcalan'la aynı noktada buluştu. (13.08.2005). *Cumhuriyet*,

Union<sup>207</sup>. In the early phases of AKP tenure, the intervention of foreign countries and institutions were quite common, and the government did not decline their roles. This approach seemed to lost its significance as the regime in Turkey began to move from tutelary democracy to more authoritarian system in following years.

In the celebration of Victory Day, Yaşar Büyükanıt, top-level general, stated that they want to convert Turkey into Palestine. He warned that it was not only the problem of PKK but more than that<sup>208</sup>. Büyükanıt and the general staff Hilmi Özkök's speeches during the celebration revealed the difference between the approaches of the Army and the government in terms of PKK problem<sup>209</sup>. This divergence at the very beginning of reforms gave the signal of incoming conflict between the government and the Army. Some of them aimed at PKK-related institutions and former PKK members<sup>210</sup>. The claim that one of attackers was the member of security forces raised the public unrest not only in Hakkari but in the region. The question of whether there was a new organization responsible for attacks began to raise<sup>211</sup>.

Public unrest also began to raise as PKK increased its activity and bombs exploded in the region. The explosions were not done only by PKK but other unknown organizations against PKK. In the city of Hakkari, there happened sixteen bombing attacks in two months<sup>212</sup>. Erdoğan's visit to Hakkari could not appease the raising unrest<sup>213</sup>. On the other hand, Barzani, prominent Kurdish figure in Northern

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<sup>207</sup> Avrupa Konseyi: Güneydoğu için komisyon kurulsun. (13.08.2005). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>208</sup> Filistinleştirmek istiyorlar. (31.08.2005). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>209</sup> Teröre farklı yaklaşım. (01.09.2005). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>210</sup> Şemdinli bombalı saldırıyla karıştı. (10.11.2005). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>211</sup> Şemdinli bombalı saldırıyla karıştı. (10.11.2005). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>212</sup> Hakkari'de şir perdesi. (10.11.2005). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>213</sup> Erdoğan'a soğuk karşılama. (22.11.2005). *Cumhuriyet*.

Iraq, called PKK as ‘ a political entity’ and talked about the possibility of the establishment of an independent state in Northern Iraq<sup>214</sup>. The relation between Barzani through political figures or state officials has always been important. Particularly following an unrest in the East of Turkey, Turkish officials preferred to get in touch with Barzani. By this way, Turkey has always tried to put pressure on PKK for ceasefires and decrease its military activities. Closely related to mountainous geography and official border of Iraq, the struggle with PKK became highly tough without cooperating with Barzani, Northern Iraq authority. Barzani’s position and attitudes towards PKK is a significant factor contributing Turkish positions vis a vis PKK. Either for military solution or political settlement, the role of Barzani, or Northern Iraq, seems to be substantial.

Despite his prominent role, Barzani was not a party to Kurdish problem in Turkey; therefore, cannot be the sole interlocutor. Like not be overshadowed by Barzani’s speech, Öcalan made a statement via the meeting with his lawyers. Öcalan clearly stated that his aim is not to found a state but sustain their cultural identities in democratic Turkey. He also said that the concepts used by Erdoğan belonged to him. With these words, Öcalan seemed to support the new approach adopted by AKP for PKK problem. Lastly, Öcalan indicated his reservation that AKP cadres and the party’s class base might not be convenient for the solution<sup>215</sup>. Tacitly referring to conservative/nationalist constituents of AKP, he thought the energy of AKP might not suffice for the solution. With the intervention through these statements, Öcalan renewed its primary role in PKK problem.

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<sup>214</sup> MIT’ ten Barzani’ye ziyaret. (24.11.2005). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>215</sup> Öcalan: Bağımsızlık istemiyoruz. (06.12.2005). *Hürriyet*.

Following the statements of Öcalan, PKK seemed to abstain from direct conflicts with state forces. But the organization was still using suicide bombers in urban attacks. Beside rural guerilla tactics, PKK began to increase its activity in urban areas. It was claimed that PKK aimed to shift its members to big cities. Both the suicide attacks and the funerals of PKK members caused public unrest and the feeling of insecurity. The attack on municipal police forces in Van<sup>216</sup>, bombing attack on children of soldiers<sup>217</sup> and killing four soldiers in Şırnak<sup>218</sup> were some examples happened in. the year 2006.

In August, Sean McCormack, the speaker of U.S Foreign Ministry, pointed out the number of security forces dead as a result of PKK attacks in Turkey and call PKK to leave their arms<sup>219</sup>. The statements raised the hopes for a ceasefire and political dialogue with PKK. The U.S announced that a coordinator will be appointed for cooperating with Turkish government to solve PKK problem<sup>220</sup>. Turkish government responded back as appointing a coordinator for cooperating with the American counterpart. Also, Iraq decided to join this coordination by appointing its own coordinator responsible for PKK issues. This cooperation between Turkey, the U.S and Iraq was promising institution for PKK problem. It should be noted that the appointment of a coordinator was asked by Turkish state. Namık Tan, the spokesperson of Foreign ministry, said that they asked the U.S to appoint a coordinator related to PKK problem<sup>221</sup>. This statement is very significant because it clearly shows the acceptance of the U.S as a third-party in the conflict of PKK in

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<sup>216</sup> Van'da kanlı gün. (10.03.2006). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>217</sup> Terör asker çocuklarını hedef aldı. (04.05.2006). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>218</sup> Şırnak'ta 4 asker şehit. (14.05.2006). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>219</sup> ABD' den PKK'ye çağrı. (16.08.2006). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>220</sup> Türkiye'de koordinatör atayacak. (17.08.2006). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>221</sup> Koordinatör atanmasını biz istedik. (18.08.2006). *Cumhuriyet*.

Turkey by AKP. Compare to Resolution Process, AKP had a very positive stance towards foreign interventions and aids in this period. By appointing a coordinator, the U.S. took a similar position in Northern Ireland problem. The new also pointed out this similarity by referring that as happened in Northern Ireland, the coordinator was expected to be a retired soldier<sup>222</sup>. The coordination between Turkey, Iraq and the U.S highly resembles the collaboration between the U.K, the Republic of Ireland and the U.S through G. Mitchell. Although American approach to U.K problems is very likely to have different motivations from that to Turkish domestic issues, the similarity is very notable.

In return for leaving their arms, U.S promised PKK to provide a dialogue with Turkish government<sup>223</sup>. According to the MIT report presented to MGK ( National Security Council), PKK worried whether Turkish government accepts the offer of dialogue and because of that uncertainty PKK avoid to leave their arms beforehand. As the report shows, leaving arms is a costly option for armed insurgents especially in the absence of an independent guarantor that has an impact on the actions of states. American presence in the process could fill the role of an independent guarantor.

As expected, Joseph Ralston who was a former vice president of chief of general staff in the U.S. His military position was more advanced compare to G. Mitchell's. It was most likely to result from the complex nature of PKK conflict and guerilla tactics employed in the region. Ralston was appointed to raise the cooperation between Iraq and Turkey, as well as disarmament of PKK<sup>224</sup>. The

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<sup>222</sup> Türkiye'de koordinatör atayacak. (17.08.2006). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>223</sup> Teröristle pazarlık. (24.08.2006). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>224</sup> ABD Ralston'ı atadı. (29.08.2006). *Cumhuriyet*.

cooperation produced significant results in the short run. PKK declared a ceasefire beginning from October 1<sup>st</sup>,2006<sup>225</sup>. After a couple of days, Ralston visited Turkey and met with its counterpart Edip Başer, retired full general. Ralston considered the ceasefire as an important watershed and advised the Turkish government to take it seriously<sup>226</sup>. Ralston also got in touch with Iraq central government and Kurdish Autonomous Region. Kurdish leaders in the Northern Iraq gave the report that included the names of people that had escaped from PKK camps<sup>227</sup>. Ralston also met with Gül, the foreign minister, and convey that the military means were the last solution that they could resort. He also considered PKK's actions as positive<sup>228</sup> and the status quo as suitable for disarmament<sup>229</sup>.

As the cooperation between the U.S, Turkey and Iraq had increased, the pressure of domestic politics on AKP started to undermine this process. Necdet Sezer, the head of the state, high-level generals and opposition parties accused the government of violating the secular tenets of the Republic. The mutual battle of words with the government seemed to turn into a competition for power. Deniz Baykal, the head of main opposition party, even called AKP to declare an early election if it trusted on public support<sup>230</sup>. The incoming election of the head of state and general election seemed to dominate political agenda.

Debates over appointments of high-ranking state officials, attire of state officers and secularism<sup>231</sup> increased the political tension. While the government was

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<sup>225</sup> PKK ateşkes ilan etti. (01.10.2006). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>226</sup> ABD: Ateşkesi ciddiye alm. (12.10.2006). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>227</sup> PKK'den kaçış. (11.10.2006). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>228</sup> PKK olumlu adım attı. (13.10.2006). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>229</sup> ABD: Ateşkesi ciddiye alm. (12.10.2006). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>230</sup> Erken seçime çağrı. (18.11.2006). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>231</sup> Halkı tahrik etme. (02.01.2007). *Cumhuriyet*.

concerned with elections, the root-level organizations raised their demand for the solution of Kurdish problem<sup>232</sup>. The assassination of Hrant Dink, the law draft of Armenian Genocide in the U.S Senate and American warning to Turkey about cross-border military operations in Northern Iraq highly increased the pressure on AKP<sup>233</sup>. While PKK mostly kept its passive position and waiting for new reforms and laws, AKP government was not able to launch a new era due to such political environment. Zubeyir Aydar, PKK member, stated that democratic advancement should continue in Turkey and the U.S presence in the region was welcomed by PKK<sup>234</sup>. Although the rapprochement between the U.S and PKK was beneficial for the cooperation, opposition parties and the Army raised harsh criticisms for the government because of its cooperation with the U.S<sup>235</sup>. Despite its majority in the Parliament, AKP could not take any significant steps.

While the negotiations between Turkey and the U.S coordinators were going on, the Parliament was stuck on the election of the new head of the state. Because CHP, main opposition party, refused to attend the voting in the Parliament, it was claimed that minimum number for a valid voting, 367, could not be reached<sup>236</sup>. The Islamic root of AKP candidate, Abdullah Gül, attracted Republican/Secular reactions from the public. Under the name ‘Republic Protests’<sup>237</sup>, there were five mass protests organized for the opposition against Gül’s candidacy. Combining with the necessity of 367 deputies asserted by the main opposition party, AKP began to feel an important threat for its power. Despite constitutional debates on the verdict,

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<sup>232</sup> Kürt Sorununa çözüm istediler. (14.01.2007). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>233</sup> Türkiye’ye kurşun. (20.01.2007). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>234</sup> ABD PKK’nin dostu. (14.02.2007). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>235</sup> Terör örgütüne ABD silahları. (18.02.2007). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>236</sup> AKP Meclis’te atamayı oyluyor. (27.04.2007). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>237</sup> Tehlikenin farkındayız. (14.04.2007). *Cumhuriyet*.

The Supreme Court finally decided that the presence of 367 deputies during the voting is a necessity for its validity on May 1<sup>st</sup>. AKP that could not reach the threshold without help of deputies from other parties and called for an early election in July<sup>238</sup>. This incident both radicalized the AKP's stance and delay the ongoing reforms including Kurdish problem. Political instability in the period had negatively impacted foreign interventions, too.

The general election done in July 22<sup>nd</sup>,2007 could not generate an incumbent with more than 367 parliamentarians. But, MHP which passed the threshold of ten percent and gain 71 seats in the Parliament accepted to join the voting of the head of state, which paved the way for the election of Abdullah Gül as the head of the state in August 24<sup>th</sup>,2007.

Domestic political conjecture had interrupted the ongoing developments on Kurdish problem. AKP's struggle with secular state apparatus made the party get away from advancing the reforms. On the other hand, Secular-Islamic tensions had a significant capacity to dominate political agenda in that period. With the early election and the election of Abdullah Gül as the new head of the state enabled AKP to consolidate its political legitimacy and power.

However, in October 21<sup>st</sup>,2007, PKK attacked a military base in Dağlıca, causing the death of 12 soldiers and 16 soldier wounded<sup>239</sup>. It had a huge impact on the change of AKP's policy towards Kurdish problem (Aktoprak, 2012). AKP responded back with the military operations both in border and cross-border PKK camps. But the cross-border operations had created a tension between Turkey and

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<sup>238</sup> Erken seçim kararı. (02.05.2007). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>239</sup> Yeter artık. (22.10.2007). *Cumhuriyet*.

Northern Iraq. National Security Council called MGK advised to lift an embargo on Kurdish groups in Northern Iraq<sup>240</sup>. While felt threatened by Army's increasing pressure, AKP government sought a solution with the intervention of the U.S President, George Bush. His visit to Erdoğan raised the hope for a permit for cross-border military operations in Northern Iraq with the cooperation of Iraqi government.

Despite expectations, G. Bush did not support the direct military operations but put forward to threefold information sharing and collaboration among Turkey, the U.S and Iraq for weakening PKK's capacity in the region<sup>241</sup>. The U.S's approach to deployment of Turkish and airstrikes in the Northern Ireland drew the criticisms of the opposition<sup>242</sup>. Kurdish Autonomous Region, by the way, welcomed Bush's approach and barrier to direct military operations by Turkish Army<sup>243</sup>. Not backed by G. Bush, AKP found a new way to address problems in Northern Iraq. In December 13rd, 2007, AKP legislated a new remorse law for PKK militants. According to a new<sup>244</sup>, a PKK militant surrender to Turkish authorities and benefit from the law. The portrait of a militant that was released upon the introduction of the remorse law was instrumentalized to encourage further surrenders.

The effectiveness of the remorse law was supported by the military operations in Northern Iraq. As discussed in the meeting with G. Bush, upon the cooperation with the U.S and Iraq, Turkish Army had started ' The Sun Operation' in February 21<sup>st</sup>, 2008<sup>245</sup>. Despite some controversial statements, the Iraq government spokesman announced that the operations of Turkish Army did not violate the

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<sup>240</sup> Kuzey Irak'a ambargo. (25.10.2007). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>241</sup> Yeni oyalama taktiği. (06.11.2007). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>242</sup> Harekat izne bağlandı. (06.11.2007). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>243</sup> Kürtler memnun. (08.11.2007). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>244</sup> Teslim oldu, salıverildi. (14.12.2007). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>245</sup> Karadan kuşatma. (23.02.2008). *Cumhuriyet*.

national sovereignty of Iraq<sup>246</sup>. On the other hand, the U.S secretary of defense called Turkish operations to finalize in a short time<sup>247</sup>. Drawing on the statements of Iraq and the U.S officials, it can be claimed that the operations had done within the scope of trilateral cooperation between them. However, the primary position in the cooperation should be taken into consideration. A few days after the first statement about Turkish operations, the secretary of defense warned Turkey that if the operations last a long time, the U.S could stop the sharing of information with Turkish state<sup>248</sup>. After this statement, the operation was ended. The short time between the statement and the end of the military operation raised the doubts about American pressure. While the Turkish General Staff stated that there was not any ‘international or domestic impact’ on the decision of ending the operation, the opposition kept questioning the role of American statements<sup>249</sup>.

However, the U.S interventions on Kurdish issue began to concentrate on political dialogues and negotiations. Raymond Odierno, the American general, propounded those military operations are not long-term means for the solution and emphasize the importance of Kurdish Autonomous Region in the North Iraq<sup>250</sup>. Supporting Odierno’s words, the secretary of the defense stated that Turkey should generate political solutions to Kurdish people living in Turkey in addition to military operations on PKK<sup>251</sup>.

Despite foreign interventions and inter-state cooperation, domestic politics became highly problematic for AKP once again. A case was opened by a prosecutor

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<sup>246</sup> Çelişkili açıklamalar Bağdat kararsız. (25.02.2008). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>247</sup> Robert Gates ‘Kısa sürsün’. (25.08.2008). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>248</sup> İstihbarat kesilebilir. (28.02.2008). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>249</sup> ABD mi etkili oldu. (01.03.2008). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>250</sup> Masaya oturtma planı. (06.03.2008). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>251</sup> Siyasi çözüm de üretilmeli. (06.03.2008). *Cumhuriyet*

for the closure of AKP and Constitutional Court accepted the case<sup>252</sup>. Combined with deepening global economic crisis<sup>253</sup>, AKP had faced both economic and political threats for its survival as an incumbent party. The prosecutor also demanded 71 politicians including Prime Minister Erdoğan and Head of state Gül to be banned from the politics. Turkish politics seemed to be dominated by political instability and protests for deteriorating economic conditions. On July 29<sup>th</sup>,2009, Constitutional Court charged AKP of cutting its state funding to the half<sup>254</sup>.

As political circumstances seemed to move in favor of AKP after the closure movement, famous Ergenekon Trials began to show up in Turkish media. The police operation to a house in Umraniye in which handmade explosive grenades and ammunition were found revealed various plans and information including a coup d'état against AKP government and the assassination of Hrant Dink<sup>255</sup>. As the trials expanded, more and more military officers including retired generals were included in the case<sup>256</sup>. The trials turned into power struggle between AKP and the Army. Even Erdoğan called himself as the prosecutor of the trials<sup>257</sup>. The trials showed the weakening impact of the Army on politics and Turkey's break from tutelary democracy. The Independent newspaper named the trials 'the test of democratization', the opposition considered it as a revenge for the closure movement<sup>258</sup>.

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<sup>252</sup> Dava kabul edildi. (01.04.2008). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>253</sup> Esnaf bunalımda. (07.04.2008). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>254</sup> AKP'ye para cezası. (29.07.2008). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>255</sup> Çelişkili suçlamalar. (28.07.2008). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>256</sup> Ergenekon'da yeni iddialar yeni gözaltılar. (14.08.2008). *Cumhuriyet*.

5 Teğmen gözaltında. (19.09.2008). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>257</sup> Ergenekon'da görevimiz. (20.10.2008). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>258</sup> İddianame Da Vinci şifresi gibi. (21.10.2008). *Cumhuriyet*.

The year 2009 commenced with increasing pressure on the Army through Ergenekon Trials. The number of retired high-ranking generals included in the trials were raising<sup>259</sup>. Beside retired generals, officers in charges began to be taken into custody<sup>260</sup>. General Staff's passive position vis a vis these arrests almost signifies the end of tutelary regime in Turkey. But, not only the Army but also significant leftist figures were targeted. Expanding scope of the trials raised the doubts about possible scenarios of witch hunt initiated by AKP government<sup>261</sup>. Dominating position of AKP in domestic politics almost reflected on international scene in Davos Summit. Erdoğan accused Shimon Peres, Israeli President, of using excessive force in Gazze and left the meeting<sup>262</sup>. Then Peres made a phone call with Erdoğan and apologize for his manner in the meeting. The incident increased the popularity of Erdoğan and might be signifying the initial steps for authoritarian turn.

The developments in foreign politics combined with the ceasefire declared by AKP until the local elections seemed to decrease the pressure on AKP in domestic politics. Considering also the weakening political status of the Army, it can be claimed that convenient political environment had appeared for political reforms. The head of the state, Abdullah Gül, gave the first signals of incoming 'Kurdish Opening'. Before his visit to Iran, Gül responded the questions of reporters about Kurdish issue that great things will happen<sup>263</sup>. In the local election in 2009, AKP managed to keep its vote above forty percent despite losing some votes in Eastern

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<sup>259</sup> Ergenekon'da en büyük dalga. (08.01.2009). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>260</sup> Görevdeki 9 Subay gözaltında. (08.01.2009). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>261</sup> Ergenekon 'cadı avı. (10.01.2009). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>262</sup> Davos'ta gerginlik. (30.01.2009). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>263</sup> Çok güzel şeyler olacak. (11.03.2009). *Cumhuriyet*.

provinces. Also, PKK extended its ceasefire until June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2009. This move of PKK was interpreted as a possible dialogue process with the incumbent party.

International support for such a dialogue came from the newly-elected U.S President Barack Obama. In his famous speech in Turkish Grand Assembly, he pointed out that any kind of terror could not be accepted and the endeavors of the Turkish government for the solution of Kurdish problem shall be supported<sup>264</sup>. Obama's supportive attitude towards AB membership and PKK problem encouraged the AKP policies and boost the start of 'Kurdish Opening' whose signals were given by Gül before.

The second important statement again came from Abdullah Gül. He clearly stated that the Kurdish Problem has top-priority regardless of calling it 'Southeastern Problem' or 'PKK Problem'. He also added that the year 2009 is the year of opportunity<sup>265</sup>. On the other hand, it was claimed in the news that Karayılan, the head of PKK, was also looking for a channel for a dialogue with the government<sup>266</sup>. According to a new in Referans newspaper<sup>267</sup>, Öcalan responded back to Gül's speech that he started to work on a roadmap.

Erdoğan also supported Gül's speech and repeated a similar stance by stating that good things will happen<sup>268</sup>. Before an official announcement, the newspaper had already started to call these statements as a signal of Kurdish Opening. The opening was assumed to focus on two stages. While the first one was to disintegrate. PKK

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<sup>264</sup> Obama'dan tarihi konuşma. (07.04.2009). *Hürriyet*.

<sup>265</sup> Kürt sorunu birinci meselemiz. (10.05.2009). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>266</sup> Karayılan, Ankara ile diyalog yolları arıyor. (10.05.2009). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>267</sup> I could not find a related news in *Cumhuriyet* and *Hurriyet* newspapers.

<sup>268</sup> İyi şeyler olacak. (13.05.2009). *Cumhuriyet*

through remorse law and changes in Penal Code, the second stage was to initiate democratic and cultural reforms<sup>269</sup>.

Öcalan had completed its 'roadmap' and sent to Turkish authorities. The roadmap was also sent to European Court of Human Rights. He proposed three-stage roadmap for the opening. First stage was the de-escalation of the conflict. It shall be done with the ceasefire declared by PKK. It should be pointed out that Öcalan did not talk about disarmament in this stage, but the end of mutual warfare. In the second stage, a new committee should be created for helping the repeal of legal barriers for PKK militants to leave the country or benefit from the remorse law. Amnesty law should be created in this committee. Moreover, another committee was a need for monitoring the process in which PKK transferred its entities out of Turkey borders. This committee should be consisted of representatives from the U.S., E.U, U.N, Kurdish Autonomous Region and Turkey. While the PKK forces were retreating from Turkey, its members in prisons should benefit from the amnesty. Öcalan's proposal for a monitoring committee for the retreat of PKK was a significant point. As happened in Çözüm Süreci, the lack of monitoring services could pave the way for misunderstandings, lack of information about the retreat process and make the process fragile. An independent committee that is consisting of representatives from various institutions and countries appeared also in Öcalan's words in 2009.

The third stage was the legalization of KCK, the political branch of PKK. With the amnesty for high-level PKK members and those deprived of its Turkish citizenship, PKK began to legalized its entity and conditions for applying to guns

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<sup>269</sup> İki aşamalı açılım. (13.05.2009). *Cumhuriyet*.

were eliminated. In this stage, legal and constitutional changes should be effectively employed according to him<sup>270</sup>.

Öcalan's stages did not envisage the PKK's leaving arms but the gradual elimination of conditions that caused the armed warfare. Therefore, leaving the arms beforehand was not a matter of debate or in agenda. Murat Karayılan, the head of PKK, also pointed out the same position in his interview with Hasan Cemal. He talked about the silence of guns rather than disarmament<sup>271</sup>. However, AKP's roadmap for the opening was quite different. Being aware of insufficient parliamentary majority for constitutional changes, AKP divided its plan into three sub-periods. The map was consisted of short-term, mid-term and long-term targets. Short-term targets were to enable Kurdish language courses, increase Kurdish broadcasting and extend the use of Kurdish naming of villages and towns through changes in regulations. In mid-term, AKP aimed to change the related articles in Penal Code to update effective remorse conditions. These changes were to be made through changes in laws. In the last stage, the long-term, AKP aimed to make more reforms through constitutional changes. This stage was considered as the hardest part of the plan considering the necessity of MHP and CHP supports<sup>272</sup>.

In the meeting of tripartite cooperation between Turkey, Iraq and the U.S in Ankara, Turkish efforts for Kurdish issue and Makhmour Refugee Camp that was founded by the U.S for mostly Kurdish people in Iraq were discussed<sup>273</sup>. A day after the meetings, Beşir Atalay, the minister of domestic affairs, clearly stated that the

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<sup>270</sup> ÇANDAR, C. (2011). Dağdan İniş - PKK Nasıl Silah Bırakır? Kürt Sorunu'nun Şiddetten Arındırılması. Türkiye Ekonomik ve Sosyal Etüdler Vakfı. İstanbul: TESEV, p.110

<sup>271</sup> Karayılan: Barış umudumuz var. (05.05.2009). *Milliyet*.

<sup>272</sup> Üç aşamalı çözüm planı. (16.08.2009). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>273</sup> Ankara'da üçlü PKK zirvesi. (29.07.2009). *Cumhuriyet*.

Kurdish opening is actually the democratic opening which aimed at improvement of democratic rights of Kurdish people<sup>274</sup>.

All the developments were welcomed by DTP, Kurdish Nationalist Party and people living in Eastern provinces. PKK announced the extension of its ceasefire as a response. In World Peace Day, September 1<sup>st</sup>, various non-governmental organizations and political parties including DTP celebrated the day with slogans regarding the Kurdish Openings<sup>275</sup>. The first conflictual statements on disarmament happened in this period. While pointing out the importance of legal reforms, Beşir Atalay attached primary importance to disarmament issue. He said the disarmament is the beginning of this process<sup>276</sup>. A DTP Parliamentarian responded back that the demand for disarmament could block the ongoing process<sup>277</sup>.

However, the conditions for leaving army by PKK could not be discussed in detail due to judicial crisis. Through the year 2009, AKP government had aimed for reforms in the formation of high courts and judicial arrangements. That had caused various tensions between members of high-court and government representatives<sup>278</sup>. In September, with the advent of the Kurdish Opening, DTP members started to comment on Öcalan's intervention and PKK's agenda. These statements were seen as acts of terrorist propaganda, which was a crime in Penal Code. A prosecutor opened a case for DTP members for their statements. DTP members' refusal of giving a statement to the court caused a crisis<sup>279</sup>. To solve this problem, AKP was looking for a way to make constitutional changes about legal immunity of

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<sup>274</sup> Açılım haberi geldi. (30.07.2009). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>275</sup> Kadıköy'de 1 Eylül kutlaması. (02.09.2009). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>276</sup> İşin başı silahların bırakılması. (01.09.2009). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>277</sup> Kürtler ayrılmayı tartışır. (02.09.2009). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>278</sup> AKP'nin ilk hedefi HSYK. (26.08.2009). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>279</sup> DTP'liler zorla getirilecekler. (30.09.2009). *Cumhuriyet*.

Parliamentarians<sup>280</sup>. This incident again showed the necessity of constitutional reforms for the future of the opening.

Öcalan, then, took a step and called for a group of PKK militants to pass Iraq border and surrender the Turkish authorities as a sign of goodwill. His claim was reciprocated by executive committee of PKK. A group of people coming from Mahkmour Camp and militants from Kandil surrendered<sup>281</sup>. A prosecutor took their statements and release them. The surrendered group took DTP bus, greeted the mass waiting for them and make a meeting in Diyarbakır. While the incident was initially welcomed by Atalay<sup>282</sup>, Gül and Erdoğan reacted harshly to the rallies by calling them provocative<sup>283</sup>. The incident, later called Habur Incident, created a huge political tension in the Kurdish Opening.

While the opening was damaged by Habur Incident, PKK had attacked a military vehicle and killed seven soldiers<sup>284</sup>. The pressure of the opposition parties, CHP and MHP, on the governing party had raised after the attack. They accused AKP of being traitor due to the policies that the party had followed in the Kurdish Opening<sup>285</sup>. Beside these debates, the last straw that breaks the camel's back came from Constitutional Court. The court decided to close DTP<sup>286</sup>. While DTP members established a new party to sustain its presence in the Parliament, BDP<sup>287</sup>,

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<sup>280</sup> AKP çözüm arıyor. (01.10.2009). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>281</sup> PKK'liler geldi. (20.10.2009). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>282</sup> Yeni gruplar yolda. (21.10.2009). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>283</sup> İşin ölçüsü kaçtı. (23.10.2009). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>284</sup> Tokat'ta 7 şehit. (08.12.2009). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>285</sup> İhanet kavgası. (10.12.2009). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>286</sup> DTP kapatıldı. (12.12.2009). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>287</sup> Yeni partide siyaset öne çıktı. (13.12.2009). *Cumhuriyet*.

Constitutional Court's decision showed the fragile nature of the process against high-level bureaucratic institutions.

The year 2009 had witnessed many developments regarding the Kurdish problem in Turkey. The dialogue process initiated by AKP under the name 'Kurdish Opening' were welcomed by DTP and Öcalan despite huge criticisms by MHP and CHP. The U.S interventions through the visit of Obama and tripartite cooperation among Turkey, the U.S and Iraq enable AKP to advance the democratic reforms including Kurdish language schools, broadcasting and Kurdish alphabet. But Habur Incident and the closure of BDP created a deadlock in the process. While Kurdish Opening was not officially ended, its trajectory was undermined. The power struggle between AKP and judicial institutions such as Constitutional Court and High Court of Judged and Prosecutors (HSYK) kept its prominence in 2010, too. Both not to face the impediments in Kurdish Openings and consolidate its power, AKP found a way to change the formation of Connotational Court through a referendum.

AKP had also suffered from domestic opposition to Kurdish Opening. Some of members claimed that the public hold AKP responsible for attacks and provocations happened during the opening<sup>288</sup>. Also, Ergenekon trials created a discomfort among the Army<sup>289</sup>. The political tension in Turkey seem to raise in the beginning of the year 2010.

The conflicts between Judiciary and AKP had dominated the agenda of 2010. A prosecutor in Erzurum interrogated the chief prosecutor in Erzincan. For the first time in Turkish history, a chief-prosecutor got prison sentence. While HSYK decided

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<sup>288</sup> AKP'liler açılıma kapalı. (14.01.2010). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>289</sup> Benim moralim de bozuluyor. (14.02.2010). *Cumhuriyet*.

that the prosecutor in Erzurum exceeded his authority, AKP evaluated the decision of HSYK as a crime<sup>290</sup>. With the interventions of other high-courts, Danıştay and Yargıtay, into the debate, the incidents turned into AKP-Judiciary struggle<sup>291</sup>.

In this struggle, BDP, Kurdish Nationalist Party, was actually the ally of AKP because of former decision of the closure of DHP and prison sentence to DHP parliamentarians. PKK also declared a ceasefire in August 13rd, 2010, a month before the referendum. The political reproachment between BDP and AKP did not generate substantial results for Kurdish Openings but an alliance against state institutions that they both considered undemocratic.

The changes accepted in the referendum are mostly related Constitutional Court and Supreme Court. With increasing the members of Constitutional Court, AKP aimed to obtain the majority in the court. Also, for the closure of political parties, the necessary votes increased from 3/5 to 2/3 to make the possibility of closures more difficult. The legal scope of military courts were restricted and civilians' trials in military courts were repealed. As a result of the changes, AKP had curtailed the judicial monitoring over its actions (Esen & Gumuscu, 2020).

After the referendum, the peace initiatives began to appear again. Kurdish Nationalist party members claim that Öcalan can call PKK to disarm considering the rising tension in the East<sup>292</sup>. Supporting his party's position, Ahmet Türk announced that for the sake of the peace process, PKK should take their armed forces out of the border<sup>293</sup>. Right after these statements, PKK announced that the organization takes

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<sup>290</sup> Yargıda deprem. (18.02.2010). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>291</sup> HSYK'ye tam destek. (18.02.2010). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>292</sup> Öcalan'a silah bırak çağrısı. (26.09.2010). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>293</sup> Silahlarını Türkiye dışına çek. (30.09.2010). *Cumhuriyet*.

inactive position, meaning that they'll not attack but respond the attacks of Turkish Army in case<sup>294</sup>. PKK extended its inaction until October 31<sup>st</sup>, 2010<sup>295</sup>. Despite such developments in PKK's position, the government could not expand its reforms relating to Kurdish Opening. AKP's victory in referendum did not generate positive results for the opening. Getting rid of tutelary judicial oversight was believed to enable AKP to initiate democratic reforms, on the contrary, the government raised the doubts about decaying democratic institutions. The Economist, on October, 2010, gave the first signal of this backsliding by drawing the attention to Erdoğan's intolerance<sup>296</sup>.

“By the end of 2010 the AKP had already pacified most of the veto-players in the system and ended the era of tutelary democracy in Turkey”<sup>297</sup> write Esen and Gumuscu (2016) to depict the regime change in Turkey. With the referendum of 2010 and Sledgehammer and Ergenekon trials, AKP overcame the threats coming from the Army and Judiciary. Starting from 2011 onwards, rising authoritarian tones and policies resulting from executive executive aggrandizement became more noticeable. While reducing Army and Judiciary's sphere of influence seemed to favor Kurdish nationalist movements and supported by BDP, due to decreased threat of closing their party and deputies' getting arrested, the regime change started to undermine civil and political liberties, which contradicted with the aims of the Openings, though.

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<sup>294</sup> Eylemsizliğe devam. (01.10.2010). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>295</sup> 31 ekime kadar süre. (16.10.2010). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>296</sup> Derin yarılma. (31.10.2010). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>297</sup> Esen, B., & Gumuscu, S. (2016). Rising competitive authoritarianism in Turkey. *Third World Quarterly*, 37(9), 1581-1606, p.1585

Throughout 2011 and 2012, Turkey had gone through excessive level of violence and most of them happened in urban areas. Compare to rural-based guerilla attacks of PKK in previous years, the organization changed its policies towards suicide bombers and attacks in cities. Therefore, PKK attacks resemble those of IRA starting from 2011. Rising violence in cities, I and the country overall, pushed AKP government to initiate peace negotiations by advancing the scope of previous opening in 2009.

The year 2011 began with rising international tension both in the World and the region. Operations in Libya were accelerated and Turkey started to play more and more role in military operations by permitting the use of flying field for attacks on Libya<sup>298</sup>. Political instability was also rising in Syria. Beşar Esad was striving for keeping its government against the opposition. The political reform promises given by Esad could not appease the opposition and armed conflicts were to start. Esad government was also suspicious of Turkey's support the opposition<sup>299</sup>. Conditions were likely to trigger tensions between Esad and Erdoğan.

Getting almost rid of judiciary oversight, AKP government seemed to follow more radical policies towards any opposition. A group of people who were the opponents of building hydroelectric power stations in Black Sea Region protested the rally of Erdoğan in Hopa, Artvin. Government's reaction was so harsh. Protestors were excessively intervened by police forces<sup>300</sup>. Even one person was dead as a result of the chaos. The government took excessive precautions and exaggerate the

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<sup>298</sup> Operasyon sürüyor. (21.03.2011). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>299</sup> Türkiye sınırından silah geldi. (17.06.2011). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>300</sup> Terör estiriyor. (02.06.2011). *Cumhuriyet*.

tension<sup>301</sup>. Government position on incidents in Hopa raised the doubts of an authoritarian turn in Turkey<sup>302</sup>.

While the government gave the message of its commitment to the Opening<sup>303</sup>, PKK attacked the military soldier in Silvan and caused the death of 13 soldiers<sup>304</sup>. Just after this bloody attack, BDP, pro-Kurdish nationalist party, deputies declared a democratic autonomy of Kurdish people living in Turkey<sup>305</sup>. The government was shocked by the declaration and responded harshly to it. Öcalan announced that he was the only one who can make PKK to leave their arms and warned the government that more attacks can happened if the government keeps the same political path<sup>306</sup>.

Close time period between Silvan attack and the declaration of democratic autonomy led to the criticisms that BDP could not keep its political entity independent from PKK. Clinton, foreign secretary of the U.S advised BDP to adopt the strategies of Sein Fein, Republican Party in Northern Ireland, in the sense that Sein Fein could separate its political character from IRA<sup>307</sup>. Actually, Sein Fein's position vis a vis IRA was not sufficiently independent. Many former IRA members were elected as Parliamentarians from Sein Fein and the party had very close ties with IRA, though. At the very beginning of peace negotiations in the U.K, the head of Sein Fein said that they buried the weapons but they always can take them back from there. Depending on similar statements, it can be claimed that Sein Fein was

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<sup>301</sup> Hopa'da ohal. (08.06.2011). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>302</sup> Otoriter eğilim kaygısı. (11.06.2011). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>303</sup> Açılım kararlı şekilde sürecek. (09.07.2011). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>304</sup> Silvan'da 13 şehit. (15.07.2011). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>305</sup> Demokratik özerklik. (15.07.2011). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>306</sup> Yarın on katı olur. (21.07.2011). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>307</sup> Sein Fein'i örnek alın. (23.07.2011). *Cumhuriyet*.

not that much independent from IRA. Moreover, Sein Fein's influence on IRA was not significant. Sein Fein, as a party, could not control the attacks of IRA and accepted that IRA was not listening them. In this manner, BDP-PKK relations highly resemble that of Sein Fein- IRA. But, Öcalan's influence on PKK creates important advantages for the benefit of AKP government because Öcalan's call can be directly responded by PKK. Having the power of leading the actions of PKK, Öcalan had a critical role that can be instrumentalized by the government for the sake of the peace process.

PKK attacks began to incrementally raise. PKK killed three soldiers in Mardin by laying an ambush<sup>308</sup>. Another attack happened in Şırnak and caused the death of three soldiers<sup>309</sup>. Only four days after the attack in Şırnak, ten soldiers were died because of mine explosion on the road<sup>310</sup>. PKK started to aim at soldiers in their social lives and schools. PKK attacked the soldiers playing football in Tunceli<sup>311</sup>. PKK militants had threatened the teachers to leave their schools, otherwise, they said they burn schools<sup>312</sup>.

While PKK continued its attacks, the secret talks happened between government officials, National Intelligence Service members and PKK representative in Oslo in 2009 were revealed on the Internet<sup>313</sup>. The opposition harshly criticized the hidden talks and sound records<sup>314</sup>. While the records are not fully understandable, the content showed that many reforms in the Opening in 2009 were decided by PKK

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<sup>308</sup> Pusu: 3 şehit. (25.07.2011). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>309</sup> Şırnak'ta 3 asker şehit. (14.08.2011). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>310</sup> Büyük acı: 10 şehit. (18.08.2011). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>311</sup> Halisahada pusu: 2 Şehit. (05.09.2011). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>312</sup> Gidin, yoksa yakarız. (13.09.2011). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>313</sup> Oslo görüşmesi internete düştü. (14.09.2011). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>314</sup> Oslo kapışması. (15.09.2011). *Cumhuriyet*.

representatives and state officials beforehand. While PKK promised to keep its ceasefire in return for some guarantees and political reforms. Overall, because leak of voice records had increased the political pressure on AKP, the government could not respond BDP's call that the government can talk with Öcalan without hiding it<sup>315</sup>.

The last days of September, 2011, had witnessed many bloody attacks done by PKK. 2 soldiers were dead due to mine explosion in Van<sup>316</sup>. PKK exploded a bomb in a vehicle in the capital city of Turkey, Ankara<sup>317</sup>. Rising activities in metropolitans highly raised the public fear. After two days, one traffic police were died in Diyarbakır<sup>318</sup>. PKK militants attacked a police station with a rocket launcher in Siirt<sup>319</sup>. On October 20<sup>th</sup>, PKK caused the death of 24 soldiers in Hakkari<sup>320</sup>. That was the final straw. Massive military operations had been started just after the attack<sup>321</sup>. The cross-border airstrikes had supported the ground attacks. Since the operations in Northern Iraq that was interrupted as a result of American diplomatic pressure, this was the first extensive military operation in Northern Iraq. The chaos and military-dominated strategies also caused the empowerment in executive authorities. Erdoğan started to bypass the Grand Assembly with executive orders (KHK in Turkish) and AKP's dominance in the Assembly prevented the examination of these executive orders<sup>322</sup>. Turkish electoral system seemed to slip into a kind of presidential system.

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<sup>315</sup> Öcalan'la açık görüşün. (15.09.2011). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>316</sup> Terkre 2 şehit daha. (18.09.2011). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>317</sup> Bu nasıl istihbarat. (21.09.2011). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>318</sup> Terör kana doymuyor. (23.09.2011). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>319</sup> Terörsüz gün yok Pervari'de 5 şehit. (25.08.2011). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>320</sup> Acı, öfke ve isyan. (20.10.2011). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>321</sup> 22 taburla kara harekatı. (21.09.2011). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>322</sup> Meclis'e 28 çalım. (03.11.2011). *Cumhuriyet*.

The military operations could not generate a clear victory and PKK attacks did not end. Military warfare could not reach the level of hurting stalemate that can motivate parties to look for an alternative way to end the conflict. In the last days of 2011, there happened a tragic incident in Uludere<sup>323</sup>. 34 citizens were died as a result of airstrikes because the Army was informed that they were terrorist trespassing the Turkish border<sup>324</sup>.

The year 2012 commenced with the echoes of Uludere incident<sup>325</sup>. BDP carried the case of Uludere to the United Nations because the party claimed that it was the crime committed against humanity right<sup>326</sup>. While Uludere incident had been discussed, the head of National Intelligence Service, Hakan Fidan, was called for giving a statement for the case of KCK, the political branch of PKK. Fidan's role in Oslo talks required its testimony. But, with the change in the regulations of Intelligence Service, Erdoğan was given the power to decide whether Fidan can give a statement for the prosecutor or not. With this move, the prosecutor could not take Fidan's testimony about Oslo talks<sup>327</sup>. This incident was, afterwards, named ' MIT Crisis'. While undermining the principle of equality before law, Erdoğan gave the sense of guarantee for those involved in Oslo process.

The year 2007 had marked deepening crisis in Syria, its affect on Kurdish issue in Turkey and continuing PKK attacks. As a result of these, AKP government was forced to initiate more serious openings under the name of Solution Process in

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<sup>323</sup> Jetler sivilleri vurdu. (30.12.2011). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>324</sup> İstihbaratı kim verdi? (31.12.2011). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>325</sup> Uludere affedilemez. (02.01.2012). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>326</sup> BDP BM'ye başvurdu. (26.01.2012). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>327</sup> Fidan'ı harcamadı. (10.02.2012). *Cumhuriyet*.

2013. To grasp the conditions that paved the way for the process, the political instability and hurtling stalemate occurred in 2012 should be addressed.

PKK continued its attack at the beginning of the year. The first attack was in Şırnak and caused the death of two soldiers<sup>328</sup>. There was a bombing attack in İstanbul<sup>329</sup>. Moreover, similar attack happened in Kayseri and Gaziantep. Suicide bombers caused the death of one police officer<sup>330</sup>. The bombing vehicle was exploded near to the police station and caused death of eight civilians including a two-years-old baby<sup>331</sup>. The violence had spread across the country and aim at metropolitans in this period. On the other hand, conflicts between soldiers and PKK militants were happening in rural regions. Attacks in Diyarbakır<sup>332</sup>, Hakkari<sup>333</sup> and Şırnak<sup>334</sup> caused the death of many soldiers. Starting from September,2012, hurtling stalemate between the Army and PKK began to appear. This military stalemate was followed by political initiatives by AKP government.

However, political crisis in Syria was deepening as PKK attacks in Turkey was raising. Turkish plane that was shot by Syrian government caused a crisis between Turkey and Syria. Turkish's stance on the incident threatened the Syrian government so much that Esad stated he wished we would not shoot the plane<sup>335</sup>. But the bombing attack happened in the capital of Syria, Damascus, after two weeks,

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<sup>328</sup> Şırnak'ta 2 asker şehit. (14.02.2012). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>329</sup> Polise bombalı saldırı. (02.03.2012). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>330</sup> Terör Kayseri'de. (26.05.2012). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>331</sup> Bunun adı alçaklık. (21.08.2012). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>332</sup> Diyarbakır'da 2 asker şehit. (28.07.2012). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>333</sup> Hakkari'de 8 şehit. (06.08.2012). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>334</sup> Bitsin bu ölümler. (04.09.2012). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>335</sup> Esad: Keşke düşürmeseydik. (03.07.2012). *Cumhuriyet*.

indicated that the tension between Turkey and Syria would not be short-term. Syrian government accused Turkish intelligence of conducting this bombing attack<sup>336</sup>.

While the relations between Turkish and Syrian government was getting worse, there happened a power gap in the Northern Syria. YPG, a branch of PKK in Syria, filled the gap and capture the governance of some cities<sup>337</sup>. It alarmed the Turkish authorities<sup>338</sup>. Combining with the domestic problems with PKK, Kurdish regional power in Northern Syria could increase the warfare capacity of PKK and trigger more problems in Turkey.

Under the pressure of raising PKK attacks, Erdoğan stated that the government can get in touch with Öcalan again<sup>339</sup>. Erdoğan's words were also supported by statements of other ministers. The minister of justice, regarding the legal status of Öcalan, announced that the talks with Öcalan can start anytime soon<sup>340</sup>. Combining with legal reforms including defense in mother-language, the government strived for ending the death fast of PKK prisoners<sup>341</sup>. Compare to previous attempts, Öcalan was directly accepted as an interlocutor<sup>342</sup>. In the last days of year 2012, Erdoğan publicly declared that the officials were negotiating with Öcalan<sup>343</sup>.

Before discussing the incidents happened in the first months of 2013 in which Solution Process was launched, Turkish electoral system's move to presidentialism

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<sup>336</sup> Şam'ın kalbine bomba. (19.07.2012). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>337</sup> Kürtler yönetiminde. (20.07.2012). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>338</sup> Ankara telaşa. (26.07.2012). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>339</sup> Imralı ile görüşürüz. (27.09.2012). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>340</sup> Öcalan'la müzakereye başlıyor. (31.10.2012). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>341</sup> Erdoğan'dan talimat. (06.11.2012). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>342</sup> Öcalan tek muhatap. (21.11.2012). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>343</sup> Öcalan ile görüşülüyor. (29.12.2012). *Cumhuriyet*.

needs an attention. The change from parliamentarism to presidentialism did not only signify a change in electoral system but also in regime type. By concentrating political power at the hand of a person, Turkish regime began to approach to authoritarian regimes. After appointments of deputy ministers, Erdoğan clearly stated that the party was trying a presidential or semi-presidential practices<sup>344</sup>.

Without preparing the legal basis, raising power of Erdoğan raised the threats of authoritarianism and debates over presidentialism began to be a matter of a regime type, not electoral system. Executive orders appeared to dominate precedents in bureaucracy and became an instrument to bypass the Parliament. Erdoğan's appointment of high-ranking bureaucrats through executive orders were sued for its cancellation<sup>345</sup>. The debates over presidentialism will turn into a struggle against authoritarianism and caused significant dilemmas during Solution Process.

The head of National Intelligence Service, Hakan Fidan, again appeared as an important figure for the negotiations as happened in Oslo talks. Fidan's meeting with Öcalan on December 16<sup>th</sup>, 2012 was revealed in newspapers<sup>346</sup>. After a week, Fidan stated that Öcalan was still a cult character for PKK, drawing attention to Öcalan's primary role in negotiations<sup>347</sup>. On the other hand, BDP commission start to meet with Öcalan<sup>348</sup>. The legal negotiations seemed to be initiated. Öcalan prepared three-staged plan for the negotiations. While the first step was the withdrawal of PKK to Northern Iraq, other steps included democratic reforms aiming at expanding cultural and political rights<sup>349</sup>. Erdoğan also agreed with the first step by stating that with the

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<sup>344</sup> Başkanlığı deniyoruz. (28.09.2012). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>345</sup> Hükümet yetkisini aştı. (28.10.2012). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>346</sup> Fidan yine devrede. (02.01.2013). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>347</sup> Öcalan kült bir isim. (04.01.2013). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>348</sup> Gündem İmralı. (04.02.2013). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>349</sup> İmralı'dan 3 aşamalı plan. (27.02.2013). *Cumhuriyet*.

withdrawal of PKK militants to another country, the process would officially start<sup>350</sup>. But the problematic nature of Solution Process demonstrated itself at the very beginning. Despite the agreement on the withdrawal, monitoring institutions or coordination with other countries that PKK could move were not provided. The withdrawal was mainly a trans-national problem, which required a trans-national cooperation because the withdrawal was most likely to get reaction from the host country, Iraq in this context. Moreover, while the parties were making mutual statements, legal roadmap was not also provided. Although Öcalan demanded democratic reforms, the government did not specify its agenda. Therefore. What was to be done during Solution Process was quite ambiguous. It worried PKK and cause commitment problem<sup>351</sup>. Compare to Kurdish Opening in 2009, Turkey did not utilize international coordination as provided by American general Ralston. The lack of third-party intervention seemed to show the weaknesses of Solution Process at the very beginning.

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<sup>350</sup> Erdoğan: İlk adım PKK'nin gitmesi. (26.02.2013). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>351</sup> Yol haritası yok. (05.03.2013). *Cumhuriyet*.

## CHAPTER 7

### RESOLUTION PROCESS BETWEEN 2013-2015

Main tenets of PKK problem in Turkey have been discussed so far. As we can observe in this chronology, PKK's demands has been revolved around general amnesty for PKK prisoners, remorse law for PKK militants, non-aggression pact and regulations on democratic rights of Kurdish people. These demands are historically important subjects that have critical influence on the survival of process and any commitment problem that can possibly occur. On the other hand, losing general or local elections, reactions from inside incumbent party, and anti-peace process parties, MHP in this context, are of great importance for the commitment of incumbent parties to peace processes. Elections can shape peace processes positively or negatively depending on the vote share of the incumbent parties that are carrying out the process and anti-peace process parties whose success are detrimental for the processes.

Since the electoral victory of AKP in 2002, the government had been in conflict with bureaucratic institutions which was considered as apparatus of tutelary regime in Turkey. After surviving the election of head of state and e-memo in 2007, political context started to change in favor of AKP government. Concentrating executive power at disposal, the government firstly initiated a witch hunt against Army members. Through Ergenekon and Sledgehammer trials, Army's position as tutelary institution in the political system started to disappear. Moreover, with referendums and appointments, AKP government managed to curb also the power of Judiciary over its acts. AKP's pro-EU stance and democratic policies almost acted like excuses for such changes.

AKP's policies aiming at curtailing the power of the Army and Judiciary were mostly supported by pro-Kurdish parties who were being challenged by tutelary institutions. Considering threats of tutelary regime including the closure of previous parties and arrests of deputies, pro-Kurdish parties' union with AKP government against the Army and Judiciary seemed to make sense. AKP government's attempts of democratization also favored pro-Kurdish parties. Therefore, democratization and curtaining the power of tutelary institutions seemed to work both for AKP and Kurdish nationalist parties.

However, at the beginning of 2013, the regime in Turkey had completed its change from tutelary regime and take an authoritarian position. While the government claimed to initiate democratic reforms to solve Kurdish problem, its authoritarian path inevitably was in conflict with those reforms. Facing significant challenges to its power, AKP government became more and more authoritarian, which undermined its capacity to advance democratic rights in Turkey. As can be observed through Resolution Process, the deadlocks over disarmament, legal roadmap and inclusive nature of the process could not be solved. Both the absence of third-party interventions and electoral lose in 2015 with raising authoritarian policies of the government contributed the failure of the process. It should also be addressed those fundamental developments in Northern Syria had undermined Resolution Process considering its impact on PKK's warfare capacity and territorial power.

AKP's changing position on third-party intervention is also related to its authoritarian turn. While AKP accepted trans-national nature of Kurdish problem and ask the U.S to appoint a coordinator responsible for cooperation among Turkey, Iraq and the U.S in 2009, third-party role was declined by AKP. AKP government in 2013 tended to consider Kurdish problem as a national and domestic issue rather than

trans-national. This prevented the interventions of third-parties. Wise Men Committee was formed as an alternative to execute the duties of third-parties. It was a secure solution for AKP because it could not threaten the government's interests. Wise Men Committee was formed by the government and lacked of both independent character and collaborative nature. Its contact with PKK and HDP was so restricted. Compare to G. Mitchell and Irish Prime Minister, Wise Men Committee could not ensure the dialogue between HDP and AKP, fail to incorporate CHP and MHP into talks and not produce solution for disarmament and legal roadmaps. As a result of these, Resolution Process became vulnerable to changes in political context. The Gezi Movement, corruption scandals and lastly lose in 2015 general elections undermined this vulnerable process. Resolution Process had finally failed following 2015 general elections. Overall, through this chapter, Resolution Process is going to be extensively analyzed in terms of parties' interests, deadlocks and the lack of third-party functions. Cross-case comparison with U.K offers an important opportunity to examine the impact of third-party intervention and domestic payoffs.

The peace process which started in 2013 in Turkey was carried out by AKP that gained 327 seats in the Parliament in which 276 seat were needed for a majority. Compare to Conservative Party in the U.K, the incumbent that started the negotiations in Turkey was at better position in terms of electoral power. Despite its quite strong parliamentary whip, AKP had gone through significant threats to its power during the peace process including Gezi Movement, 17-25 December Operations and Gülen group<sup>352</sup>. As will be discussed in this chapter in detail, such events had drawn the main attention of the incumbent party and caused the ignore of

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<sup>352</sup> Named 'Parallel structure' in this time

the peace process and delay the steps that AKP was supposed to take. Moreover, there happened three elections between 2013 and 2015. While AKP appeared as the first party in all of the elections, its downward trend triggered the fears of hardliners in the party. In Eastern cities, HDP-AKP dichotomy started to slip in favor of HDP. The claim that HDP benefited from the process more than AKP strengthened hardliners in the party. These were also substantial factors shaping the trajectory of the peace process. On PKK's side, main problems were about slow moves of the government, rising nationalist threat and cross-border events in Syria that increased the territorial power of PKK. Hardliners who were getting stronger in AKP increased the fears of PKK in the process. In addition, autonomous provinces in Syria enabled easy supply of arms and make the fighting less costly for PKK. So, these main problems of two parties were in interplay with each other to decide the final result of the peace process in the absence of third-party intervention.

On March 21<sup>st</sup>, Öcalan's letter was read in the meeting of Nowruz in Diyarbakır. He directly called PKK to withdraw outside Turkish border and start of political negotiations while indicating that their struggle continues<sup>353</sup>. AKP welcomed the declaration of Öcalan and quite pleased to see no demand from Öcalan in return of PKK's withdrawal. But, soon, HDP invited the Parliament to create committees to discuss how this process will be carried out<sup>354</sup>. In response, Erdoğan, Prime Minister, refused the intervention of the Parliament and claim the actual withdrawal of PKK beforehand<sup>355</sup>. Erdogan initiated the foundation of a group of people who could propagate the process and get into touch with the public. They were called ' Wise Men' called Akil Adamlar in Turkish. With this move, Erdoğan

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<sup>353</sup> Yeni Döneme geçiş. (22.03.2013). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>354</sup> Çekilme hemen olmayacak. (22.03.2013). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>355</sup> Geri çekilme zor. (23.03.2013). *Cumhuriyet*.

intended to postpone the intervention of the Parliament to the process and secure the pro-AKP majority in the committee. For deciding the members of Wise Men, Erdoğan had the final say to determine the members. As opposed to all-party committees in Northern Ireland, Wise Men Committee was supposed to be formed in the Parliament to reach an inclusive nature.

The formation of Wise Men was too problematic to consider it as a third-party. Firstly, Wise Men committee has very close relations with the incumbent party and this hampered its independent position in the eyes of other political parties and PKK. Wise Men had to report their activities directly to AKP, and its members were also selected by AKP. Secondly, the activities of Wise Men were mostly about setting meetings, panel, workshops and direct interactions with the public. In this sense, some writers analyze Wise Men as a root-level peace organization (Kadioğlu, 2007) rather than third-party. Lastly, the contact between the members of Wise Men and HDP-PKK side was quite limited. Unlike G. Mitchell and Irish Prime Minister, Wise Men could not get contact with both sides, bind both of them and increase the cooperation between them. So, for these reasons, Wise Men cannot meet the necessary, even minimum, requirement of being a third-party in a conflict. The opposition to its formation and functions also proved its ineffectiveness in mediating.

Erdoğan's impact on Wise Men committee and non-intervention of the Parliament displeased the demands of CHP and HDP and undermine the legal base of the process<sup>356</sup>. While HDP insisted on the intervention of the Parliament because legal steps that could be taken in the Parliament could be more obligatory and binding, CHP was annoyed with Erdoğan's power to affect the committees by using its parliamentary majority<sup>357</sup>. On the other hand, AKP was quite skeptical about

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<sup>356</sup> HDP is used to refer both BDP and HDP in this period

<sup>357</sup> Akil insanlar açmazda. (24.03.2013). *Cumhuriyet*.

showing itself in bargaining with PKK and preferred to wait for actual withdrawal and disarmament before the intervention of the Parliament. Gül, the head of State, declared that withdrawing outside the border with weapons was not the aim, but the total disarmament of PKK<sup>358</sup>. This is the first statement that signaled the importance of disarmament and its critical impact on the peace process. Throughout the process, disarmament as a prerequisite and condition to be actualized appears on several occasions. Comparing with IRA case, Conservative Party's resistance on decommissioning highly resembles AKP's initial approach. They both insisted on the actual decommissioning before any formal talk. Despite certain contextual differences, the perspective and statements of the two parties show us the similar dynamics in two peace process further. Turkish case started to resemble the first period of the peace process in the U.K in which disarmament became a main problem and reason for the delay of formal talks. In general, Conservative Parties are claimed to be more reluctant to give concessions to insurgents because they avoid to get reaction from its constituents.

Upon this discussion and AKP's insistence on non-intervention of the Parliament, HDP conveyed Öcalan's message that PKK cannot withdraw unless AKP takes a step in the process and assure the legal protection for PKK members<sup>359</sup>. Erdoğan's first reaction was quite rough. He said the terrorists who intend to withdraw must leave their guns<sup>360</sup>. The reaction came from PKK this time. PKK criticized Erdoğan's words and indicated there will be no withdrawal unless the legal framework is ready<sup>361</sup>. The process was stuck due to the disagreement on legal

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<sup>358</sup> Silah tamamen bırakılmalı. (27.03.2013). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>359</sup> Çekilin talimatı yokmuş. (28.03.2013). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>360</sup> Bölgeye 7'şer akıl. (30.03.2013). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>361</sup> Sürecin ruhu sarsıntıda. (31.03.2013). *Cumhuriyet*.

framework and intervention of the Parliament<sup>362</sup>. Considering the well performance of Labor government, it can be claimed that the first step should be done by the government. The lack of laws regulating the disarmament of IRA member also caused a deadlock in British law. The suggestions about preventing the prosecution of IRA members who left their weapons and data obtained from their surrender as inadmissible evidence motivated the withdrawal of weapons in Irish case. Similarly, the lack of any legal guarantee caused a commitment problem in PKK and deadlock about the withdrawal.

AKP stepped back and agree to form two committee in the Parliament, relying on its parliamentary majority<sup>363</sup>. Considering also the fact that CHP and MHP refused to join the committees, committees could not create any problematic results for the government<sup>364</sup>. While this non-inclusive nature of the committees hampered the future of the process, this step enabled the process carry on. It was also an important indicator of AKP's commitment to the process under preferred conditions. Unlike Northern Ireland peace process, other parties in the Parliament could not be involved in the process. G. Mitchell's endeavor to persuade even anti-peace party DUP to join all-party talks increased the representative nature of the peace process. Similar impact was lacked in Turkey. Both MHP and CHP did not join the committees. Parties in the opposition are not tended to prefer joining the process by themselves. Third-party intervention here could also motivate and persuade them to send representatives to the committees as happened in the Northern Ireland.

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<sup>362</sup> Süreç kilitlendi. (02.04.2013). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>363</sup> Süreç mecliste. (04.04.2013). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>364</sup> İki parti baş başa. (05.04.2013). *Cumhuriyet*.

On April 14<sup>th</sup>, Öcalan sent a new letter to PKK and prepare the deadline of withdrawal outside Turkish borders<sup>365</sup>. In order to control the withdrawal, the government also restricted to cross-border operations of Turkish military forces<sup>366</sup>. Peace process seemed to progress quite well. But the problem of disarmament and third-party intervention were still intact. HDP began to question how effective Wise Men are. Because Wise Men committee did not get contact with Öcalan or other political parties, create no solution for withdrawal and dominated by pro-AKP members, HDP demanded the more active role played by Wise Men as a mediator<sup>367</sup>. As put forward in methodology part, third-part is defined in terms of its independent position, its ability to get contact with two sides and suggest proposition to solve problems in the process. According to this definition, characteristics of which are mostly accepted in the literature, the creation of Wise Men committee was problematic from scratch and draw serious critics from the opposition. At the very beginning of the process, Wise Men appeared to lack of authority to act as a mediator.

Upon the dialogue between AKP and HDP, PKK declared its withdrawal calendar<sup>368</sup>. Two points in PKK's statement were of great importance. Firstly, PKK claimed that they will not leave their arms in this stage and total disarmament can occur after the release of Öcalan. PKK also imposed the conditions of removing special forces and the system of koruculuk. Due to the lack of legal framework, PKK claimed their forces cannot trust on anything but their guns<sup>369</sup>. As can be understood from that and in parallel to the main thesis, the cost of leaving guns are very high for

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<sup>365</sup> Çekilme planını Öcalan verecek. (14.04.2013). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>366</sup> TSK durdurulacak. (16.04.2013). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>367</sup> Her akıl heyeti başka telden. (16.04.2013). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>368</sup> Kandil'in planı silahlı. (26.04.2013). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>369</sup> Kandil'in planı silahlı. (26.04.2013). *Cumhuriyet*.

terrorist organization due to scare sources that they can reach. Without legal assurance, disarmament appears as an impossible object for terrorist organizations. Therefore, the first step that came from the ruling party could be more useful to solve this problem out. Moreover, considering conditions of dialogue process, it can be claimed that disarmament should be the topic during formal negotiations or after post-agreement stages as ‘twin-track’ approach suggested in IRA case.

Secondly, PKK also mentioned the importance of monitoring of the withdrawal by independent committees. As argued in this thesis, the committees could prevent the mistakes that could be done by both sides and contributed progress of the withdrawal. One of basic functions of third-parties in peace processes is to appease parties when there happens a problem/mistake/misunderstanding.

Withdrawal process was so open to any sabotage and mistakes. Therefore, the presence of third-party authorized for monitoring the movement was quite critical. On the other hand, such committees should be independent as it was the case in Irish case. Otherwise, committees that are dominated by one of the parties create a source of distrust and hampered the process. Wise Men committee which did not execute any monitoring function from the beginning was problematic both in terms of its formation and duties.

However, Resolution Process was going well despite undiscussed problems. Both politicians and the public were waiting for 8<sup>Th</sup> May which was declared as the beginning of withdrawal by PKK. Despite prior declarations, Erdoğan declared the withdrawal must be without weapons and refused any deadline<sup>370</sup> for it. As opposed to that, PKK responded that they did not leave their weapons and will not leave until they guaranteed rights of Kurdish people<sup>371</sup>. Withdrawal of PKK militants with their

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<sup>370</sup> Silahı bırakıp çıksınlar. (08.05.2013). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>371</sup> PKK çekilmeye başladı. (09.05.2013). *Cumhuriyet*.

guns to Iraq also worried the Iraq government<sup>372</sup>. As opposed to Irish case, there was no institution for regional cooperation for Kurdish problem. Strand 3 in Irish case was designed to increase the coordination between Ireland Republic and Britain in the solution of Northern Ireland problem. But lack of inter-state institutions caused possible problems with central Iraq government due to rising number of terrorists in its borders. Under these conditions, disarmament was destined to appear again as a problematic issue throughout the process.

On May 11<sup>th</sup>, a bomb exploded in Reyhanlı, the district near Turkish border of Syria<sup>373</sup>. Perpetrators of the attack could not be found. The attacks raised doubts about the withdrawal of PKK. There was no news that attributed this bombing attacks to PKK, and Demirtaş refused any link between the attack and withdrawal<sup>374</sup>. Despite all, the attack damaged the ongoing process and dominated the new for couple of days, which showed the fragile nature of the process.

However, the nature of the withdrawal was problematic in the sense that it was purely under the control of PKK and could not be monitored by any independent committee. Therefore, how much time it could take was unclear and this delayed the calendar of the peace process overall. On PKK side, it was time for the government to take step<sup>375</sup>. The demands that HDP announced were legal framework of the process, amnesty, democratic reforms and reducing electoral threshold, which are historically important discussion topics.

At the very beginning of June, the government faced important social protests in Gezi Park. Number Protestors who opposed the destruction of Gezi Park incrementally raised and the protests turned into an anti-government political

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<sup>372</sup> Irak PKK'yi istemedi. (10.05.2013). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>373</sup> Reyhanlı patlaması. (12.05.2013). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>374</sup> Saldırımın çekilmeyeyle alakası yok. (16.05.2013). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>375</sup> 6. Heyet gidiyor. (23.05.2013). *Cumhuriyet*.

movement, particularly due to excessive use of police power<sup>376</sup>. The conflict between AKP and Gezi protestors became intensified. AKP started to perceive Gezi Movement as a threat to its political power. Therefore, the main attention of political arena slipped away from Resolution Process to Gezi Movement, which delayed anticipated moves that AKP was supposed to take. HDP also reflected its fears about the negative influence of Gezi Movement on Resolution Process<sup>377</sup>. International actors including U.S and E.U had harshly criticized the excessive use of power against the protestors. Erdoğan did not welcome these critics and tend to consider them as a part of international plot against him. After Gezi Movements, Turkey seemed to be divided into supporters and opponents of Erdoğan (Cook, 2016).

As expected, the government could not take enough step on cultural rights, decreasing electoral threshold, stop of building police stations and legal framework of the process due to both Gezi Movement and Gülen Movement<sup>378</sup>. Moreover, because of the mentioned nature of the withdrawal, there happened a conflict between the parties. Erdoğan claimed that only fifteen percentage of total withdrawal has been completed. According to him, this is not enough for passing to the stage 2 meaning the formal negotiations here. On the other hand, Demirtaş responded that eighty percentage of the withdrawal has been completed and it is time to pass to the stage two<sup>379</sup>. The vast difference between the two discourse was resulted from the lack of third-party who can monitor the withdrawal process and inform the both sides. Lack of independent authority which could verify the ongoing withdrawal and claims of two parties were not binding for each other. The commitment problem between them was about to appear.

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<sup>376</sup> Halkla çatışıyor. (03.06.2013). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>377</sup> Partiler farklı okudu. (08.06.2013). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>378</sup> Cemaatle dersane savaşı. (04.07.2013). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>379</sup> Süreçte yeni kriz. (28.06.2013). *Cumhuriyet*.

The steps that were expected from the government did not realize in next months. Despite Öcalan's statements that the peace process should go into the next stage<sup>380</sup>, it seemed to be stuck at the dialogue part in which parties expressed their reciprocal demands. Under these conditions, the reaction came from PKK. It declared September 1<sup>st</sup> as a deadline for the steps that should be done by the government<sup>381</sup>. AKP did not respond this statement directly( I cannot detect any news about this issue). But, in the next month, there happened again a conflict on the reforms. AKP strictly rejected the right of education in mother tongue. Rejectionist manner of Erdoğan created a tension in HDP<sup>382</sup>. Incoming local elections raised doubts about the calendar of the peace process. Because of the restricted time, HDP aimed to pass to negotiation stage and demand substantial steps from the government. As the local elections approached, both sides predicted slowing down in the ongoing process<sup>383</sup>.

Despite the deadline set by PKK, the government did not initiate expected reforms. In parallel to IRA case, the deadlines set by each of parties are less functional than those set by third parties. As PKK's deadline did not create enough pressure on the government, Conservative Party's pressure on IRA to declare a new ceasefire did not work. But the deadline set up by G. Mitchell proved to work during the negotiations. So, parties, those accepted as equal actors, were not able to bind each other by setting deadlines. Likewise, AKP did not respond the deadline of September 1<sup>st</sup>. On September 13<sup>th</sup>, PKK attacked the construction site of police

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<sup>380</sup> İmralı'ya basını çağırdı. (22.07.2013). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>381</sup> Adım atılmazsa strateji değişir. (01.08.2013). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>382</sup> Çözüm süreci tıkanıyor mu? (24.08.2013). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>383</sup> Çözüm sürecini AKP gerdi. (31.08.2013). *Cumhuriyet*.

station and kidnapped four workers. It was the first serious action of PKK after the deadline<sup>384</sup>.

While PKK ended the ceasefire and withdrawal, disputes over democratic reforms were still at issue. Parties were still in case of disagreement over education in mother tongue<sup>385</sup>. Topics of the political reforms could not be discussed in detail due to both lack of mediator and negotiation atmosphere. Then, HDP group went to Imrali to discuss the future of the process with Öcalan. His statements included significant clues which could help us to perceive the weaknesses of the process so far in the eyes of PKK side<sup>386</sup>. First point is that the lack of the legal framework about the withdraw affected the process quite negatively. His claim was that if the law about the withdrawal was legislated, there would be no PKK militants left<sup>387</sup>. So, legal framework appears as an important way to show a party's commitment to the process. Despite the insistence of Conservative Party on decommissioning, Irish Republic's intervention to the process through a meeting, which ended up with *Joint Communique*, highly contributed to improvement of the legal framework. Similarly, hypothetical intervention of Kurdish Regional Government to the process could create the similar effect on Resolution Process. Secondly, Öcalan mentioned the need of a mediator. He did not prefer a foreign country but a committee that can get into touch with two sides. On the other hand, the committees formed in the Parliament and Wise Men committee seemed to function unilaterally. Lastly, Öcalan stated that this dialogue must turn into a negotiation<sup>388</sup>, which was addressed as second stage

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<sup>384</sup> PKK'den Siirt'te baskın. (13.09.2013). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>385</sup> Paketi anadil kilitledi. (16.09. 2013). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>386</sup> Silahlara dönüş mü? (19.09.2013). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>387</sup> Geri çekilme ile ilgili bir yasa çıkarılmış olsa tek PKK'li kalmayacaktı. (19.09.2013). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>388</sup> "...yeni format ile kastettiği bu diyalogun müzakereye dönmesi" (19.09.2013). *Cumhuriyet*.

throughout the process. Negotiations here meant formal contact between AKP officials and HDP official sitting in a round table and bargaining about reforms.

Lack of communication between actors made the process stuck at dialogue period. To overcome this deadlock, a new law package which included wide range of issues was announced<sup>389</sup>. While the package was thought to give an answer to expectations, HDP harshly criticized the content of the law package because the package did not imply any serious reform on education in mother tongue, election threshold and cultural rights. Beside HDP, PKK also reacted to the package as depicting it as AKP's preparation for the incoming election and accusing AKP of ending the peace process<sup>390</sup>. Vast difference between the law package announced by AKP and regulations that HDP demanded actually shows the difference between agendas of two parties and lack of communication channels to find a common ground by negotiating. This scene appears similar to first official talks between Sein Fein and Conservative Party officials in May 10<sup>th</sup> 1995 in which the difference agendas of parties clearly manifested itself.

HDP deputies again tried to visit Öcalan upon the new deadlock on the law package. But, for this time, as a reaction to criticism raised by HDP, the visit was not allowed by the government<sup>391</sup>. This move contributed the slowing trend in the peace process. While one of most important instruments used by HDP was restricted, the eyes were on AKP to make a new move to solve out the deadlock in the process.

However, AKP was preoccupied with incoming local elections (also the election of the head of state in August), internal disorder in the party and external threat to its power. Firstly, Erdoğan invited Barzani, the leader of IKDP, to Turkey

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<sup>389</sup> AKP'nin seçim paketi. (01.10.2013). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>390</sup> AKP süreci bitirdi. (02.10.2013). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>391</sup> Demirtaş'a paket vetosu. (15.10.2013). *Cumhuriyet*.

and made meetings with him. It appeared as a practical move to take back Kurdish votes that AKP had lost due to deadlocks in the peace process. Contrary to expectations, Barzani's visit did not contribute to the process, on the contrary, hamper it by giving AKP a chance to surpass HDP that claims to be representator of Kurdish nationalism. HDP rejected the relation between Barzani's visit and the peace process<sup>392</sup>. But, Barzani's compliment about Öcalan and the process<sup>393</sup> damaged AKP' trying to find out alternative parties and bypassing HDP in the process.

Secondly, internal disorder in AKP was in rise. Starting from the debate on student houses where male and female students were living together, some deputies raised the criticisms for the government, particularly for Erdoğan. Some of them were expelled from the party<sup>394</sup>. This both decreased the parliamentary power of AKP and erode the integrity of the party<sup>395</sup>, which ended up with inconsistent declarations that could be detrimental for the process by various AKP members.

Thirdly, AKP had faced critical threat to its power in December,2013. 17-25 December operations<sup>396</sup> had dominated the whole agenda and political arena in Turkey. Upon the reveal of voice records, many AKP members including ministers in charge were accused of bribe and corruption. This scandal created social turmoil and cause nationwide protests<sup>397</sup>. Both resignations<sup>398</sup> from the party had raised and criticisms<sup>399400</sup> inside the party had significantly increased. 7 members in total had already resigned from the Party. Under these conditions, the steps that AKP was expected to take did not seem to actualize. Moreover, these problems caused

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<sup>392</sup> Seçim kardeşliği. (14.11.2013). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>393</sup> Öcalan övgüsü. (18.11.2013). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>394</sup> Dershane depremi. (22.11.2013). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>395</sup> Erdoğan ile her çatışan gidiyor. (15.11.2013). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>396</sup> Pimi çektiler. (18.11.2013). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>397</sup> Her yer eylem. (22.11.2013). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>398</sup> Yolsuzluk eritiyor. (01.01.2014). *Cumhuriyet*. ( 7 deputies in total)

<sup>399</sup> Çiçek de kral çıplak dedi. (04.01.2014). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>400</sup> AKP'de iç kavga. (04.01.2014). *Cumhuriyet*.

questioning of AKP's political legitimacy and the opposition pressure for resignation of Erdoğan and ministers. On March 15<sup>th</sup>, PKK made a statement that AKP that is in the crisis of political legitimacy is not anymore, a party to the peace process<sup>401</sup>. This period of Resolution Process resembles the period in IRA case in which Conservative Party was suffered from dwindling majority in the Parliament and cannot take a serious step. So, incoming elections appeared as an important way to solve legitimacy problem and deadlock in the peace process.

### 7.1 Third-party absent, payoffs getting close

This period between the local election in 2014 to general election in 2015 had witnessed considerable political rapprochement between parties. Despite certain positive reforms, the lack of third-party had impacted the advent of the process negatively. Firstly, the lack of cooperation and coordination between parties caused the extension of the process in time and make it more fragile for the impact of elections. Secondly, decommissioning problem could not be effectively addressed and stay intact. Lastly, regional dynamics started to become an important variable affecting the payoffs of PKK and AKP ( Ozkahraman,2017). IŞID's attack on the cities in the Northern Syria both raised the security concerns of the incumbent party and PKK's territorial gains in the region. The situation forced the latter to cooperate with Turkish state for anti-IŞID alliance while the incumbent party, AKP, gave priority to the security of Southern borders, which caused a dilemma in the process. Although PKK-HDP demanded the government to fight with IŞID, rising military activity in the South triggered PKK's concerns due to the army's getting strategical superiority against PKK militants. So, developments in the Northern Syria had

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<sup>401</sup> AKP artık muhatap değil. (16.03.2014). *Cumhuriyet*.

complicated the peace process in Turkey and in the absence of third-party assistance such developments seemed to be unsolvable considering the capabilities of two parties. In this sense, Özkan's (2018) stress on the importance of regional dynamics in his comparison between peace negotiations with FARC and PKK appears to be valid in IRA-PKK comparison. Political environment in the Republic of Ireland was quite favorable for the peace process in the U.K. Likewise stable political environment in Syria could highly contribute the peace process in Turkey.

On March 30<sup>th</sup>, AKP triumphed in the local election despite corruption scandals and social upheavals<sup>402</sup>. Its votes increased from 38,39 to 42,87 percentage. We also should note down that AKP lost some cities such as Ağrı and Bitlis that it won in 2011 election to HDP, which symbolized the raising popularity of HDP and its potential for addressing AKP constituents in Eastern provinces. The victory in local election contributed the solution of legitimacy problem and increase the capacity to initiate reforms by AKP government in the process. However, Erdoğan regarded the local election as a referendum for his leadership. He would regard the victory in the election as public's support for his stance on Gezi Movement, corruption scandals and Resolution Process. Therefore, he was motivated to disregard both opposition parties and international actors. Turkey seemed to consolidate its competitive authoritarian character(Kuran,2014; Sozen,2014). This also prevented any intervention by third-parties and endeavor to incorporate the opposition.

Despite the ongoing political problems<sup>403</sup>, AKP started to prepare the legal framework of the process. As a result of the change in National Intelligence Service

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<sup>402</sup> Gerilim kazandı. (31.03.014). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>403</sup> Kılıçları çektiler. (12.04.2014). *Cumhuriyet*.

law, visits of prisoners or PKK members with Öcalan became possible<sup>404</sup>. This was actually one of the demands raised by Öcalan before. HDP welcomed this move and the tripartite dialogue between Öcalan, HDP and AKP began again. Although the dialogue was delayed by the explosion in Soma, which caused the death of 301 workers, HDP committee met with minister of internal affairs and minister of justice. It was the first meeting done in the level of ministers. The meeting with high-level politicians revived the process that was slowing up since September 1<sup>st</sup>. The necessity of legal framework and cultural rights had been discussed and ministers' response was quite favorable. It was hoped that the process will be legalized soon<sup>405</sup>. As happened in IRA case, the meeting at the level of ministers produced important results for the negotiations.

Öcalan's response to these developments was also quite positive. He thought this dialogue is the beginning of the next stage in the process. He also drew the attention to the point that the process cannot be executed before closed doors. It should be done publicly and Monitoring Committee is a need<sup>406</sup>. Third-party problem was still intact. While AKP opted to use Wise Men committee as a substitute for the Monitoring committee that Öcalan talked about, HDP's approach was more skeptical due to formation of its members. As we discussed before, Buldan, HDP deputy, stated that the meetings between HDP members and Öcalan should also be monitored for preventing actions that could harm the process<sup>407</sup>. Also, Buldan criticized manner and discourses of Erdoğan and accuse him of blinking to Nationalist for incoming Presidential election. This statement complies with my argument that Erdoğan represents a hardliner position in negotiations.

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<sup>404</sup> Kandil-İmralı için yasal hat. (29.04.2014). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>405</sup> Çözüm süreci yasallaşacak. (22.05.2014). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>406</sup> Öcalan: Süreç yeni aşamaya geçecek. (03.06.2014). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>407</sup> İzlemeye akıl formül. (05.06.2014). *Cumhuriyet*.

Preparation for legal framework accelerated as the election of the head of state was approaching. Considering the result of last general election and local election, Erdoğan's getting fifty percent of votes was claimed to be in danger. It motivated AKP to take more serious steps in the process. Although the constructions of police stations and state building continued, which annoyed PKK side due to increasing military presence in the region, and rising public protests<sup>408</sup>, legal regulation had been finalized<sup>409</sup>. Öcalan stated that he was pleased with the law while HDP considered it as an important step but not enough<sup>410</sup>.

The law in question implied provisions about PKK militants who leaved their guns, enable ministers to meet with foreign institutions and people ( it made both the monitoring committee and any meeting with top-level PKK members possible) and authorize the government about all issues of the peace process ( the supervision of the Parliament was restricted). While all these developments were happening, the threat of IŞİD got serious. Rising military power of IŞİD directly affected both PKK's presence in the region and Kurdish-dominated areas. Therefore, HDP increased its pressure on the government to take measure on IŞİD<sup>411</sup>.

However, the incoming election dominated the political agenda of AKP. Again, an election appeared to repress the whole process, like prior local election. But there had been more than 15 months since the beginning of dialogue and PKK side was quite worried about the instability in Northern Syria resulting from rising power of IŞİD. Öcalan made a statement that the patience is over and he is very unpleased that transition from dialogue to negotiation stage could not be done<sup>412</sup>.

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<sup>408</sup> Eylemler yayılıyor. (10.06.2014). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>409</sup> Kürt seçmene rüşvet paketi. (25.06.2014). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>410</sup> Yasal zemin pakette. (27.06.2014). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>411</sup> 15 gün sonra Hatay'a gelir. (13.07.2014). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>412</sup> Öcalan: Sabır taşı çatladı. (05.08.2014). *Cumhuriyet*.

On August 10<sup>th</sup>, Erdoğan won in the election by getting 51,79 percent of the votes and became the first head of state that was directly elected by the people. This electoral victory relieved the political pressure on AKP and paved the way for directing main focus to the peace process. After a couple of days, the minister stated that the map of the process will be announced in the last days of September<sup>413</sup>. Moreover, the head of National Intelligent Service, Hakan Fidan, met with Öcalan in İmralı. This official visit increased the hopes in the process. Also, it was stated that many other institutions and committee could meet with Öcalan, too<sup>414</sup>. These developments seemed to accelerate the peace process after the election. HDP welcomed the new steps by calling attention to legal framework that should be legislated urgently<sup>415</sup>. The period commencing with the victory of AKP in local election had witnessed many developments so far. Meetings with HDP deputies at ministerial level, declarations on legal status of ex-PKK members and Fidan's meeting with Öcalan were qualitatively different from the period prior to the local election. The fact that all of these positive developments followed the electoral victory of AKP, I think, shows that AKP is motivated to commit to the process as far as it does not harm its electoral power. But, unlike limited payoffs motivating both PKK and AKP to cooperate, the absence of third-party was still important factor on the solution of decommissioning, trans-national impacts on Resolution Process and lack of coordination among parties.

Involvement of third-party to the process was again demanded by Öcalan. But, this time, the proposal was not directly rejected by the government officials and the presence of third-party began to be discussed<sup>416</sup>. The result of the elections

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<sup>413</sup> Atalay: yol haritası Eylül sonunda. (15.08.2014). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>414</sup> Kandil'le görüşmeye yeşil ışık. (20.08.2014). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>415</sup> Belgesiz barış olmaz. (20.08.2014). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>416</sup> Çözümüne gözlemci geliyor. (23.08.2014). *Cumhuriyet*.

seemed to enable moderates to get upper hand in AKP. The need for a third-party started to be discussed. This period can be claimed to be the closest point in the peace process to signing of a peace agreement. While instability in Syria motivated PKK not to continue war in Turkey and AKP was not suffering any internal discipline in the party or electoral threat, on the other hand third-party intervention could be accepted. However, PKK did not declare a ceasefire and Öcalan did not demand it yet<sup>417</sup>. So, despite the steps taken by the government, PKK's attacks had continued<sup>418</sup>. This period is similar to the period in IRA case in which IRA did not declare ceasefire but press for new steps from Conservative Party. Compare to IRA attacks in major cities, PKK's activities are claimed to be at low-scale.

Considering the fact that IŞID had attacked Kobane, Kurdish-populated city in Syria, disarmament for PKK seemed to become more unlikely<sup>419</sup>. Due to rising threat to its regional power and legitimacy, PKK increased its military capacity to counterattack IŞID assaults. On the other hand, the government concerned IŞID attacks in Syrian border both because of national security and political pressure by HDP. Authorization for use of military force, called tezkere, was legislated in the Parliament with the support of MHP deputies. The political rapprochement between MHP and AKP<sup>420</sup> in the Parliament worried HDP because of MHP's adoption of its traditional hardliner and anti-peace process position from the very beginning. Under such conditions, Kobane appeared to be an important topic that could impact the advent of the peace process<sup>421</sup>. This military mobilization in the region made disarmament problem even more serious and hard to be handled in the lack of third-

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<sup>417</sup> 1 Eylül'de barış yok. (29.08.2014). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>418</sup> PKK saldırıyı üstlendi. (28.09.2014). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>419</sup> Sınırdaki insan seli. (19.09.2014). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>420</sup> Savaş cephesi. (03.10.2014). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>421</sup> Sürecin kilidi Kobane. (03.10.2014). *Cumhuriyet*.

party intervention and transnational institutions which could assure fears of parties. While AKP raised the military presence in the East as a precaution to conflicts in Syria, PKK had to strengthen its military capacity to defense de facto Kurdish states in Syria. This security dilemma arising from cross-border dynamics became critical to the peace process.

To cope with these issues, the government firstly permitted the transition of Kurdish forces from Iraq to Syria through Turkish borders<sup>422</sup>. This strategic move appeased the critics of HDP and contributed the protection of Turkish borders from IŞID. Secondly, the government prepared the roadmap of the process which included critical topics such as withdrawal, disarmament and rehabilitation processes<sup>423</sup>. But these one-sided proposals did not get serious reactions from the other party. HDP claimed that the roadmap that was sent to them was undetailed and two committees<sup>424</sup> that were supposed to form were still unprepared.

Again, compare to the proposals of Mitchell, those of parties did not appear to be functional for each other. G. Mitchell had discussed with other parties and political figures to find out the common agendas of them. It enabled him to conclude on binding and precise suggestions for all parties. In this way, all-party talks in Forum for Dialogue started in the Northern Ireland. Because there was no authority which was responsible for the promises and dialogue between actors in Turkish case, both the roadmap and committees could not be checked out. I should recall here that one of the reasons that Hakyemez (2017) put forward as a reason for the failure of Resolution process is the lack of legal roadmap. She writes “the absence of legislative action delineating a roadmap for peace rendered Kurds more vulnerable to

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<sup>422</sup> Habur üzerinden Kobane’ye. (24.10.2014). *Cumhuriyet*. Peşmerge konvoyla girdi. (30.10.2014). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>423</sup> 6 adımda yol haritası. (14.10.2014). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>424</sup> İki yeni kurul oluşturuluyor. (01.10.2014). *Cumhuriyet*.

a possible breakdown in negotiations while augmenting the bargaining power of the AKP”. But in this thesis, the comparison between Turkish and British peace negotiations shows that roadmap may not be a factor by itself but also a result of third-party assistance. Conservative Party was also suffered from the lack of legal roadmap until the third-party interventions happened in various times. Therefore, the lack of roadmap in Resolution Process was also triggered by the lack of third-party assistance.

Besides other shortcomings, the problem of third-party began to attract more attention. PKK offered an interesting proposal that the U.S could be the third-party<sup>425</sup>. But the government was still suspicious about any intervention from abroad<sup>426</sup> and sensitive on the committees that were to be formed. Contacts between HDP and AKP<sup>427</sup> revived the process further and brought disarmament into question for one more time<sup>428</sup>. Repeated discussion on disarmament happened in a way that it appeared between Conservative Party and Sein Fein. Until the intervention of G. Mitchell and its report, there was no progress on the problem of disarmament in the Northern Ireland. Even Mitchell’s assistance did not suffice by itself to solve disarmament problem but at least keep the process move on. The lack of a similar assistance made the process stuck at disarmament. For negotiations, the monitoring committee consisting of thirty people was decided in Turkey<sup>429</sup>. With this development, the peace process began to look like getting negotiation stage in which parties could bargain around a table. But the main problem was that PKK did not still

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<sup>425</sup> ABD süreç için gözlemci olsun. (04.11.2014). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>426</sup> Üçüncü göz yok. (22.11.2014). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>427</sup> Buzları eriten görüşme. (13.11.2014). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>428</sup> Silah bırak masada. (17.11.2014). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>429</sup> 30 kişilik masa İmralı’da kurulacak. (20.11.2014). *Cumhuriyet*.

declare ceasefire and social unrest was quite high. That's why the government focused its attention on ceasefire in meetings<sup>430</sup>.

However, Öcalan refuses to call PKK to leave their weapons before the start of formal negotiations. According to him, declaring ceasefire was not practical unless the steps of legal assurance and the formation of the monitoring committee which can check the ceasefire were taken by the government<sup>431</sup>. Public order could be maintained only when legal negotiations were going on. Therefore, public order cannot be a precondition for negotiations for him<sup>432</sup>. Öcalan's statements were not welcomed by AKP<sup>433</sup>. Moreover, AKP and HDP committees could not agree during meetings on three main topics, officially-signed reports of negotiations, withdrawal calendar and democratic autonomy<sup>434</sup>.

Two of the three disagreement topics clearly symbolized the absence of third-party. Officially-signed reports are the way to make the statements of parties during negotiations binding for each other. AKP avoided that the other party has written and formal proofs for pledges and discussions in negotiations because those papers could be instrumentalized in election campaigns. As a party who has conservative constituents, AKP was afraid of such binding documents. A third-party observing the negotiations could be softer way to both bind each other and protect parties from opposition from their voter base. Moreover, withdrawal calendar is also beyond the capabilities of AKP and HDP because it was more depended on both PKK and trans-national dynamics. Where and when to start the withdrawal can directly concern the neighboring countries. Without any institutions, as Strand III ensures in Northern

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<sup>430</sup> Eylemsizlik çağrısı gündemde. (30.11.2014). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>431</sup> Önce yasal müzakere sonra düzen. (01.12.2014). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>432</sup> 65 maddelik taslak. (01.12.2014). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>433</sup> Taslakta uzlaşa yok. (09.12.2014). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>434</sup> Çözümde restleşme. (10.12.2014). *Cumhuriyet*.

Ireland, any agreement on withdrawal calendar was seen to be unachievable and unsustainable. So, third-party assistance could highly contribute on these problem as it did in the Northern Ireland. However, PKK announced that disarmament can be discussed if the solution package is accepted<sup>435</sup>. Even restricted consensus of parties, the process was still in progress. It can be explained, I think, by the payoffs getting close. Even the parties could not deal with some problem in which third-party assistance is needed, they still committed to the process. Similar to the first months of the peace process, legal steps that AKP was expected to take became critical moves that can determine the trajectory of the process.

## 7.2 Third-party absent, payoffs getting far off

The second period is marked by internal conflict in AKP, changing dynamics favoring PKK in Syria and pressure of incoming general election. As also happened in the U.K, the general election had slowed down the peace process and motivate parties to follow their political interest. The peace process in the Northern Ireland was almost stopped prior to 1997 election. Conservative Party avoided taking radical steps under the pressure of decreasing parliamentary majority and Unionists votes. The hope for its revival was expected from the election. Likewise, AKP that was suffered from corruption cases and public disorder was inclined to focus on incoming general election in June, which obstructed the reforms moves that AKP was supposed to take. Moreover, PKK's not declaring ceasefire, as IRA did before 1997 election, was both to increase pressure on AKP to initiate legal steps in the Parliament and secure its improving position in Syria. Very similar dynamics prior to 1997 election in the U.K and 2015 election in Turkey offer substantial insights about

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<sup>435</sup> Silahsızlanmaya taslak koşuluyla yeşil ışık. (11.12.2014). *Cumhuriyet*.

Resolution Process. Both period cover worsening relation between parties. Both IRA and PKK did not declare any ceasefire in these periods. But the elections in two cases produced different results.

While raising social turmoil in the country and PKK attacks increased the pressure on AKP to take a step, it also created internal discomfort inside the party. It mostly revealed itself through the different discourses used by different actors in AKP<sup>436</sup>. For example, speeches of Bülent Arınç and Beşir Atalay on third-party issue was quite contradictory<sup>437</sup>. Despite positive statements of Atalay, Arınç strictly rejected the idea of third-party in the process. Such contradictory statements hampered the process because the other party cannot determine which statements to believe in. Moreover, AKP started to lose its party discipline in the Parliament. In voting for the ministers who were accused of the corruption, the votes in favor of the ministers cannot reach even simple majority ( although the number of AKP deputies was far more than that). For example, in the voting for Egemen Bağış, almost sixty AKP deputies did not vote in favor of him<sup>438</sup>.

These missing votes in AKP brought the doubt that legal regulations on remorse law, cultural rights, autonomy and rehabilitation may not be legislated in the Parliament because of the lack of votes. Therefore, delay in the legal package raised the doubts of HDP further. AKP seemed to lose its parliamentary discipline and power to legislate reforms in the process in result. While the government was waiting for a step for disarmament, PKK and HDP pressed for legal assurance. Demirtaş depicted this deadlock as ‘political slippage’<sup>439</sup>. He also pointed out the importance of third-party for more healthy contacts between parties. Because of the lack of

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<sup>436</sup> Erdoğan farklı bakanlar farklı. (20.10.2014). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>437</sup> Üçüncü göz yok. (22.11.2014). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>438</sup> Yolsuzluk AKP’yi çatlattı. (21.01.2015). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>439</sup> Çözüm süreci politik patinaj yapıyor. (20.01.2015). *Cumhuriyet*.

communication channels, two parties did not attempt to take step and the process seemed to freeze.

Furthermore, social unrest in Turkey pushed the government to take more security precautions. To this end, the government presented a new “domestic security package” to the Parliament. According to the package, authority and power of police forces would be increased. PKK side harshly criticized the content of the package and consider it as detrimental for the process. This increase in the capacity of police forces intimidated PKK. Considering both IŞID threat and lack of legal framework, PKK announced that domestic security package was unacceptable and leaving arms is not an option<sup>440</sup>. Disarmament as a precondition<sup>441</sup> again appeared to cause security dilemma and a deadlock in the process.

Contrary to gloomy portray of disarmament problem, a sudden meeting between AKP and HDP committees happened in Dolmabahçe Palace (named ‘Dolmabahçe Mutabakatı’). Committees agreed on ten principles relating to using democratic instruments and recognition of cultural rights, as well as PKK was called to ‘silence the guns’<sup>442</sup>. But, PKK announced, after ten days, that PKK can leave weapons only if the convention in which Öcalan can join in person decide so<sup>443</sup>. Also, there happened many discussions over whether Erdoğan was informed about the meeting or not<sup>444</sup> because Erdoğan totally denied the idea of agreement<sup>445</sup>. What can be deduced from Dolmabahçe Agreement, I think, is that there was an internal lack of communication in AKP, so AKP could not commit itself to the process as a

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<sup>440</sup> Paket krizi derinleştirdi. (16.02.2015). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>441</sup> Buldan: AKP güvence vermeli. (18.02.2015). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>442</sup> Dolmabahçe Anlaşması. (01.03.2015). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>443</sup> Öcalan’ı bırakın silahı bırakalım. (11.03.2015). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>444</sup> Oturma düzenini bile biliyordu. (28.05.2015). *Cumhuriyet*.

whole, HDP's rising potential in elections threatened the government and there was other motivations that were beyond scientific inquiry.

As the general election approached, political arena was getting more tense. While the domestic security package was temporarily retreated<sup>446</sup>, there was no serious attempt for the negotiations and monitoring committee. For the latter, Erdoğan stated its displeasure with the committee<sup>447</sup> and AKP distorted the monitoring committee by forming its members from Wise Men committee<sup>448</sup>. The peace process was again stuck while parties' contest for the general election was carrying on the background. Arınç's statements on HDP's electoral power was quite significant both to understand the failure of Dolmabahçe Agreement and deadlocks in the process. By addressing the possibility that HDP got 12 percent of the votes in the election, he said "it can lead to our corrosion. We afraid of that"<sup>449</sup>.

Considering the predictions of polling organizations, HDP would take more than ten percent and AKP drop down to about forty two percent<sup>450</sup>. According to these estimations, fears of AKP seemed to be more sensible. This political contest between AKP and HDP became more salient. Almost every result of election polls including those done by KONDA, GENAR and SONAR indicated that AKP cannot secure its majority in the Parliament and HDP pass the electoral threshold. Sein Fein, the political representative of IRA, did not pose an electoral threat for both Conservative and Labor government due to its limited scope of activity in Northern Ireland. In Turkey, the negotiations were hampered by political contest in the background. Raising authoritarianism also contradicts with expected democratic

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<sup>446</sup> Paket kısmen çekildi. (13.03.2015). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>447</sup> Erdoğan konuştu derin kriz ortaya çıktı. (21.03.2015). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>448</sup> Heyetten geri adım yok. (24.03.2015). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>449</sup> HDP'den korkuyoruz. (28.03.2015). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>450</sup> Koalisyonun ayak sesleri. (21.04.2015). *Cumhuriyet*.

reforms. Contrary to pro-Kurdish parties' support for AKP against tutelary regime, they were political rivals in 2015. Demirtaş's statement that we are not going to make you President<sup>451</sup> signified both political contest with AKP as a party and a reaction to raising authoritarianism. So, Resolution Process seemed to be hampered by regime change and political rivalling.

As the election approached, the level of violence in Turkey had raised. PKK attacks to police station, public building and military points had raised<sup>452</sup>. Military warfare brought with sharp political statements of parties. Erdoğan's denial of negotiations<sup>453</sup> and HDP's ties with PKK aroused a public unrest for the latter. In some cities, HDP buildings were attacked<sup>454</sup>. On the other hand, HDP committee's meeting with Öcalan was stopped. It caused a lack of communication in the party and PKK took it for a reason for war<sup>455</sup>. HDP's announcement on these issues reflected the general approach of PKK to the process "The solution process has come to an end for us. We do not allow ourselves to be instrumental in a process that will not proceed through negotiation"<sup>456</sup>.

As happened before every election, the process seemed to decay. Incoming election was seen as a new opportunity to revive up the process as happened before Presidential election in August 2014. Unfortunately, this time, the election did not generate the results that could satisfy the expectations. AKP, for the first time since its establishment, did not reach to majority in the Parliament. Its seats decreased from 327 to 258 while there happened an incremental increase in HDP's seats from 35 to

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<sup>451</sup> Seni Başkan yaptırmayacağız. (17.03.2015). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>452</sup> Tehlikeli tırmanış. (12.04.2015). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>453</sup> Heyetten geri adım yok. (24.03.2015). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>454</sup> Erdoğan yine ayar verdi. (29.04.2015). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>455</sup> Öcalan'a tecrit savaş nedeni. (16.05.2015). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>456</sup> HDP:Çözüm süreci askıda. (01.05.2015). *Cumhuriyet*.

80. The result of the election highly influenced the process because one of the parties, the incumbent party, had to change.

Forming a coalition was the first option that political parties attempted to. First option was a coalition between AKP and CHP. Both ideological difference and long history of government-opposition hostility between the parties blocked this coalition option. HDP announced its support for AKP-CHP coalition<sup>457</sup> because the other option, AKP-MHP, could be very detrimental for the process. The first obstacle for the second coalition option, AKP-MHP, was the peace process. MHP clearly claimed anti-peace process policies as a condition for the coalition just after the election<sup>458459</sup>. On the other hand, while MHP stucked to its conditions, the party pursued supportive stance towards strategies of AKP which were in common without forming a coalition. Non-involvement of MHP Parliamentarians to the election of head of the Parliament indirectly enable AKP candidate to win. It was highly criticized by the main opposition<sup>460</sup>. This rapprochement between AKP and MHP decreased the possibility of reviving the peace process again. Compare to the transition from Conservative Party to Labor Party in 1997, the election in Turkey created government ambiguity and boost the power of anti-peace party, MHP.

While the lack of a government created party problem, conditions in Syria began to favor PKK. Compared to the situation in September,2014, PKK got upper hand in Northern Syria and gain victory against IŞID in some cities<sup>461</sup>. This made Turkey border on PKK in South, which enable PKK to both increase its warfare capacity and access to weapons more easily. Rising capability of warfare and de

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<sup>457</sup> Demirtaş'tan destek sözü. (19.06.2015). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>458</sup> MHP'nin tavrı çok net. (9.06.2015). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>459</sup> Vaatlerini şart gösterecek. (11.07.2015). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>460</sup> Hep koltuk değneyi. (02.07.2015). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>461</sup> Kürtler IŞID'i sınırdan kovdu. (16.06.2015). *Cumhuriyet*.

facto autonomous cities in Syria motivated PKK to get hardliner positions toward the state's policies in the East. It was declared that the ceasefire is over and barrages are the first targets<sup>462</sup>. After a day, PKK attacked to the lorries<sup>463</sup>. HDP's response was appeasing and it suggested PKK not to be hasty and wait for new coalition<sup>464</sup>.

Particularly after Suruç explosion, insecurity in Turkey had reached its highest levels. PKK killed two policemen as a retaliation to Suruç for which the government was accused of<sup>465</sup>. The government, temporary, uprose military precautions. Turkish Military Forces launched number of operations nationwide<sup>466</sup>. PKK's claim that Turkey had bombed PKK militants in Northern Syria increased the level of tense further<sup>467</sup>. Military conjecture in Northern Syria and rising military power of PKK had worried AKP and push it towards a nationalist coalition partner, MHP who again proposed the end of the peace process as a precondition for the coalition<sup>468</sup>.

Despite statements of foreign institutions<sup>469</sup> and domestic attempts, the peace process could not be revived again. PKK's attacks had incrementally raised and Turkey went through tough times<sup>470</sup>. While the need for third-party was expressed for many times<sup>471</sup>, the process entered an inevitable period in which the war appeared to be only option. Overall, in the lack of third-party intervention, parties were suffered from lack of communication, determined discussion topics, lack of motivation and monitoring services, which made peace processes more fragile.

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<sup>462</sup> KCK: Ateşkes bitti. (12.07.2015). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>463</sup> PKK'nin ilk hedefi tırlar oldu. (13.07.2015). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>464</sup> Demirtaş'tan PKK'ye çağrı. (15.06.2015). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>465</sup> PKK iki genç polisi evinde infaz etti. (23.07.2015). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>466</sup> Yurtta savaş. (25.08.2015). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>467</sup> YPG: Türkiye bizi bombaladı. (28.07.2015). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>468</sup> Kuran'a el bas birlikte kuralım. (31.07.2015). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>469</sup> AB: Ateşkes korunmalı. (27.07.2015). *Cumhuriyet*. Çözüm sürecini terk etmeyin. (03.08.2015). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>470</sup> Çözüm süreci bitti bölgede kaos başladı. (16.08.2015). *Cumhuriyet*.

<sup>471</sup> Mandela modeli. (07.08.2015). *Cumhuriyet*.

Interplay between third-party and changing payoffs which weakened moderates in the process is decisive on the result of peace processes.

## CHAPTER 8

### CONCLUSION

Both Turkey and U.K had gone through peace negotiations with armed insurgents in their borders, respectively with PKK and IRA. The both organizations have ethnic claims, adopt Leninist way of organizing, have close ties with ethnic minorities in different countries and wage their war against the states beginning from similar time period. These characteristics of IRA and PKK make them similar organizations those are suitable for comparison. On the other hand, both peace negotiations happened under conservative governments who were in government for more than ten years. While Conservative government was in power since 1979 while 2002 was the beginning of long series of AKP governments. On the other hand, IRA had focused their attacks on urban areas while PKK adopted guerilla warfare for a long time period. But, starting from 2009, PKK also increased its urban attacks and organize in metropolitans, which makes it more comparable with IRA. However, AKP government had increased its political power, eliminated tutelary regime and took an authoritarian turn. Unlike the U.K, Turkey had gone through a regime change and it had significant impacts on Resolution Process in Turkey.

Despite many similarities, the peace process in U.K included serious negotiations among political parties and conclude in an agreement called Good Friday Agreement. In this sense, the peace negotiation claimed to be successful in transforming the level of violence in the country. On the other hand, the peace process called Resolution Process in Turkey did not witness considerable formal negotiations among political parties, especially between AKP and HDP, and could

not able to transform the level of violence in Turkey. In contrast, the process was followed by high level of social unrest and terrorist attacks.

In this study, why these two processes differed from each other in terms of its results have been discussed. Two factors shaping the trajectory of the processes are suggested: intervention of third-party and domestic payoffs. I argued that interplay of these two factors increases the coordination among parties and contribute the results of peace processes.

Conservative Government initiated the process upon the ceasefire declared by IRA. Despite rising hope in the beginning, the talks were stopped at the discussions of disarmament. While the government insisted on prior disarmament before negotiations, IRA rejected the offer because it meant the surrender for its supporter. The advantages of third-party intervention could be observed after the first deadlock over disarmament. G. Mitchell's proposals, twin-track approach and the establishment of monitoring committee, highly contributed the advance of dialogue between Conservatives and IRA. But, decreasing parliamentary majority and increasing pressure of hardliner Unionists on the government made the process costly for the Conservatives.

1997 Election in the U.K produced significant results for the peace process. Labor government won the election with unprecedented majority in U.K history. Both its power in the Parliament and weak pressure of Unionist on the government due to historical reasons enable Labors to give more concessions to IRA and manifest its commitment to the process. The initial steps taken by Labor government also motivated IRA moderates to commit to the process. Upon the expulsion of Sein Fein, IRA did not conduct any bombing attacks, unlike what happened in

Conservative period, but keep its non-aggression position. Third-party intervention in the forms of Independent International Commission on Decommissioning, deadlines set by Mitchell and proposals given by him highly supported the process. The interplay of third-party and weakening hardliner powers resulted in Good Friday Agreement and decreasing level of violence.

AKP, in Turkey, started a dialogue with Öcalan and open the way for political resolution for Kurdish Question. Lack of third-party intervention created many conflicts in the process. While PKK decided to withdraw its forces out of Turkish border, there was no mechanism for monitoring the process and inform two sides. Moreover, withdrawal also increased the suspicions of Iraq government. Due to lack of institutions or people that enabled the cooperation between two states, withdrawal process happened under ambiguous conditions. This ended up with the two contradictory statements made by AKP and HDP over the status of withdrawal. Compare to Kurdish Openings in 2009, AKP government adopted a nationalist approach to Kurdish problem and leave the trans-national approach that the government had in 2009. AKP government demanded a coordinator from the U.S, General Ralston, to increase the coordination among Turkey, the U.S and Iraq on PKK problem. After the leak of Oslo talk, anti-EU stance and raising authoritarian tones of the government, third-party interventions were declined during Resolution Process.

Wise Men Committee that AKP thought as an alternative for any third-party during the process proved to be ineffective. Firstly, the committee could not sustain an independent position. It was both rejected by HDP and CHP due to AKP's influence on the members. Secondly, the committee could not execute monitoring functions. As a watershed during the process, the committee could not monitor the

withdrawal of PKK and inform both sides. Its formation was so problematic that it could not act as an independent third-party. Thirdly, the committee could not propose drafts for legal roadmap, reforms and could not set deadlines that could bind both parties. Lastly, the committee's contact with HDP and PKK was so restricted. Under such conditions, it can be easily suggested that Wise Men committee could not perform the duties of a third party. In the absence of third-party intervention, Resolution Process became more vulnerable against possible deadlocks and changes in political environment.

Also, the deadlines set by each party did not seem to work, on the contrary, quite problematic because they were motivated to ignore deadlines set by the other side to reflect their stronger position in bargaining. Unpractical functions of deadline both caused commitment problem and delay the beginning of formal negotiations. Lastly, equivalents of intervention done by Mitchell in U.K such as pressure on governments, suggesting frameworks and increase dialogues, made the process more fragile for elections. As opposed to transition from Conservative to Labor government on which hardliner Unionist leverage was low, AKP's loss in 2015 election created the reverse political situation. The result of the election made the process more costly and empower hardliners who thought the process favored HDP more than AKP, for example Erdogan. AKP started to look for an ally and the most probable option was MHP who set anti-peace process conditions for any coalition offer. Overall, while the election in the U.K created more opportunities for pro-peace process actors, 2015 general election in Turkey produced the contrary results. Rising veto power of MHP combined with loss of AKP government created a power hub and resulted in the failure of Resolution Process.

Lastly, political developments in the Republic of Ireland, and in the region did not support the supply of weapons for IRA and make the process more favorable, both the threat of IŞID and autonomous Kurdish presence in Northern Syria made the disarmament costly for PKK and hampered the peace process. Overall, lack of third-intervention and changing payoffs contributed the breakdown of the peace process in Turkey.

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