Russian-Turkish Relations in the Era of Vladimir Putin

Tan Berk Akı

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Abstract

"Russian-Turkish Relations in the Era of Vladimir Putin"

Tan Berk Akı, Master's Candidate at the Atatürk Institute
for Modern Turkish History at Boğaziçi University, 2019

Prof. Dr. Aydın Babuna, Thesis Advisor

This thesis focuses on the Turkish-Russian relations from the year 2000 to 2019. In this 19-year period, the Turkish-Russian relations went through different stages due to the conflict of interests between the global powers in the major international incidents of the early 21st Century such as the Russo-Georgian War, the Ukrainian Euromaidan Revolution, the Arab Spring and the Syrian Civil War. The thesis aims at analyzing these changing relations between the two states through the perspective of the Neorealist Theory of International Relations which puts emphasis on power politics. In the thesis, the Turkish foreign policy is explained according to the positions of the two great powers, the United States and Russia, concerning the Turkish national security. The thesis looks at the major global incidents of the first two decades of the 2000s in order to provide a better understanding of how unexpected changes were caused in the Turkish foreign policy by these events.

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Özet

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Bu tez 2000 ile 2019 yılları arasındaki Türk-Rus ilişkilerine odaklanmaktadır. Bu 19 yıllık süre boyunca Türk-Rus ilişkileri Rusya-Gürcistan Savaşı, Ukrayna Euromaydan Devrimi, Arap Baharı ve Suriye İç Savaşı gibi erken dönem 21. Yüzyılda yaşanan büyük uluslararası olaylardaki küresel güçlerin arasındaki çıkar çatışmaları sebebiyle farklı dönemlerden geçerek günümüze gelmiştir. Bu tez, iki ülke arasındaki değişen ilişkileri güç siyasetine öncelik vererek açıklayan Uluslarası İlişkiler'in Neorealist Kuramı perspektefinden bakarak analiz etmeyi hedeflemektedir. Bu tezde, Türk ulusal güvenliği dikkate alınarak, iki büyük güç olan Amerika Birleşik Devletleri ve Rusya'nın konumlarına bakmak suretiyle Türk dış politikası açıklanmıştır. Tez 2000'li yılların ilk iki on yıllarındaki temel küresel olayları inceleyerek bu olayların nasıl Türk dış politikasında beklenmedik değişimlere yol açtığını anlatmayı amaç edinmiştir.

86.000 kelime

To the memories of my father, Naci Akı and my grandparents,
Osman and Nebahat Şahinoğlu

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

AKP	Justice and Development Party
CHP	Republican People's Party
CIS	Commonwealth of Independent States
CSCE	Council for Security and Cooperation of Europe
DAESH	Islamic State of Iraq and Levant
DBP	Democratic Regions Party
ECO	Economic Cooperation Organization
EU	European Union
FETÖ	Fetullahist/Gülenist Terrorist Organization
GATT	General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HDP	People's Democratic Party
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IPAP	Individual Partnership Action Plan
ISIL/ISIS	Islamic State of Iraq and Levant
MHP	Nationalist Action Party
NAF	United Army of Novorossiya
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
OSCE	Organization for Security and Cooperation of Europe
PKK	Kurdistan Workers' Party
PYD	Democratic Union Party
SDF	Syrian Democratic Forces
SSR	Soviet Socialist Republic
UÇK	Kosovo Liberation Army
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
US/USA	United States of America
USD	United States Dollar
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
TAK	Kurdistan Freedom Hawks
THKP-C	People's Liberation Party's Front of Turkey

TIKA	Turkish International Cooperation Agency
YPG	People's Protection Units

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Preface

The thesis aims to explain the dynamics behind the fluctuations in the Turkish-Russian relations during the 21st Century. It tries to explain the evolution of the Turkish-Russian relations, by examining Turkey's behavior according to the foreign policies of the great powers which create either opportunities or threats for Turkey. A special emphasis will be given to the two major events of the 2010s, the Euromaidan Revolution of Ukraine and the Arab Spring. This thesis focuses on the stances of the great powers, Russia and the United States, concerning these two incidents that had global impacts and how Turkish foreign policy was shaped by these stances. Also, the thesis aims to understand how the Turkish foreign policy changed dramatically in mid-2016 by looking at Turkey's internal factors and security issues.

The thesis consists of 8 chapters. The first chapter gives a brief introduction to the reader about the thesis. The second chapter is the part where the Neorealist Theory, a theory of international relations that is used to explain the relations between Russia and Turkey, is defined. This chapter explains the Neorealist Theory of International Relations while a brief history was also given to show how the Realist School has been evolved in the history of international relations and why it has more explanatory power than the other theories of international relations for the analysis of the Turkish-Russian relations.

The third chapter gives a historical background of the Turkish-Russian relations. The Turkish-Soviet relations in the Interwar Period, the Second World War and the Cold War were not so different than the contemporary Turkish-Russian relations. In this chapter, we see how the Turkish-Soviet relations evolved into the current Turkish-Russian relations and how Turkey conducted a foreign policy in accordance with the competition between the two great powers.

The fourth chapter starts to analyze the Turkish-Russian relations in the 21st Century. In this chapter, we see how Russia rose from her ashes after the end of the Chechen War. By the year of 2008, Russia will again be a major actor in the global politics as a great power, and a new cold war will start when Russia invades Georgia. By the end of the chapter, we also see how the

Turkish-Russian rapprochement will come to an end when Russia starts to follow an aggressive foreign policy.

The fifth chapter is about the Russian aggression in the Black Sea region. The chapter explains how Turkey reacted to the Ukrainian Crisis and we understand why Turkey acted that way. This chapter also demonstrates how a regime change in an Eastern European country can turn into a global issue.

The sixth chapter consists of a brief introduction to the most important waves of change in the 2010s, the Arab Spring and how it evolved in some Arab countries. The chapter tries to analyze the case of Syria and understand how Syria became one of the few survivors of the Arab Spring even though she experienced one of the worst civil wars of the Arab Spring. Also, we will look at how the great powers and Turkey acted upon these regime changes in the Middle East and how those states became new playgrounds for the great powers. The last part of the chapter will focus on why Turkey conducted a different foreign policy on Syria by dropping the old "Zero Problems with Neighbors" policy and how Russia was involved in the Syrian Civil War.

The seventh chapter provides an answer to the question "How has Turkey's foreign policy towards Russia changed since 2016?" by investigating the failed coup d'état attempt of Turkey. Major issues between the United States and Turkey are also examined such as the S-400 Crisis and the case of Fetullah Gülen's extradition. This chapter is the part which contains a closer look to the Turkish military operations in the lands of Syria when the Assad regime was gaining the upper hand in the Syrian Civil War by conquering the major headquarters of the Syrian rebels. The new US President Donald Trump's decision of withdrawal from Syria and how he later slowly backstepped from this decision is also discussed in the context of the Turkish-American relations.

Finally, the last chapter is the chapter of conclusion. Here, the thesis is summarized and the main arguments are underlined. The major findings of the thesis are analyzed and the history of the Turkish-Russian relations is evaluated in detail in this chapter, through the lens of the Neorealist Theory of International Relations.

1

Introduction

With the destruction of the Berlin Wall, a new democratic wave came into the regions of the Soviet Union, an optimistic belief prevailed that all countries of the world were coming closer and liberal democracy would become the victorious system in a post-ideological world. Nevertheless, in the 21st Century, this optimistic vision failed. A new Cold War with a different structure started between the same two great powers of the globe, the United States of America and the Russian Federation. The competition between these two countries continued in different parts of the world as proxy wars.

The main turning points of the 2010s were two global events that shaped the foreign policy of the two great powers, the Arab Spring and the Euromaidan Revolution. Both of these conflicts increased the tension between the United States and Russia. The Arab Spring and the Euromaidan Revolution came unexpectedly, and Russia quickly became involved in these incidents, unlike it was the case during the Color Revolutions at the beginning of the 21st Century. The first signal of this new Russian foreign policy was seen in the case of the Russo-Georgian War in 2008. After that date, Russia would play a more important role in international relations. Especially in the cases of Syria and Ukraine, which were the countries where the status quo was in favor of Russia, the Putin government of the Russian Federation followed an

active foreign policy to stop the ongoing revolutionary movements and restore the old order by any means necessary.

Turkey, as a country that is geographically located between the Middle East and Eastern Europe which were the two regions where both the Arab Spring and the Euromaidan Revolution were occurring, found herself in the middle of the conflicts between the two great powers. The Arab Spring initially seemed to be an advantage for Turkey in terms of following an active foreign policy in the Middle East by siding with the Western world as a model country for the post-revolutionary countries in the region. However, Turkey slowly changed her foreign policy towards the Syrian Crisis by the year 2016 and the coup d'état attempt in Turkey on July 15, 2016 accelerated this change. Rather than insisting on the regime change in Syria, Turkey now focused on eliminating the terrorist groups in Syria such as ISIS and the YPG that pose a threat to Turkey's national security. On the other hand, Turkey softened her criticisms towards the Russian activities in the Black Sea region.

This thesis will try to analyze how Turkey used the balance of power policy between Russia and the United States to protect her interests. This analysis will be made from the perspective of the Neorealist Theory of International Relations. The major global incidents that shaped the foreign policy of both of the great powers and the reaction of Turkey to those developments will be studied. This thesis tries to show how Turkey basically cared about her national interests and followed a pragmatist foreign policy based on its own survival, rather than following an ideological or identity based foreign policy.

§ 1.1 Literature Review

Literature on Russian-Turkish relations has put more emphasis on energy and economic relations than diplomatic relations, mostly through the application of the Dependence Theory of the Liberal School of International Relations. Mitat Çelikpala mentions the dependence of Turkey on Russia in the energy sector and underlines that the relations between the two countries

would not be disrupted due to mutual gains.[1] He gives the example of the energy relations between Turkey and Russia after the Russian Plane Shooting Incident, which was not disrupted even though Russia imposed some economic sanctions on Turkey.[2] Cenk Sidar and Gareth Winrow underline the importance of the energy deals between Russia and Turkey and say that they were the main reasons for a quick rapprochement between the two countries in the early 2010s and that they actually created more dependence on Russia for Turkey.[3] In another article, Gareth Winrow describes the energy dependence of Turkey on Russia as the main reason why Turkey was quite passive when Russia made a military intervention in Georgia in 2008.[4]

Some scholars applied the Complex Interdependence Theory to the Russian-Turkish relations in order to create a Neoliberal narrative that can challenge the existing Realist perspectives. Aslı Fatma Kelkitli explains the Russian-Turkish relations in the post-Cold War years by using the Complex Interdependence Theory and claims that both Russia and Turkey had some conflict of interests on many regions; nevertheless, both of them tried to decrease the diplomatic disputes through the mechanism of consultation, negotiation and bargaining because a tension between the two countries would create a lose-lose situation for both of the countries.[5]

In Realist circles, the Russian-Turkish relations are explained as a kind of a power competition between the two countries, but most of the time their relations with the other great power, the United States, is less emphasized or

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1 Mitat Çelikpala, "'Rusya Gazı Keser Mi?': Son Gelişmeler Işığında Türkiye-Rusya Enerji İlişkilerine Bakmak," in *Kuşku Ile Komşuluk,* eds. Gencer Özcan, Evren Balta and Burç Beşgül (İstanbul, İletişim Yayınları, 2017), 218-219.

2 Ibid.

3 Cenk Sidar and Gareth Winrow, "Turkey and South Stream: Turko-Russian Rapprochment and the Future of the Southern Corridor," *Turkish Policy Quarterly* 10, no. 2 (Fall, 2011): 52-53.

4 Gareth Winrow, "Turkey, Russia and the Caucasus: Common and Diverging Interests," Chatham House Briefing Paper, 2009, 6-8. https://www.chathamhouse.org/sites/default/files/public/Research/Europe/bp1109turkey.pdf.

5 Fatma Aslı Kelkitli, *Turkish-Russian Relations: Competition and Cooperation in Eurasia,* (New York, Routledge, 2017), 33.

even ignored in some cases. Şener Aktürk makes a comparison of GDP, GDP per Capita and the manpower in the military forces for both of the countries.[6] A similar approach based on military power competition was also taken by Sıtkı Egeli which points out how increasing power worsens the Russian-Turkish relations, just like Şener Aktürk states "If you are weak, we are friends. But if you are strong, then we are rivals".[78]

Another realist point of view was looking at the balancing acts of Turkey in the Turkish foreign policy. Fiona Hill and Ömer Taşpınar evaluated the Russian-Turkish rapprochement in the early 2000s as "Axis of the Excluded", because of the political isolation from the Western world.[9] Similarly, Suat Kınıklıoğlu and Valeriy Morkva see the improving Turkish-Russian relations as a consequence of Turkey's isolation from the Western world. They say that Russia and Turkey got closer because of Turkey's disappointment regarding the long EU process and Russia tries to deter Turkey from joining the EU.[10] Furthermore, Orkhan Garfarli claims that Russian-Turkish relations has been improving since the year 2000 because Russia aims to take Turkey away from NATO and attract her to the Russian side.[11]

Beyond the Realist and Liberal perspectives, there is another perspective which sees the new Turkish foreign policy as an ideologically driven foreign policy of the Justice and Development Party. These scholars point out the conservative, Islamic, populist values of the Justice and Development Party

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6 Şener Aktürk, "A Realist Reassessment of Turkish-Russian Relations 2002-2012: From the Peak to the Dip?," *Caspian Strategy Institute Report,* 2013, 13.

7 Sıtkı Egeli, "Dost-Düşman-Dost Döngüsü ve Türkiye-Rusya Rekabetinin Dönüşümü," in *Kuşku Ile Komşuluk,* eds. Gencer Özcan, Evren Balta and Burç Beşgül (İstanbul, İletişim Yayınları, 2017), 163-165.

8 Şener Aktürk, "Türkiye'nin Rusya ile İlişkilerinin Yükselişi ve Gerilemesi, 1992-2015: Neorealist Bir Değerlendirme," in *Kuşku Ile Komşuluk,* eds. Gencer Özcan, Evren Balta and Burç Beşgül (İstanbul, İletişim Yayınları, 2017), 130.

9 Fiona Hill and Ömer Taşpınar, "Turkey and Russia: Axis of the Excluded?," *Survival: Global Politics and Strategy* 48, no. 1 (June 19, 2016): 83-86.

10 Suat Kınıklıoğlu and Valeriy Morkva, "An Anatomy of Turkish-Russian Relations," *Southeast European and Black Sea Studies* 7, no. 4 (2007): 537-538.

11 Orkhan Gafarli, "Russian Foreign Policy in Light of Changing Balances in the Middle East," *Turkish Policy Quarterly* 10, no. 4 (Winter, 2012): 147.

as the main driving force of the contemporary Turkish foreign policy and put emphasis on the ideas of some important individuals in the party such as Ahmet Davutoğlu, Former Minister of Foreign Affairs. Ziya Öniş underlines that the Islamist roots of the Justice and Development Party made it popular in the Arab world, hence the new Turkish foreign policy started to become more pro-active in the Middle East during the 2010s.[12] Cihan Tuğal describes the foreign policy of the Justice and Development government as an attempt to create "Pax Ottomana" in the region of the Black Sea, the Mediterranean and the Middle East.[13]

The thesis does not deny the foundings of these different perspectives, but it applies the Neorealist Theory of International Relations, which focuses primarily on the power politics and explains the relations between Turkey and Russia through the concept of national security. Unlike other research, this thesis looks into both the Black Sea and the Middle East. The Arab Spring and the Euromaidan Revolution of Ukraine are investigated as the major global incidents that shaped international relations in the 2010s which also shaped the Russian-Turkish relations in this decade. The unit of analysis of the thesis is based on an analysis which is systemic and at a national level, just as it tries to explain the change in the Turkish foreign policy as it places itself between the two great powers, the United States and Russia, according to the threat that is imposed upon herself. Instead of focusing on ideologies, identities, individuals or personalities, the thesis focuses on the events that changed the status quo and how Turkey responds to them to protect herself from the new threats of these sudden changes through balancing. Economic relations between Turkey and Russia are also discussed in some parts of the thesis, but the major arguments are built around the concept of security.

12 Ziya Öniş, "Multiple Faces of the "New" Turkish Foreign Policy: Underlying Dynamics and a Critique," *Insight Turkey* 13, no. 1 (2011): 57.

13 Cihan Tuğal, "Democratic Janissaries?" *the New Left Review* 76 (July-August 2012): 6.

2

Theoretical Framework: The Neorealist Theory of International Relations

§ 2.1 The Historical Roots of the Realist School

The Classical Realism is the earliest interpretation of the Realist Theory of International Relations that came out after the Second World War by famous figures such as Edward Hallett Carr and Hans Morgenthau.[1]

The Classical Realist School has philosophical roots that can be traced back to the works of Thucydides and Sun Tzu.[2] Also, Thomas Hobbes and Niccolò Machiavelli were the major theoreticians of Realism in political science, who influenced many scholars of the Classical Realist Theory of International Relations.[3] The Classical Realist School assumes that the states are the major actors in the international relations as self-interested, power-seeking rational actors.[4] The only thing that matters for Classical Realism is

1 Michael G. Roskin and Nicholas O. Berry, *Uluslararası İlişkiler: UI'nin Yeni Dünyası*, trans. Özlem Şimşek (Ankara, Adres Yayınları, 2015), 49.

2 Andrew Heywood, Siyasetin ve Uluslarası İlişkilerin Temel Kavramları, trans. Fahri Bakırcı (Ankara, BB101 Yayınları, 2018), 248.

3 Ibid.

4 Michael G. Roskin and Nicholas O. Berry, *Uluslararası İlişkiler: UI'nin Yeni Dünyası*, 48-50.

power.[5] Nevertheless, the Classical Realist School explains this situation by claiming that the human nature[6] is selfish and evil, therefore it is the only reason for all of the problems in politics.[7] Scholars of the Classical Realist School ignored morality or political ethics when they explained the behavior of states. They only focused on the interests of the states and how these states use all means selfishly to achieve their own goals. Although they seem quite pessimistic about human nature and international relations, they made an important impact on the separation of political ethics from the real politics in practice.

The philosophical background of classical realism can easily be found in the works of Thomas Hobbes and Niccolò Machiavelli, who both lived in the period of very bloody conflicts such as The English Civil Wars and the Renaissance Wars. In *Leviathan,* Hobbes describes human life as "solitary, brutish, poor, nasty and short" in the state of nature[8].[9] In this state of nature, without higher authority, in Hobbes' words, "Every man is enemy to every man."[10] Therefore, the state of nature for Thomas Hobbes is evil and there is no justice in it. In his preface of *De Cive,* Hobbes described the evil human nature by drawing it out of a very famous Latin proverb, "To speak impartially, both sayings are true. That Man to Man is a kind of God, and that Man to Man is an arrant Wolf" and he gave the examples of vicious competition among some Roman leaders.[11] In his book, *Leviathan*, Hobbes proposes a

5 Michael G. Roskin and Nicholas O. Berry, *Uluslararası İlişkiler: UI'nin Yeni Dünyası*, 48.

6 The term of human nature is still a debated concept. Some critical scholars rather to use the concept of human condition instead of human nature.

7 Jack Donnelly, "Realizm," in *Uluslararası İlişkiler Teorileri*, Eds. Scott Burchill et all, trans. Muhammed Ağcan and Ali Aslan (İstanbul, Küre Yayınları, 2015), 55.

8 State of nature refers to the possible conditions of human beings before the political associations were established. It is the imagination of a life without government, state or law. Mostly, the political philosophers who studied social contract theory such as Thomas Hobbes, John Locke and Jean-Jacques Rousseau used this concept to explain their arguments about human nature.

9 Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*, trans. Semih Lim (Ankara, Yapı Kredi Yayınları, 2014), 101.

10 Ibid.

11 Thomas Hobbes and Carlo Monti. *De cive.* Vol. 2 (Whitefish, Kessinger Publishing, 2004), 1.

social contract to end this bad state of nature, which gives sovereign power to a single person by putting him/her above laws to control the state and save the citizens from each other's destructive behaviors motivated by their selfish and evil human natures. For Hobbes, citizens should sacrifice some of their liberties at the expense of the sovereign to save themselves under the guidance of the powerful ruler. Hobbes calls this sovereign power as "The Great Leviathan" as a "mortal God" who has all the power to establish peace.[12] Thus, it is no surprise to see that Thomas Hobbes favors monarchy where there is only one person to decide on everything rather than a democracy or aristocracy in which he sees nothing but division.[13]

Niccolò Machiavelli had also a similar pessimistic assumption about the human nature which he observed through the political tactics of Cesare Borgia in Italy during the Renaissance Wars.[14] In his book, *The Prince,* which was dedicated to Lorenzo de Medici of Florence, Machiavelli states that an authoritarian and cunning leader who does not care about political ethics and does whatever necessary to maintain his power is needed. This would protect the interests of the state. He also stressed the importance of alliances against powerful groups. For Machiavelli, end justifies means, therefore, a leader should do everything, including the most cruel and unacceptable things, to achieve victory.[15] This human nature, according to Machiavelli, is "ungrateful, inconstant, false, cowardly and greedy", thus people cannot be trusted.[16] Machiavelli says that being scared is much better than being loved, in order to stay in power.[17] If the leader would reach the aims, in the end, all of the bad things that he had done would be forgotten as long as he has the power.[18] A leader can lie, cheat and break his promises, otherwise he would lose everything he had. Hannibal of Carthage is praised as a successful leader alt-

12 Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 136.

13 Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 146.

14 Andrew Heywood, *Politics* (New York, Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 5.

15 Niccolo Machiavelli, *Prens*, trans. Leyla Tonguç Basmacı (İstanbul, Remzi Kitabevi, 2014), 82.

16 Ibid.

17 Niccolo Machiavelli, *Prens*, 82-83.

18 Niccolo Machiavelli, *Prens*, 83-84.

hough he gained everything through harsh cruelty, while Scipio Africanus, who was too merciful, has faced a rebellion in Spain.[19] In his *The Prince,* Machiavelli gives the example of King Ferdinand II of Aragon who has gained everything through immoral behavior even though he always talked about peace and good faith.[20] Niccolò Machiavelli also gives the examples of three Roman emperors, Marcus Aurelius, Patranax and Alexander Severus, who have made the fatal mistake of being against cruelty and relying on justice rather than their own armies, hence lost their thrones.[21]

Although both of these works are pessimistic about human nature and justify cruel dictators, they showed us how the world works rather than how it should work and changed the mainstream discourse in political philosophy. These two intellectuals were the most prominent political philosophers of the era of Renaissance and their ideas are still being discussed in the field of political philosophy. Although what they have written is shocking, they brought a secular approach to politics by leaving behind Christian teachings and concerned only with the nature of things, just like many other rationalist philosophers of the Renaissance.

§ 2.2 The School of Classical Realism

The academic discipline of International Relations was established after the First World War in an environment where the world experienced a disastrous war, which had never happened before. The first scholars of International Relations emerged in the 1930s, who considered politics as rational behavior among the states and they tried to create a scientific approach to understand the relations of states in order to prevent another possible disastrous world war in the future. During this period, the First Great Debate on the International Relations was made and two big schools of thought

19 Niccolo Machiavelli, *Prens*, 85.

20 Niccolo Machiavelli, *Prens*, 88.

21 Niccolo Machiavelli, *Prens*, 94.

emerged.[22] One of them was the Realist School which emphasized the importance of power and selfish human nature as the causes of wars.[23] On the other side, there were idealists who were coming out of the tradition of progressivism and non-traditional legal theory, claiming that the institutions are vital in improving the relations between the states and solving international conflicts.[24] Hence, they were not pessimistic about the human nature and they argued that international organizations such as League of Nations could prevent an upcoming world war.

Well-known scholars from the School of Classical Realism of International Relations such as Hans Morgenthau, E.H. Carr and Reinhold Niebuhr made very similar assumptions with the old works of realist philosophers. The Classical Realist scholars did not ignore international anarchy, but they often underlined the importance of evil and selfish human nature as the main cause of all conflicts in international relations.[25] For them, states act like human beings.[26] They have inherent desires to dominate other states for their own self-interests, thus wars exist.[27] These scholars also found the arguments of idealists, who were also known as the Liberal School of International Relations, as unrealistic because they expected too much from international organizations. After the failure of the League of Nations with the start of the Second World War, the Realist School gained the upper hand against the Liberal School and became the dominant theory in international relations until the present day.[28]

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22 David A. Lake, "Theory Is Dead, Long Live Theory: The End of the Great Debates and the Rise of Eclecticism in International Relations," *European Journal of International Relations* 19, no. 3 (September 5, 2013): 569.

23 Ibid.

24 Ibid.

25 Jack Donnelly, "Realizm," 55.

26 Stephen Martin Walt, "International Relations: One World, Many Theories," *Foreign policy* (Spring 1998): 31.

27 Ibid.

28 Mustafa Aydın, "Uluslararası İlişkilerin "Gerçekçi" Teorisi: Kökeni, Kapsamı Ve Kritiği," *Uluslararası İlişkiler*, 1, no. 1 (Bahar 2004): 34-35.

The Liberal School of International Relations was based on normative values such as international law, political ethics or world peace through the promotion of cooperation and collective security among states by international organizations. A classical realist scholar E. H. Carr wrote that Liberals exaggerated the roles of those normative values in *Twenty Years' Crises, 1919-1939: An Introduction to Study of International Relations.*[29] According to E.H. Carr, the utopian perspective of liberal intellectuals sees political theory as a norm that states should follow, but the realist perspective, which sees politics like bureaucrats, assumes that political theory is just a codification of political practice.[30]

In his famous book, *Politics Among Nations,* Hans Morgenthau listed six main principles of political realism. Morgenthau underlines that politics are governed by rational objective laws that come from human nature, and power is the main universal factor in politics and this is valid for every state.[31] He also says that realism is aware of the moral significance of political action, but he emphasizes that moral principles cannot be applied to the states.[32] He reminds that the moral values of a particular single nation cannot be accepted as the universal moral laws that rule the globe.[33] Lastly, he distinguishes political realism from the other schools of thought and says that political realism only cares about how politics work.[34]

As Morgenthau underlined, the classical realist scholars claim that international relations have their own laws and their roots are in human nature, which is inherently evil, rather than in moral values. The Classical Realist scholars did not fully ignore the existence of political ethics or morality, but they believed that the respect for these values could be achieved solely

29 Edward Hallett Carr, *The twenty years' crisis, 1919-1939: an introduction to the study of international relations* (London, Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), 25-31.

30 Edward Hallett Carr, *The twenty years' crisis, 1919-1939: an introduction to the study of international relations*, 13-14.

31 Hans Joachim Morgenthau and Kenneth W. Thompson, *Politics among Nations: The Struggle For Power And Peace* (Beijing, Pekin University Press, 1997), 4-15.

32 Ibid.

33 Ibid.

34 Ibid.

through power.[35] Therefore, for classical realists, wars among states were perpetual due to the evil nature of human beings. All of the states are battling and competing with each other to maximize their own self-interests.

The Classical Realist School of International Relations made an important distinction between the questions of "What is politics?" and "How it should be?" The scholars from this tradition believed that the roots of politics are solely in human nature and they argued that cooperation among the states is not easy and war is actually something very common due to the conflict of interests. The arguments of classical realists who accuse human nature for causing the wars in history, seem quite simplistic and reductionist for complex social issues like international relations and politics, but they made an important contribution by showing that the real world is not a peaceful place, and that every state acts for its own self-interest, which is the key point that influenced the upcoming Neorealist school.

§ 2.3 The School of Neorealism

Neorealism, also known as Structural Realism, is another school of thought on international relations that revised the premises of classical realism and reformulated political realism. Neorealists also accept that power is the most essential factor in international relations and they see states as main rational actors which are seeking for power to survive. Nonetheless, unlike the Classical Realist School, Neorealist scholars do not explain this conflicting behavior of states by pointing to human nature.[36] Instead, the Neorealist School of International Relations placed international anarchy in the center of their theory.[37] Scholars of the Neorealist Theory claim that states are in conflict and competing with each other to gain more power because of international

35 Mustafa Aydın, "Uluslararası İlişkilerin "Gerçekçi" Teorisi: Kökeni, Kapsamı Ve Kritiği," 35-36.

36 Jack Donnelly, "Realizm," 55.

37 Jack Donnelly, *Realism and International Relations* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2004), 82.

anarchy.[38] In an atmosphere of international anarchy, all states feel insecure because there is no greater power as a kind of central authority that can protect them, hence all of the states have to seek for power to survive by maximizing their own security.[39] In an international system that is completely anarchic, all of the states are standing alone and depending solely on their own power to ensure their own survival.[40]

By the end of the 1970s, Kenneth Waltz's wrote his famous book, *Theory of International Relations,* in which he describes the main arguments of the Neorealist School. In this work of Kenneth Waltz, the system of international anarchy was the starting point to explain the behaviors of state with a more scientific method, and he put emphasis on the analysis of the international structure to understand the actions of states.[41] He underlines that states might have cultural, ideological or historical differences; nevertheless, all of them act in the same pattern as rational actors because of the international structure that shapes the behaviors of states, thus their actions can be predicted.[42]

In the Neorealist School of International Relations, power is the most vital thing for a state, but this power should be considered as "Relative Power" which means a state can be described as powerful when it has more power than other states. If a state wants to assure its survival, it has to gain more power than other states to be the strongest actor so that it can defend itself from any possible threat. However, if a state increases its power and becomes superior to other states, then these states would also try to increase their own powers to keep up with the superior state. This competition of relative power among states to survive leads to a "Security Dilemma", which means that all of the states would try to increase their power continuously to assure their own existence. Hence, if state A becomes the strongest, state B will increase

38 Ibid.

39 Mustafa Aydın, "Uluslararası İlişkilerin "Gerçekçi" Teorisi: Kökeni, Kapsamı Ve Kritiği," 49.

40 Jack Donnelly, "Realizm," 60.

41 Mustafa Aydın, "Uluslararası İlişkilerin "Gerçekçi" Teorisi: Kökeni, Kapsamı Ve Kritiği," 48-49.

42 Ibid.

its relative power more than state A and state B will become the strongest, but this will push state A to increase its power further to again be stronger than state B, and this loop will continue as it is the case with the Nuclear Arms Race between the United States and the Soviet Union during the Cold War.

Also, "the Balance of Power" is another important concept for Neorealist scholars to explain the behavior of states. According to Neorealist scholar Kenneth Waltz, if one state gets too powerful, the other states will feel insecure in an anarchic system, hence they will establish a short-term alliance against this rising power to keep the status quo.[43] An example from history might be Napoleonic Wars. When Napoleonic France became too powerful and started to threaten the other European states, all of those threatened states established a coalition against the Napoleonic France, although they had different interests. When Napoleon was defeated in the Battle of Waterloo in 1815, the coalition of great powers against Napoleon was dissolved and all of the members of the coalition resumed to follow their own political agendas.

Neorealists also analyze the roles of great powers in the existing structure and how other countries act accordingly. For example, Kenneth Waltz states that non-great powers, which are relatively weaker states, are always in favor of balance of power between great powers in an atmosphere of international anarchy rather than having only one great power, because this great power could be a threat to the weaker states.[44] Therefore, instead of joining the side of the great power that could establish its own world hegemony (Waltz uses the term of "Bandwagoning" to describe this behavior), the weaker states would create a coalition against the rising great power and they would try to conserve the status quo by balancing this rising power.[45] Because of international anarchy, security is the main goal and power is just a means for it. Siding with a rising power and making it too big to establish its own hegemony

43 Kenneth N. Waltz, *Theory of International Relations* (Reading, Addison-Wesley, 1979), 126.

44 Ibid.

45 Ibid.

will always be a threat even to its allies; therefore, other states will always be in favor of balancing the power in the international structure.[46]

Scholars of the Neorealist School, however, are divided into two camps because of their disagreement on the question of how states act to maximize their own security. On the first camp, there is Offensive Realism which claims that all of the states want to be a hegemonic state that dominates the structure of the international arena to ensure its security. John Mearsheimer, a well-known scholar from the Neorealist school of international relations, describes the reason for this behavior of states as "There are no status quo powers in the international system."[47] Therefore, he concludes that "Great powers are primed for offense."[48] He also underlines three fundamental features of the international system that force states to fear each other and maximize their own interests to survive. These three fundamental features are "the absence of a central authority that sits above states and can protect them from each other", "the fact that states always have some offensive military capability" and "the fact that states can never be certain about the other states' intentions."[49] Because of these features of the international system that is already existing in an anarchical structure, Mearsheimer, as a defender of the Offensive Realism camp of the Neorealist School, claims that "the best guarantee of survival is to be a hegemon, because no other state can seriously threaten such a mighty power".[50]

Nonetheless, on the other side, there is Defensive Realism which disagrees with the scholars of Offensive Realism and claims that being a hegemonic power will push the other states to form a coalition against the hegemonic power, hence the great powers would rather keep the existing balance of power rather than being the sole hegemonic power of the world. Kenneth Waltz, one of the leading representatives of this argument of Defensive Real-

46 Ibid.

47 John J. Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics* (WW Norton & Company, 2001), 2.

48 John J. Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, 3.

49 Ibid.

50 Ibid.

ism, coined the term of "Bandwagoning" to explain how weak states will create an alliance to resist a rising powerful and aggressive state that aims to be the hegemonic power.[51] Waltz mentions that states do not want to be a hegemonic power because they do not want to scare other states and lead them into establishing a coalition against them.[52] Thus, they prefer to balance the power among the great powers and conserve the status quo while chasing their own interests.[53] For this reason, Kenneth Waltz believed that an international stability can only be achieved in a bipolar world where the two equal great powers share the world. In the article, *The Stability of Bipolar World,* Kenneth Waltz points to four factors in a bipolar world that limit violence among states.[54] The first one is the absence of peripheries where all the world has to be united in one of the camps.[55] The second factor is "the range and intensity of competition" among great powers.[56] The third factor is "the persistence of the pressure and crisis".[57] In a bipolar balance, the competing great powers could not involve in a direct conflict in times of crisis.[58] He gives the example of the Cuban Missile Crisis to explain this factor. This crisis had forced the two great powers to withdraw their nuclear missiles to avoid a larger war.[59] The last factor is "the preponderant power" of the great powers.[60] Developments in military technology, especially the production of nuclear arms, made the great powers more dangerous but also more vulnerable to one another. Thus, having nuclear weapons on both sides created a mutual deterrence that does not encourage any of the great powers to start a war with the other great power because of the possibility of a nuclear warfare.

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51 Kenneth N. Waltz, *Theory of International Relations*, 126.

52 Ibid.

53 Ibid.

54 Kenneth N. Waltz, "The Stability of a Bipolar World," *Daedalus* 3, no. 93 (Summer 1964): 882.

55 Ibid.

56 Kenneth N. Waltz, "The Stability of a Bipolar World," 883.

57 Kenneth N. Waltz, "The Stability of a Bipolar World," 886.

58 Kenneth N. Waltz, "The Stability of a Bipolar World," 883-884.

59 Kenneth N. Waltz, "The Stability of a Bipolar World," 884.

60 Kenneth N. Waltz, "The Stability of a Bipolar World," 886.

Kenneth Waltz lived and developed his theories in the era of the Cold War. He argued that a bipolar international system is more stabilized than non-polar, multipolar or unipolar systems. However, the Cold War was neither a very peaceful, nor a stabilized era for the whole world. Especially after the election of Ronald Reagan in 1980, the era of détente, which was the time when both the USSR and the US respected each other as rival great powers, was ended and a roll back was started by the Reagan administration that aimed to aggressively decrease the power of the USSR or even destroy it. The experience of Cold War actually showed us that a bipolar world is neither a safe place, nor it is the most stable times of history, as major wars such as Vietnam War or War in Afghanistan were fought in this period. For Waltz, the conflicts between two great powers would be short diplomatic crises just like the Cuban Missile Crisis. However, both of the wars in Vietnam and Afghanistan continued for a long time and they limited the expansion of the great powers in the scene.

Also, there is a relatively new realist theory called the Neoclassical Realist Theory. The term Neoclassical Realist Theory was coined by Gideon Rose, who published a famous paper in 1998 to explain his thoughts on Realism and create a new Realist school.[61] In the Neoclassical Realist Theory, both the external and internal variables are considered, hence it is a kind of a merger of Classical Realism and Neorealism.[62] The Neoclassical Realist School also claims that the decision making in the foreign policy is determined not just by the relative quantities of material power, but also by the leaders of the states.[63] From the Neoclassical perspective, the decision making process is much more complex than what the other Realist schools thought. The Neoclassical Realism criticizes the old Realist theories by stating that countries do not have to simply follow power.[64] According to Rose, countries' rulling leaders do not have the total liberty to control and use national resources as

61 Gideon Rose, "Neoclassical Realism and Theories of Foreign Policy," *World Politics*. 51, no. 1 (1998): 146.

62 Ibid.

63 Gideon Rose, "Neoclassical Realism and Theories of Foreign Policy," 147.

64 Ibid.

they want.[65] Thus, Gideon Rose says, "Power analysis must therefore also examine the strength and structure of states relative to their societies, because these affect the proportion of national resources that can be allocated to foreign policy."[66] In other words, countries that have the same power might act different due to the differences in their particular state structures.[67]

§ 2.4 Alternative Theories to the Realist Theories

The main challenger of the Realist school is still the Liberal school, since the foundation of the academic field of international relations. The school of Liberalism in International Relations believes that perpetual peace among nations is possible regardless what realists say about human nature or international anarchy because natural laws among human societies dictate harmony and cooperation.[68] Liberals believe in human progress and the possibility of reaching the perfect state of human condition.[69] For Realist scholars, violence and conflict are rational behaviors for states due to short-term interests, but for Liberal scholars, these concepts are irrational due to their collective damage and the long-term interests of states.[70] Hence, liberal scholars believe that with the power of human reason and humans' capacity to realize their inner power, wars will end permanently when human beings reach the last level of human progress.[71] To improve this optimistic view, liberal scholars questioned how this perpetual peace could be achieved and they came up with some arguments based on rationalism. For example, in his famous article Francis Fukuyama claimed that the end of history came with the end of the Cold War as humanity reached its last phase, and peace

65 Ibid.

66 Ibid.

67 Ibid.

68 Scott Burchill, "Liberalizm," in *Uluslararası İlişkiler Teorileri*, Scott Burchill et al, trans. Muhammed Ağcan and Ali Aslan (İstanbul, Küre Yayınları, 2014), 89.

69 Ibid.

70 Joshua S. Goldstein and Jon C. Pevehouse, *Uluslararası İlişkiler*, trans. Haluk Özdemir (Ankara, BB101 Yayınları, 2015), 136.

71 Scott Burchill, "Liberalizm," 89.

was established in the world with the victory of Western Liberalism against Eastern Communism.[72]

One argument from the Liberal theory claims that the economic interdependence between states does not allow them to fight with each other because of mutual loss.[73] Nonetheless, the Liberal concept of economic interdependence was regarded as suspicious by Realist scholars, because they believe this interdependence creates more tensions in the short-term, rather than creating cooperation and peace.[74] Another argument from the Liberal School, mostly associated with the US President Woodrow Wilson, argues that the world peace is achievable if democracies would spread all around the world.[75] According to the Wilsonian perspective of Liberalism, democracies will not fight each other.

Neoliberal theory, on the other hand, rose against Neorealist theory by accepting some of its assumptions such as international anarchy and rational states as actors that pursue only their own self-interests.[76] Nevertheless, Neoliberal scholars of international relations do not share the same pessimistic view with realists.[77] Neoliberal scholars claim that states regularly cooperate with each other as rational actors because cooperation is a win-win situation where every state benefits while decreasing the chance of being deceived by other states due to interdependence based on this cooperation.[78] Furthermore, Neoliberals use some behaviorist or game theory concepts to explain the possibility of reciprocity and cooperation such as prisoner's dilemma.[79] To establish this cooperation, reciprocity is essential and reciprocity exists with norms and laws without the necessity of a higher authority or world government.[80] Also, the Neoliberal approach emphasizes the importance of

72 Francis Fukuyama, "The End of History?" *The National Interest,* no 16. (Summer 1989): 3-4.

73 Stephen Martin Walt, "International Relations: One World, Many Theories," 32.

74 Joshua S. Goldstein and Jon C. Pevehouse, *Uluslararası İlişkiler*, 136.

75 Stephen Martin Walt, "International Relations: One World, Many Theories," 32.

76 Joshua S. Goldstein and Jon C. Pevehouse, *Uluslararası İlişkiler*, 136.

77 Ibid.

78 Ibid.

79 Joshua S. Goldstein and Jon C. Pevehouse, *Uluslararası İlişkiler*, 138.

80 Joshua S. Goldstein and Jon C. Pevehouse, *Uluslararası İlişkiler*, 137.

international organizations such as the United Nations, the European Union, the African Union or World Trade Organization for financial and cultural cooperation as well as collective security.[81]

Between Realism and Liberalism, there is a unifying theory called the so-called "English School" which came out in the mid-1960s by a group of scholars who were influenced by the writings of Hugo Grotius, especially his *De Jure Belli ac Pacis*.[82] As Barry Buzan explains, the roots of the English School come from the classical legal tradition and the belief in international law that constitutes a community.[83] This community is called an "international society", which is created by powerful sovereign states, but it is an anarchic society because these sovereign states refuse to obey a higher authority that dictates them to follow universal rules.[84] Scholars of the English School choose a middle way between Realism and Liberalism as they claim that the international system is in order and civilized like Liberals, but they do not believe the utopian ideal of permanent peace, like Realists.[85] For the demands of limiting the power of the states, intercultural tolerance and spreading global justice through cooperation, the English School emphasizes the importance of a diplomatic dialogue among states.[86] It should be noted that the English School still has a strong liberal revolutionary side, as Bary Buzan points out by saying "Once the idea of society was conceded, one had to think not just of international society (amongst states), but also of 'world society' (the idea of shared norms and values at the individual level, but transcending the state)."[87] However, the supporters of the English School

81 Joshua S. Goldstein and Jon C. Pevehouse, *Uluslararası İlişkiler*, 142.

82 Andrew Linklater, "İngiliz Okulu," in *Uluslararası İlişkiler Teoriler,* Scott Burchill et al, trans. Muhammed Ağcan and Ali Aslan (İstanbul, Küre Yayınları, 2014), 123-125.

83 Barry Buzan, "From International System to International Society: Structural Realism and Regime Theory Meet the English School," *International Organization* 47.3 (1993): 328.

84 Andrew Linklater, "İngiliz Okulu," 123.

85 Andrew Linklater, "İngiliz Okulu," 124.

86 Andrew Linklater, "İngiliz Okulu," 152.

87 Barry Buzan, "The English School: an Underexploited Resource in IR." *Review of international studies* 27.3 (2001): 477.

believe that there is a limited progress in global affairs in this sense.[88] The optimism of the English School is not a utopian optimism because they also have some Realist pessimism inside their ideas.[89] The scholars of the English School believe that international society is fragile and can be destroyed in future.[90]

Another important challenger theory in international relations, to both of Liberal and Realist theories, is Constructivism. Constructivism is a relatively new approach to international relations that gained popularity by the end of the Cold War when the Liberal and Realist theories failed to explain international developments.[91] Both of the mainstream schools of international relations could not predict the end of the Cold War.[92] The Constructivist Theory of International Relations came out as a criticism to those two mainstream theories of international relations with the very famous article of Alexander Wendt, *Anarchy is what States Make of it: the Social Construction of Power Politics.* As it can be understood from the name of the article, Alexander Wendt claims that international anarchy, which is a concept that is emphasized by both Neorealist and Neoliberal scholars, is not something natural or it does not even exist at all.[93] Rationalist-behaviorist approach of Neorealist and Neoliberal schools of international relations have similar assumptions that states are the dominant actors in international relations, and they are only concerned about their own self-interests, and they only change their behaviors but keep to their identities and interests.[94] However, for Alex-

88 Andrew Linklater, "İngiliz Okulu," 148.

89 Andrew Linklater, "İngiliz Okulu," 153.

90 Ibid.

91 Stephen Martin Walt, "International Relations: One World, Many Theories," 41.

92 Trine Flockhart, "İnşac.ılık ve Dış Politika," in *Dış Politika: Teoriler, Aktörler, Örnek Olaylar,* ed. Steve Smith, Amelia Hadfield and Tim Dunne, trans. Nasuh Uslu (İstanbul, Uluslararası İlişkiler Kütüphanesi, 2016), 79.

93 Alexander Wendt, "Anarchy is what states make of it: the social construction of power politics," *International organization* 46, no. 2 (1992): 394.

94 Alexander Wendt, "Anarchy is what states make of it: the social construction of power politics," 392.

ander Wendt, self-help system and power politics are not the essential features of international anarchy.[95]

Wendt underlines social theories that explain that identities and interests exist, but Neorealist and Neoliberal scholars ignore them due to their rationalist perspective, just like Robert Keohane, a very famous Neoliberal scholar of international relations, dismisses these social theories by referring to them as "Reflectivist".[96]As a response to those rationalist theories, Wendt proposes the Constructivist Theory to replace the dominant "economic" view in mainstream theories with "sociological, social and psychological form of systemic theory" where identities and interests are dependent variables.[97] Unlike Neorealism or NeoLiberalism, Constructivism is a theory of international relations that values ideas and their impact.[98] Instead of focusing on behaviors of states as rational actors, Constructivist scholars focus on dominant discourse in a society which they accept as the reflection of beliefs and interests that also shapes the acceptable norms and behaviors in that particular society.[99] Therefore, the Constructivist Theory cares about sources of change rather than explaining the system like Neorealist or NeoLiberal theories do.[100]

Another challenger to the two dominant theories of international relations, Realism and Liberalism, is the Marxist theory. However, the Marxist school has never been a mainstream theory in International Relations.[101] The roots of a Marxist international relations theory lie in the classical works of Karl Marx, although he said very few things about the relations between

95 Alexander Wendt, "Anarchy is what states make of it: the social construction of power politics," 394.

96 Alexander Wendt, "Anarchy is what states make of it: the social construction of power politics," 393.

97 Alexander Wendt, "Anarchy is what states make of it: the social construction of power politics," 394.

98 Stephen Martin Walt, "International Relations: One World, Many Theories, 40.

99 Stephen Martin Walt, "International Relations: One World, Many Theories, 40-41.

100 Ibid.

101 Faruk Yalvaç, "Uluslararası İlişkiler ve Marksizm: Marksizmi Uluslararasılaştırmak ve Marksist bir Uluslararası İlişkiler Kuramı'na Doğru," in *Marksizm ve Uluslararası İlişkiler Kuramları*, ed. by Faruk Yalvaç (Ankara, İmge Kitabevi Yayınları, 2017), 9.

states.[102] In his *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte,* Marx advocated that humans make their own history under the circumstances which they do not choose.[103] The exploitation of the class structure limits the freedom to act for all human beings.[104] Marx believed that the differences among nations would diminish or even totally disappear in the future, but the hostile behaviors among nations would remain.[105] Friedrich Engels put emphasis on competition for power like the scholars of the Realist Theory, and he believed that a world proletariat revolution would be ignited by military competition rather than a financial crisis in capitalism.[106] However, these ideas of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels were not actually a theory of international relations.

The first actual international relations theories of the Marxist School were the theories of Imperialism, which are mostly based on the writings of famous Socialist theoreticians and political figures of the early 20th Century such as Vladimir Lenin, Rosa Luxembourg, Karl Kautsky and Rudolf Hilferding.[107] They saw the First World War as a consequence of competition among capitalist states.[108] In his *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism,* the Bolshevik revolutionary leader Vladimir Lenin describes colonial imperialism as the final stage of capitalism while disagreeing with another famous Marxist theoretician, Karl Kautsky, who considers imperialism as the preferred policy of the financial capital, rather than something that should be

102 Andrew Linklater, "Marx ve Marksizm," in *Uluslararası İlişkiler Teorileri,* Scott Burchill et al, trans. Muhammed Ağcan and Ali Aslan (İstanbul, Küre Yayınları, 2014), 163.

103 Andrew Linklater, "Marx ve Marksizm," 162.

104 Ibid.

105 Andrew Linklater, "Marx ve Marksizm," 166.

106 Ibid.

107 Faruk Yalvaç, "Uluslararası İlişkiler ve Marksizm: Marksizmi Uluslararasılaştırmak ve Marksist bir Uluslararası İlişkiler Kuramı'na Doğru," 37.

108 Ibid.

identified with capitalism.[109] Kautsky defined imperialism as the relationship between developed and underdeveloped countries.[110]

These debates on the concept of imperialism later evolved into the Dependency Theory in the Cold War era by the writings of scholars such as Paul Baran, Andre Gunder Frank, Henry Magdoff and Bill Warren.[111] The scholars of the Dependency Theory focused on the concept of economic inequality among nations.[112] They studied the relations between developed Northern and underdeveloped Southern states and how the poor periphery states are exploited by the rich core states.[113] All of these theories of the Dependency School later influenced the upcoming World-Systems Analysis of Immanuel Wallerstein during the 1970s.

According to Immanuel Wallerstein, capitalist world system emerged in Europe during the 16th Century (1450-1640).[114] In the World-Systems Analysis of Wallerstein, the unit of analysis is the whole world system, not state, society or social formation.[115] In the capitalist world system, states are in a hierarchical formation and there is an unequal exchange system among the core, periphery and semi-periphery.[116] In the previous global empires, the surplus values were produced by central authorities, but in the world economic system, the powerful core states produce this surplus value.[117] According to Wallerstein, the world economy was led by hegemonic states such as

109 Vladimir Ilyich Lenin, *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism* (Sydney, Resistance Books, 1999), 92-93.

110 Faruk Yalvaç, "Uluslararası İlişkiler ve Marksizm: Marksizmi Uluslararasılaştırmak ve Marksist bir Uluslararası İlişkiler Kuramı'na Doğru," 38.

111 Faruk Yalvaç, "Uluslararası İlişkiler ve Marksizm: Marksizmi Uluslararasılaştırmak ve Marksist bir Uluslararası İlişkiler Kuramı'na Doğru," 37

112 Ibid.

113 Ibid.

114 Faruk Yalvaç, "Uluslararası İlişkiler ve Marksizm: Marksizmi Uluslararasılaştırmak ve Marksist bir Uluslararası İlişkiler Kuramı'na Doğru," 41.

115 Immanuel Wallerstein, "World-Systems Analysis," *Sociopedia.isa,* 2013, 4. http://www.sagepub.net/isa/resources/pdf/World-Systems%20analysis.pdf.

116 Faruk Yalvaç, "Uluslararası İlişkiler ve Marksizm: Marksizmi Uluslararasılaştırmak ve Marksist bir Uluslararası İlişkiler Kuramı'na Doğru," 41

117 Ibid.

Genoa and Venice, the Netherlands, the Great Britain and lastly, the United States of America.[118]

The scholars of the Dependency Theory transformed the concept of imperialism from political imperialism into economic and cultural imperialism.[119] Hence, both the Dependency Theory and its successor, the World-Systems Analysis, are mostly described as "Neo-Marxist Theory" in international relations.[120] Nevertheless, it is hard to say that Marxist theories are challenging the status of Realist theories. For Realist scholars, the rules that govern the whole system is either shaped by human nature or by international anarchy. In the second chapter of Kenneth Waltz's *Theory of International Politics,* Waltz categorizes economic imperialism theories of Hubson and Lenin as "reductionist".[121] Although Waltz does not rule out the claim that capitalism is related to imperialism, he insists that the arguments of Hubson and Lenin were about particular causes that are more related to history than a theory.[122] As a Neorealist scholar, Waltz tries to refute the Marxist theories of international relations based on Imperialism by stating that states are actors which have various choices in front of them.[123] For Waltz, international conditions alone, that is capitalism for Hubson and Lenin, cannot explain why states make a particular choice.[124]

Besides Constructivist and Marxist theories, there are also some other alternative theories to international relations that are sometimes used as alternatives to Realist and Liberal theories such as the Critical Theory, Postmodernism, Feminism and the Green Theory. The Critical Theory is influenced by the works of the Frankfurt School. The scholars of the Critical Theory deny that theoretical knowledge can be objective or independent from the

118 Faruk Yalvaç, "Uluslararası İlişkiler ve Marksizm: Marksizmi Uluslararasılaştırmak ve Marksist bir Uluslararası İlişkiler Kuramı'na Doğru," 42.

119 Ibid.

120 Andrew Linklater, "Marx ve Marksizm," 172.

121 Kenneth N. Waltz, *Theory of International Relations*, 21.

122 Kenneth N. Waltz, *Theory of International Relations*, 26.

123 Ibid.

124 Ibid.

political views.[125] They try to find out who benefits from the theories and for which purpose and by whom these theories have been theorized.[126] The Postmodern School of International Relations apply the methods of deconstruction and double reading of Post-Structuralist scholar Jacques Derrida in international relations to demonstrate that dichotomies, which have been seen as absolute and unchangeable, do not exist at all.[127] The Feminist Theory in international relations became popular among some feminist scholars in the 1980s when they argued against meta-theoretical approach of mainstream theories of international relations that are exclusionary, state-centered and positivist.[128] Feminist scholars of international relations try to deconstruct the power politics of Realist theories and claim that women's experience have a much more critical and comprehensive perspective than the objective approach of Realism.[129] Jacqui True categorizes the Feminist Theories of International Relations into three groups: Empirical Feminism which focuses on women and gender dynamics of international relations, Analytical Feminism which aims to demonstrate the sexist biases against women regarding the concepts in international relations, and Normative Feminism which deals with the normative goals of social and political change.[130] Finally, the Green Theory of International Relations is concerned about global environmental issues, and it is mostly centered on the ideas of green political theory and global ecology.[131]

Although all of these alternative theories bring us different perspectives, none of them provide a proper criticism for the Realist or Liberal theories. It

125 Richard Devetak, "Eleştirel Teori," in *Uluslararası İlişkiler Teorileri,* Scott Burchill et al, trans. Muhammed Ağcan and Ali Aslan (İstanbul, Küre Yayınları, 2014), 222.

126 Ibid.

127 Richard Devetak, "Post-Yapısalcılık," in *Uluslararası İlişkiler Teorileri,* Scott Burchill et al, trans. Muhammed Ağcan and Ali Aslan (İstanbul, Küre Yayınları, 2014), 257-259.

128 Jacqui True, "Feminizm," in *Uluslararası İlişkiler Teorileri,* Scott Burchill et al, trans. Muhammed Ağcan and Ali Aslan (İstanbul, Küre Yayınları, 2014), 318-319.

129 Ibid.

130 Jacqui True, "Feminizm," 316-317.

131 Matthew Paterson, "Yeşil Siyaset," in *Uluslararası İlişkiler Teorileri,* Scott Burchil et al, trans. Muhammed Ağcan and Ali Aslan (İstanbul, Küre Yayınları, 2014), 347-348.

is hard to say that they can challenge mainstream theories because all of their approaches are mostly based on some critical epistemological inquiry methods such as deconstructivism, which might be seen as a useful way to criticize the scientism of Realist and Liberal theories, but they do not propose anything to replace these mainstream theories. The alternative theories do not really explain how and why states behave in a certain way. They might be used for some specific cases, but they do not have any comprehensive arguments towards the international system and global affairs.

§ 2.5 The Application of the Neorealist Theory into the Study

The Neorealist Theory is the most applicable theory for the analysis of the complex relations between Turkey and Russia which can be described as the politics of frenemies, a very common type of diplomacy between a great power and a non-great power. The study will be focusing on the competition between two rival great powers, the United States and Russia, in the global events since 2000, while analyzing Turkey's position between these two great powers.

The competition for power in international relations is very real. After the end of the Cold War, the states are aggressively competing with each other. Especially, the proxy war in Syria shows how the great powers are still competing with each other in order to be the sole power to influence the Middle East. In this competition, Turkey also acts according to her own interests by following a foreign policy based on the balance of power between the two great powers. Whenever there is a threat that comes from the Soviet Union/Russian Federation, Turkey improves her relations with the United States. If this threat comes from the United States, the Turkish-Russian relations gain momentum. This behavior pattern is one of the characteristics of the history of the Turkish-Russian relations, and it can still be seen in the relations between the two countries.

3

The Historical Background of the Turkish-Russian Relations

Before the 20th Century, the Turkish-Russian relations were based on rivalry. The Russian Tsardom was not a strong state during the rise of the Ottoman Empire.[1] However, after the defeat in the Battle of Vienna in 1683, the Ottoman Empire lost its old power and the Russian Empire started to push against the Ottomans.[2] By the 18th Century, the Russian Empire became a great power in Europe.[3] The Russian Tsars aimed to capture Istanbul and claimed to be the sole protectors of Orthodox Christian population in the Balkans.[4] The two empires battled for a long time to take control of the Black Sea.[5] The Russian Empire made an important progress through the annexation of the Northern Black Sea countries and this annexation frightened the Western powers.[6] The response of the West to the growing Russian threat in the East was aiding the Ottoman Empire against the Russian aggression in the Crimean War between 1854 and 1856.[7] The British and French support for the Ottomans in the Crimean War was a turning point for the balance of power between the Russian and Ottoman Empires.[8] After facing a series of invasions from both

1 Kemal Kirişçi and Pavel K. Baev, "An ambiguous partnership: The serpentine trajectory of Turkish-Russian relations in the era of Erdoğan and Putin," *The Brookings Institute,* 2017, 2. https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/pavel-and-kirisci-turkey-and-russia.pdf.

2 Ibid.

3 Halil İnalcık, *The Ottoman Empire and Europe* (İstanbul, Kronik Books, 2017), 135.

4 Ibid.

5 Ibid.

6 Ibid.

7 Kemal Kirişçi and Pavel K. Baev, "An ambiguous partnership: The serpentine trajectory of Turkish-Russian relations in the era of Erdoğan and Putin," 2.

8 Ibid.

the Russian and Habsburg Empires, the Ottoman Empire started to follow the policy of preserving the status quo with the great powers of the West.[9]

§ 3.1 The Turkish-Bolshevik Relations during the National Struggle

At the beginning of the 20th Century, the Turkish-Russian relations were not good, either. Just like in the past, the two empires battled again for the last time in the First World War. As a consequence, both of them experienced revolutions, namely the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia and the Kemalist Revolution in Turkey. Both of these revolutions changed the regime through the removal of monarchy and the establishment of one-party states. The newly established Soviet Russia had an interest in Turkey since March 1919. The Bolshevik leaders believed that in countries without a working class, a proletariat revolution could only be carried out after an anti-imperialist victory for national independence, and this victory could only be achieved by peasants and nationalist bourgeoisie.[10] The Communist International published a statement to the workers of the world on May 1, 1919, which called on the soldiers, workers and peasants of Turkey to end the revolution that they have started.[11] Two days after the Congress of Sivas, another statement was published on September 13, 1919, with the signatures of the People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs Georgy Chicherin and Neriman Nerimanov.[12] In this statement, pashas and viziers were described as traitors and the Istanbul government of Damat Ferit Paşa was also criticized.[13] In December 1919, Georgy Chicherin clearly expressed the Soviet support for Muslims and Turks "against European and American capitalism".[14] The Soviet Union supported the National Struggle in Turkey against Great Britain because of the British threat they had in common. During the National Struggle, the Soviet Union armed the Turkish nationalists and financially aided them.[15] Great Britain was accused by Soviet leaders for provoking the Russian Civil War.[16] Anatolia under the control of Great Britain was a threat for the Soviet Russia because she was trying to reach Iran, Afghanistan and

9 Halil İnalcık, *The Ottoman Empire and Europe,* 135.

10 Fahir Armaoğlu, *20. Yüzyıl Siyasi Tarihi (1914-1995)* (İstanbul, Kronik Kitap, 2018), 233-234.

11 Fahir Armaoğlu, *20. Yüzyıl Siyasi Tarihi (1914-1995),* 234.

12 Fahir Armaoğlu, *20. Yüzyıl Siyasi Tarihi (1914-1995),* 234-235.

13 Ibid.

14 Ibid.

15 Ateş Uslu and E. Atilla Aytekin, "Burjuva Devriminin ve Savaşın Belirsiz Sınırlarında," in *Osmanlı'dan Günümüze Türkiye'de Siyasal Hayat,* eds. Gökhan Atılgan, Cenk Saraçoğlu and Ateş Uslu (İstanbul, Yordam Kitap, 2016), 188.

16 Fahir Armaoğlu, *20. Yüzyıl Siyasi Tarihi (1914-1995),* 235.

Caucasia through controlling Istanbul and the Turkish Straits.[17] A Cordon Sanitaire was established by Great Britain around Soviet Russia by cooperating with the governments of Armenia, Georgia and Azerbaijan.[18] Hence, Turkey was a vital ally for Soviet Russia to break this Cordon Sanitaire of Great Britain.[19]

The possibility of Turkish-Soviet alliance in the East during this process alarmed Great Britain.[20] In May 1920 the British Prime Minister, David Lloyd George, tried to convince the Soviet leaders against aiding the Turkish nationalist leaders in Anatolia.[21] Nevertheless, the Soviet leaders refused to accept George's deal.[22] In May 1919, Mustafa Kemal started to seek for Bolshevik aid, hence he supported the Bolshevik progress in Transcaucasia.[23] In April 1920, Azerbaijan was taken by Bolsheviks with Turkish support.[24] The importance of Bolshevik military and financial aid for the National Struggle was vital. Therefore, Bekir Sami Bey tried to reach the Bolshevik leaders.[25] The Bolsheviks demanded Turkish leaders to leave Van and Bitlis to Armenians.[26] However, this was a demand that could not be accepted by the Turkish nationalist leaders of the National Struggle.[27] In September 1920, the Ankara government decided to invade Armenia in order to stop her claims of land.[28] Under the leadership of Kazım Karabekir, the Armenian forces were defeated, and the Treaty of Alexandropol was signed by December 2, 1920, in which Armenia agreed to accept the existing borders with Turkey.[29] Nevertheless, this agreement was ignored by the Soviet Union after she invaded Armenia.[30] By late 1920, hopes of the Soviet leaders for a Bolshevik-style revolution in Anatolia were dashed due to the harsh suppression of the Kemalist regime against Mustafa Suphi and the Green Army led by Çerkes Ethem.[31]

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17 Ibid.

18 Faruk Sönmezoğlu, *İki Savaş Sırası ve Arasında Türk Dış Politikası* (İstanbul, Der Yayınları, 2015), 112.

19 Ibid.

20 Fahir Armaoğlu, *20. Yüzyıl Siyasi Tarihi (1914-1995),* 235.

21 Ibid.

22 Ibid.

23 William Hale, *Turkish Foreign Policy since 1774* (New York, Routledge, 2013), 35-36.

24 Ibid.

25 Erik Jan Zürcher, *Modernleşen Türkiye Tarihi* (İstanbul, İletişim Yayınları, 2015), 229.

26 Ibid.

27 Ibid.

28 William Hale, *Turkish Foreign Policy since 1774,* 36.

29 Ibid.

30 Ibid.

31 Erel Tellal, "Sovyetlerle İlişkiler," in *Türk Dış Politikası: Kurtuluş Savaşından Bugüne Olgular, Belgeler, Yorumlar Cilt I: 1919-1980* ed. Baskın Oran (İstanbul, İletişim Yayınları, 2018), 164.

On April 26, 1920, Mustafa Kemal sent a letter to Lenin in which he demanded to establish diplomatic relations between the two states, recognize The National Oath (Misak-ı Milli) of Turkey and create "a military and political alliance against the imperialism of foreign powers".[32] On June 3, 1920, the Soviet government responded to this letter by declaring that it recognized the National Oath of Turkey and the Turkish-Soviet relations had officially started.[33] On November 29, 1920, Mustafa Kemal sent a telegraph to the People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs, Georgy Chicherin, and repeated his demand to establish an alliance "against the Western imperialists".[34] However, this attempt of the Turkish government to establish a Turkish-Soviet alliance ultimately failed.[35]

Although all of the demands of anti-Western pact of Atatürk was rejected by the Soviet Union, the Treaty of Friendship and Brotherhood was signed on March 16, 1921 in Moscow by Ali Fuat, Rıza Nur and Yusuf Kemal from the Turkish side and Georgy Chicherin with Celal Korkmazov from the Soviet side.[36] The treaty did not establish an alliance between Ankara and Moscow but at least enabled both parties to officially recognize each other.[37] With this treaty, the cities of Kars and Ardahan were confirmed as Turkish cities.[38] Also, the treaty ensured Soviet Russia's financial aid to Turkey.[39] Later, similar friendship treaties were signed with Azerbaijani, Armenian and Georgian Soviet Socialist Republics in Kars in October 1921, and with Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic in Ankara on January 2, 1922.[40] With the Treaty of Kars, Kars and Ardahan were recognized as Turkey's lands, but Batum was recognized as an autonomous region of Georgia.[41] Nonetheless, Turkey gained some important privileges in the port of Batum.[42]

Mustafa Kemal Atatürk was trying to gain Soviet support during the National Struggle, despite his harsh anti-Communist stance because the Soviet help was the only possible support that could be received against the three major great powers of Western Europe.[43] Both sides were fol-

32 Fahir Armaoğlu, *Türk Dış Politikası Tarihi* (İstanbul, Kronik Kitap, 2018), 96.

33 Fahir Armaoğlu, *20. Yüzyıl Siyasi Tarihi (1914-1995),* 236.

34 Fahir Armaoğlu, *20. Yüzyıl Siyasi Tarihi (1914-1995),* 237.

35 Fahir Armaoğlu, *20. Yüzyıl Siyasi Tarihi (1914-1995),* 238.

36 Ali Fuat Cebesoy, *Moskova Hatıraları: Milli Mücadele ve Bolşevik Rusya* (İstanbul, Temel Yayınları, 2002), 153.

37 Vefa Kurban, *Russian-Turkish Relations from the First World War to the Present* (Newcastle upon Tyne, Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2017), 24-26

38 Ibid.

39 Vefa Kurban, *Russian-Turkish Relations from the First World War to the Present*, 28.

40 Vefa Kurban, *Russian-Turkish Relations from the First World War to the Present,* 27.

41 Hüner Tuncer, *Atatürkçü Dış Politika* (İstanbul, Kaynak Yayınları, 2008), 46.

42 Ibid.

43 Fahir Armaoğlu, *Türk Dış Politikası Tarihi,* 36-37.

lowing the "enemy of my enemy is my friend" policy, hence they quickly recognized each other.[44] The existence of the Soviet Union was making the Eastern side of Turkey safe while Turkish leaders were battling with the European powers in the Western side of Turkey.[45] The Ankara government was using the Soviet side also as an advantage against the West in diplomacy.[46] Nevertheless, the reason why the Soviet government did not get closer to the Ankara government was the USSR's desire to establish a trade agreement with Great Britain.[47] When this trade agreement between the two states was complete, the Soviet aid for the National Struggle of Turkey increased.[48] However, these two countries did not become allies in the years to come, due to the hard anti-Communist stance of the Ankara government and its close relations with the West.[49]

§ 3.2 The Turkish-Soviet Relations during the Interwar Period and the Second World War

The successor of Vladimir Ilyich Lenin, Josif Vissarionovich Stalin, came to power in 1924, and the era of Stalinism began. The Soviet Union under Josif Stalin considered Turkey as a country that could turn into a bridge for the enemies of the Soviet Union.[50] Therefore, Stalin wanted to see a regime change in Turkey to prove her royalty.[51] It did not happen. However, Turkey did not end her relations with the Soviet Union, either because Turkey needed the Soviet Union to balance the power against the Western states. Therefore, both the Turkish President Mustafa Kemal Atatürk and the Turkish Prime Minister İsmet İnönü advised journalist Falih Rıfkı Atay to publish pro-USSR articles in the newspaper *Ulus*.[52]

Despite Soviet Union's suspicion towards Turkey, the Treaty of Non-Aggression and Neutrality was signed between the two countries on December 17, 1925.[53] The treaty promised that both par-

44 Erel Tellal, "Sovyetlerle İlişkiler," 161.

45 Ibid.

46 Ibid.

47 Fahir Armaoğlu, *20. Yüzyıl Siyasi Tarihi (1914-1995),* 236-238.

48 Ibid.

49 Fahir Armaoğlu, *20. Yüzyıl Siyasi Tarihi (1914-1995),* 239-241.

50 Nur Bilge Criss, "Turkey's Foreign Policies During the Interwar Period (1923-1939)," in *Turkish Foreign Policy: International Relations, Legality and Global Reach,* eds. Pınar Gözen Ercan (Cham, Palgrave Macmillan, 2018), 27.

51 Ibid.

52 Ibid.

53 Vefa Kurban, *Russian-Turkish Relations from the First World War to the Present,* 42-43.

ties would be neutral if the other state was attacked.[54] Later in 1927, the trade relations improved between Turkey and the USSR with another treaty that was signed by both parties on March 11, 1925.[55] On October, 1931, the Treaty of Non-Aggression and Neutrality of 1925 was extended for five more years and on November 7, 1935, the treaty was extended once more for ten years.[56]

The Turkish government in the 1920s was debating the Mosul Question with the Western powers in the League of Nations.[57] The League of Nations was established as an international organization after the First World War, but it mostly served the interests of Great Britain and France.[58] The Council of the League decided to establish a commission for inquiry.[59] Ultimately, this commission voted unanimously in favor of Iraq for Mosul, which was a decision that angered the Turkish government.[60] As a response to this, Turkey got closer to the Soviet Union and signed the Treaty of Non-Aggression and Neutrality.[61] After Turkey's move, the League of Nations and all of the Western powers feared the possibility of a Turkish aggression through ignoring the decision of the Council of the League.[62] However, Turkey was already in a war exhaustion; therefore, the Turkish government did not end the negotiations with the West on the Mosul Question.[63] On June 5, 1926, a treaty was signed in Ankara on which Turkey officially accepted the decision of the League of Nations in return for receiving 10% of Mosul's oil profits for 25 years.[64]

When the Mosul Question was solved, Great Britain put pressure on Turkey to join the League of Nations in order to shift Turkey from the revisionist side to the side of the supporters of the post-World War I status quo.[65] Nonetheless, Turkey refused to join the League by claiming that the consent of the Soviet Union was needed for Turkey to join, due to a protocol that was

54 Mehmet Gönlübol and Cem Sar, "1919-1938 Yılları Arasında Türk Dış Politikası," in *Olaylarla Türk Dış Politikası: Cilt I (1919-1973),* eds. Mehmet Gönlübol et al (Ankara, Alkım Kitabevi, 1989), 77-78.

55 Vefa Kurban, *Russian-Turkish Relations from the First World War to the Present,* 45.

56 Kamuran Gürün, *Türk-Sovyet İlişkileri: 1920-1953* (Ankara, Türk Tarih Kurumu Yayınları, 1991), 126-127.

57 William Hale, *Turkish Foreign Policy since 1774,* 43.

58 Mustafa Şener, "Burjuva Uygarlığının Peşinde," in *Osmanlı'dan Günümüze Türkiye'de Siyasal Hayat,* eds. Gökhan Atılgan, Cenk Saraçoğlu and Ateş Uslu (İstanbul, Yordam Kitap, 2016), 321.

59 William Hale, *Turkish Foreign Policy since 1774,* 43.

60 Ibid.

61 William Hale, *Turkish Foreign Policy since 1774,* 42-45.

62 William Hale, *Turkish Foreign Policy since 1774,* 43.

63 Ibid.

64 Ibid.

65 Mustafa Şener, "Burjuva Uygarlığının Peşinde," 321.

signed in 1929.[66] However, in 1932, the Turkish Prime Minister went to Moscow and received the consent of the Soviet Union to enable Turkey to join to the League of Nations.[67] On July 18, 1932, Turkey became a member state of the League of Nations with the approval of all 43 member states.[68] Nevertheless, Turkey did not allow this decision to end her relations with the USSR and declared that if the League of Nations turns into an alliance against the USSR, Turkey would leave the League, according to its Article 16.[69]

The Straits Issue was another problem in which the Turkish government had conflict of interest with the Western powers. The major demand of Turkey was to be permitted for re-militarization of the Turkish Straits since May 1934.[70] To solve this dispute, the Montreux Conference was held in 1936.[71] The Turkish demands for the straits were supported by the Soviet Union at the beginning.[72] However, more demands came from the Soviet side which disrupted the improvement of Turkish-Soviet relations.[73] The Soviet Union wanted to ban the right to passage of battleships of non-Black Sea states and demanded that the Soviet battleships should have the right to access the Mediterranean Sea.[74] The Conference ended on July 20, 1936 and the Montreux Convention was signed on August 15, 1936 which allowed Turkey to militarize the Turkish Straits.[75] With this convention, Turkey gained full control of the Straits.[76] However, almost all of the demands of the USSR were also accepted in this convention, which was not something that Turkey desired.[77]

The rise of Adolf Hitler in Germany and Benito Mussolini in Italy was the signal of a new world war that was on the way. The British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain was following an appeasement policy towards Hitler to prevent the war before it began, but every country knew

66 Haydar Çakmak, "1. Cumhurbaşkanı Mustafa Kemal Atatürk," in *Cumhurbaşkanları ve Dış Politika,* ed. Haydar Çakmak (Ankara, Kripto Kitaplar, 2016), 25.

67 Ibid.

68 Mustafa Şener, "Burjuva Uygarlığının Peşinde," 322.

69 Behlül Özkan, "1945 Türkiye-SSCB Krizi: Dış Politikada Kurucu Mitin İnşası," in *Kuşku Ile Komşuluk,* eds. Gencer Özcan, Evren Balta and Burç Beşgül (İstanbul, İletişim Yayınları, 2017), 58.

70 Feroz Ahmad, *İttihatçılıktan Kemalizme,* trans. Fatmagül Berktay (İstanbul, Kaynak Yayınları, 2016), 212.

71 Ibid.

72 Vefa Kurban, *Russian-Turkish Relations from the First World War to the Present,* 65.

73 Ibid.

74 Vefa Kurban, *Russian-Turkish Relations from the First World War to the Present,* 66.

75 Kudret Özersay, "Montreux Boğazlar Sözleşmesi," in *Türk Dış Politikası: Kurtuluş Savaşından Bugüne Olaylar, Belgeler, Yorumlar Cilt I: 1919-1980,* ed. Baskın Oran (İstanbul, İletişim Yayınları, 2018) 374.

76 Fahir Armaoğlu, *20. Yüzyıl Siyasi Tarihi (1914-1995),* 262.

77 Vefa Kurban, *Russian-Turkish Relations from the First World War to the Present,* 67.

that the Second World War was impending.[78] The Turkish foreign policy aimed at avoiding this world war.[79] After the death of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk on November 10, 1938, İsmet İnönü came to power and started follow a cautious foreign policy.[80] İnönü believed that the Soviet Union was a vital ally for the defense of the Balkans.[81] Great Britain and France were also needed as allies to secure the Mediterranean Sea.[82] Therefore, he tried to establish closer ties for a defensive alliance with both Great Britain and France without losing the established friendship with the Soviet Union.[83] In 1933, the People's Commisar for the Defense of the Soviet Union, Kliment Voroshilov, visited Turkey, and this visit was met with great enthusiasm by the Turkish government.[84] Nevertheless, neither the Soviet Union, nor Great Britain or France was interested in establishing a defense pact with Turkey.[85] The Turkish ambassador in London, Tevfik Rüştü Aras, tried to make a non-aggression treaty between Poland, Romania, the Soviet Union and Turkey against the common threat of a possible aggression from Nazi Germany, but neither Poland, nor Romania was in favor of cooperation against Nazi Germany.[86]

Besides the Hitler threat, the Mussolini threat was also very real for Turkey when Fascist Italy invaded Albania on April 7, 1939.[87] Turkey felt threatened by the Fascist Italy's expansionist ambitions on the Balkans.[88] The invasion of Albania forced Turkey to get closer to Western powers.[89] On May 12, 1939, the Anglo-Turkish declaration was issued which announced that the two countries would assist each other if one of them was attacked.[90] After this declaration, the Turkish government focused on expanding the alliance by including France and the Soviet Union.[91] On September 1, 1939, Turkey gained the approval of Great Britain and France to sign a defense treaty.

78 Mustafa Aydın, "İkinci Dünya Savaşı ve Türkiye 1939-1945," in *Türk Dış Politikası: Kurtuluş Savaşından Bugüne Olgular, Belgeler, Yorumlar,* ed. Baskın Oran (İstanbul, İletişim Yayınları, 2018), 408.

79 Vefa Kurban, *Russian-Turkish Relations from the First World War to the Present,* 67.

80 William Hale, *Turkish Foreign Policy since 1774,* 49

81 Ibid.

82 Ibid.

83 Ibid.

84 Feroz Ahmad, *Modern Türkiye'nin Oluşumu,* trans. Yavuz Alogan (İstanbul, Sarmal Yayınevi, 1995), 98.

85 William Hale, *Turkish Foreign Policy since 1774,* 49.

86 Ibid.

87 Mustafa Aydın, "İkinci Dünya Savaşı ve Türkiye 1939-1945," 415.

88 Ibid.

89 Sina Akşin, *Kısa Türkiye Tarihi* (İstanbul, Türkiye İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, 2017), 233.

90 William Hale, *Turkish Foreign Policy since 1774,* 50.

91 Ibid.

Nevertheless, the treaty could not be signed because of the unwillingness of the Soviet Union.[92] The Ribentropp-Molotov Pact, a non-aggression treaty which was signed by the Soviet Union and Nazi Germany on August 23, 1939, created a huge shock for Turkey.[93] From this date on, the Turkish-Soviet relations sank to the bottom.[94] The Turkish President, İsmet İnönü, urged Great Britain and France to establish a pact without involving the USSR.[95] Finally, The Anglo-French-Turkish Treaty of Mutual Assistance was signed by these three states on October 19, 1939 in Ankara, although the Soviet Union tried to deter Turkey from signing it.[96] According to this tripartite treaty, all of the parties had to join the war when the Mediterranean Sea or key countries like Romania and Greece would be under the threat of the Axis.[97] Also, the Turkish government added a special condition to the treaty, stating that Turkey would not have to declare war if it would force Turkey into a conflict with the Soviet Union.[98] This condition was especially added by Turkey because Turkey did not want to destroy her relations with the Soviet Union.[99] However, the USSR reacted to this treaty with very harsh statements. The Minister of Foreign Affairs of the USSR, Vyacheslav Molotov, accused Turkey for "giving up her cautious neutral policy", and Comintern's *Communist International* wrote that Great Britain and France wanted to establish an Eastern front against Nazi Germany by using Turkey as a "military base".[100]

Nevertheless, the conditions of this treaty were ignored by Turkey herself. When France was invaded by Nazi Germany in May 1940 and Fascist Italy also declared war against France, the war expanded into the Mediterranean Sea.[101] According to the treaty, Turkey had to join the war by siding with France or at least cut her diplomatic ties with Fascist Italy.[102] The allies demanded this from Turkey, but Turkey did not take any action against Italy.[103] Due to the Treaty of Non-Aggression and Neutrality in 1925, Turkey informed the Soviet Union about this situation.[104] The

92 William Hale, *Turkish Foreign Policy since 1774,* 51-52.

93 Vefa Kurban, *Russian-Turkish Relations from the First World War to the Present*, 69.

94 Mustafa Aydın, "İkinci Dünya Savaşı ve Türkiye 1939-1945," 422.

95 William Hale, *Turkish Foreign Policy since 1774,* 50.

96 Mustafa Aydın, "İkinci Dünya Savaşı ve Türkiye 1939-1945," 422-423.

97 Ibid.

98 Ahmet Şükrü Esmer and Oral Sander, "İkinci Dünya Savaşında Türk Dış Politikası," in *Olaylarla Türk Dış Politikası: Cilt I (1919-1973),* eds. Mehmet Gönlübol et al (Ankara, Alkım Kitabevi, 1989), 143.

99 Ibid.

100 Fahir Armaoğlu, "İkinci Dünya Harbinde Türkiye," *Ankara Üniversitesi SBF Dergisi,* 13, no. 2 (1958): 148.

101 Fahir Armaoğlu, "İkinci Dünya Harbinde Türkiye," 150.

102 Ibid.

103 Ibid.

104 Ibid.

Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Soviet Union, Molotov, sent a letter to Turkey which explicitly threatened her because the USSR feared a second allied front in the Balkans and the possibility of an attack to the Russian oil fields through the Black Sea.[105]

On May 29, 1940, Fevzi Çakmak reported to the Turkish Ministry of Defense that Thrace could not be defended because of some difficulties, including lack of motors.[106] Also, the fall of France in June 1940 zeroed out the possibility of Turkey in joining the Second World War because France was the only power that could be useful to stop the Italian fleet in the Mediterranean Sea.[107] Turkey also feared a possible Soviet aggression if she would declare war on the Axis powers.[108] It should also be noted that all of Nazi Germany, Fascist Italy and the Soviet Union had interests in repealing the Montreux Convention and controlling the passage through the Turkish Straits.[109] Hence, İnönü's Turkey decided to stay away from the Second World War at any cost. As the Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs, Şükrü Saraçoğlu clarified, Turkey would be "out of war", but she would never be "neutral".[110] Throughout the Second World War, the Turkish government tried to keep the status quo by creating different examples of balance of power among the USSR, Nazi Germany and Great Britain.

When Nazi Germany invaded Romania on October 7, 1940 and Fascist Italy invaded Greece on October 28, 1940, Turkey was technically expected to enter the Second World War due to both the Balkan Pact and The Anglo-French-Turkish Treaty of Mutual Assistance.[111] Nevertheless, Turkey did not enter the war, claiming that it could drive Turkey to a war with the USSR.[112] Even though, Great Britain was demanding Turkey to join the Second World War, she did not put a pressure on Turkey to help Greece.[113] The reason was Turkey's weakness and the potential cost of military help.[114]

"The Poland Syndrome" was alive in the year 1940 and it was widely believed that Turkey would be divided and shared between Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union.[115] On November 12, 1940 the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Soviet Union, Vyacheslav Molotov, visited Berlin and

105 Ibid.

106 William Hale, *Turkish Foreign Policy since 1774,* 58.

107 Ibid.

108 Mustafa Aydın, "İkinci Dünya Savaşı ve Türkiye 1939-1945," 425-426.

109 Vefa Kurban, *Russian-Turkish Relations from the First World War to the Present,* 75-76.

110 Mustafa Aydın, "İkinci Dünya Savaşı ve Türkiye 1939-1945," 431.

111 Mustafa Aydın, "İkinci Dünya Savaşı ve Türkiye 1939-1945," 429-430.

112 Ibid.

113 Mustafa Aydın, "İkinci Dünya Savaşı ve Türkiye 1939-1945," 430.

114 Ibid.

115 Mustafa Aydın, "İkinci Dünya Savaşı ve Türkiye 1939-1945," 437.

started meetings with Nazi Germany's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Joachim von Ribbentrop to discuss their plan to repeal the Montreux Convention.[116] Nevertheless, Nazi Germany did not want to share the Turkish Straits and cut all communications with the Soviet Union by choosing not to respond to the telegram on November 26, 1940.[117] Due to this downward relations between the USSR and Nazi Germany, Turkey felt relaxed as German Führer Adolf Hitler chose not to divide his army and decided to focus only on the USSR.[118] The threat of a possible Nazi aggression from the West was ended for Turkey. After this date, the Turkish government decided to follow a more moderate policy towards Hitler's Nazi Germany.[119]

Great Britain demanded the Soviet Union to end the Poland Syndrome and re-establish good relations with Turkey.[120] The USSR accepted this demand of Great Britain and signed a declaration on March 25, 1941 that approved the Treaty of Non-Aggression and Neutrality of 1925 was in effect.[121] But later, on June 18, 1941, Turkey also signed a non-aggression treaty with Nazi Germany to ensure the security of the Western parts of Turkey.[122] Turkey's action scared the West about the possibility of a change of heart on Turkey's side. Nevertheless, it would not be correct to say that Turkey shifted from the pro-Allies side to the pro-Axis side, as Yunus Nadi explained in his article on June 20, 1941 in *Cumhuriyet*.[123] In this article, Nadi answered the claims of shifting sides by saying "We (Turkey) are an ally of Great Britain and also a friend of Germany."[124]

When the war between Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union broke out, Turkey did not need to take a side and become involved in the war due the existing non-aggression treaties with both the Soviet Union and Nazi Germany. Thus, the Turkish government sent a diplomatic note to the Soviet Union's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and declared that Turkey would be neutral in this conflict.[125] Hitler's invasion of the Soviet Union came as a huge relief for Turkey because Turkey's lands were spared from a possible Nazi invasion as Hitler's armies focused solely on the USSR in the North.[126]

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116 Vefa Kurban, *Russian-Turkish Relations from the First World War to the Present,* 75.

117 Vefa Kurban, *Russian-Turkish Relations from the First World War to the Present,* 76.

118 Ibid.

119 Ibid.

120 Sina Akşin, *Kısa 20. Yüzyıl Tarihi* (İstanbul, Türkiye İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, 2017), 236.

121 Ibid.

122 Selim Deringil, *Denge Oyunu: İkinci Dünya Savaşı'nda Türkiye'nin Dış Politikası* (Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 2015), 144-148.

123 Selim Deringil, *Denge Oyunu: İkinci Dünya Savaşı'nda Türkiye'nin Dış Politikası,* 148.

124 "İngiltere ile müttefikiz, Almanya ile de dost…" Ibid.

125 Mustafa Aydın, "İkinci Dünya Savaşı ve Türkiye 1939-1945," 446.

126 Mustafa Aydın, "İkinci Dünya Savaşı ve Türkiye 1939-1945," 445.

With the Soviet victory of Stalingrad against Nazi Germany in November 1942, the Allies got the upper hand against the Axis powers.[127] To end the Second World War quickly, the Allies wanted Turkey to join the war in nearly every conference they organized during the war.[128] However, the Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs, Numan Menemencioğlu, told the British Secretary of State, Anthony Eden, that Turkey cannot enter the war due to lack of resources and that opening Turkish airspace to the Allied powers would be the same thing as entering the war, which would attract German air forces to bomb Turkey.[129] Even though Eden warned Turkey by saying that the Soviet Union would be a problem for Turkey after the war, Menemencioğlu refused to join the Second World War.[130] Menemencioğlu said that Turkey's participation in the Second World War would make Turkey an easy target for the Soviet Union after the war ended because of the war exhaustion that Turkey would have.[131] Later, this demand of the Western powers from Turkey was repeated by the British Prime Minister Winston Churchill on February 15, 1944.[132] The Turkish President İsmet İnönü proposed to open a new front in the Balkans on the condition that Turkey would be supported by the Allied troops and weapons.[133] Nonetheless, neither the American President Franklin Delano Roosevelt, nor the Soviet Leader Josif Stalin wanted to shift the military focus and resources for the Normandy Landings to the Balkans, and thus rejected Turkey's demand.[134]

During the course of the Second World War, both of the Allies and Axis powers asked Turkey to enter the war, but Turkey, which did not have a strong army, successfully preserved the status quo. When the Second World War was coming to an end, the United States and Great Britain demanded Turkey to cut financial and diplomatic ties with Nazi Germany.[135] Turkey cut off all ties with Nazi Germany and Japan and declared war on both of these countries on February 23, 1945 to be a founding member of the United Nations.[136] The Allies were victorious, thus Turkey had to focus on improving relations with Great Britain and the United States, but she also had to im-

127 Haydar Çakmak, "2. Cumhurbaşkanı İsmet İnönü," in *Cumhurbaşkanları ve Dış Politika,* ed. Haydar Çakmak (Ankara, Kripto Kitaplar, 2016), 34.

128 Haydar Çakmak, "2. Cumhurbaşkanı İsmet İnönü," 35

129 Ibid.

130 Ibid.

131 Ibid.

132 Ibid.

133 Ibid.

134 Ibid.

135 Mustafa Aydın, "İkinci Dünya Savaşı ve Türkiye 1939-1945," 468.

136 Ateş Uslu, "Hür Dünya'nın Saflarında," in *Osmanlı'dan Günümüze Türkiye'de Siyasal Hayat,* eds. Gökhan Atılgan, Cenk Saraçoğlu and Ateş Uslu (İstanbul, Yordam Kitap, 2016), 381-382.

prove her relations with the other victorious power of the Second World War, the Soviet Union.[137] However, on March 19, 1945, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the USSR, Vyacheslav Molotov, invited the Turkish ambassador Selim Sarper and declared that the USSR would not extend the Treaty of Non-Aggression and Neutrality of 1925 anymore.[138] The Turkish government knew that the Soviet Union was interested in the Turkish Straits and the cities of Kars and Ardahan.[139] This was the biggest shock for Turkey because now the Soviet Union was more powerful than ever and became an explicit threat for Turkish national security. Therefore, after the end of the Second World War, Turkey intensified her relations with the Western world against the Soviet threat. On April 25, 1945, Turkey attended the San Francisco Conference, the birthplace of the United Nations.[140] After this date, Turkey became more integrated with the Western world. However, Turkey's pragmatist foreign policy continued just as it was during the Interwar Period and the Second World War.

§ 3.3 The Turkish-Soviet Relations in the Early Cold War Years

The former Minister of Foreign Affairs of Turkey, Numan Menemencioğlu, believed that the Western powers would support Turkey against the Soviet Union even though Turkey did not enter the war on their side because they could not tolerate the Soviet control on the Turkish straits.[141] Turkey was a country of unique geopolitical importance for the United States; it was a kind of a bridge between three continents, but most importantly, Turkey was close to the Soviet Union and was an important Middle Eastern country.[142] Therefore, the United States could not lose Turkey to the Soviet Union**.** When the Cold War started, it turned out that the prediction of Menemencioğlu was quite right and the Western world supported Turkey as an important stronghold and a key ally against the USSR.[143]

The Turkish-Soviet relations were in bad shape since the meeting of Molotov with Sarper in 1945.[144] For Turkey, the Treaty of Non-Aggression and Neutrality of 1925 was vital for her national

137 Mustafa Aydın, "İkinci Dünya Savaşı ve Türkiye 1939-1945," 468.

138 Mustafa Aydın, "İkinci Dünya Savaşı ve Türkiye 1939-1945," 472.

139 Sina Akşin, *Kısa 20. Yüzyıl Tarihi,* 273.

140 Ibid.

141 William Hale, *Turkish Foreign Policy since 1774,* 77.

142 Oral Sander, *Türkiye'nin Dış Politikası* (İstanbul, İmge Kitabevi, 2006), 116-122.

143 William Hale, *Turkish Foreign Policy since 1774,* 77.

144 ".. ve onu zaten Lenin imzaladı." Erel Tellal, 2018a, "SSCB'yle İlişkiler," in *Türk Dış Politikası: Kurtuluş Savaşından Bugüne Olgular, Belgeler, Yorumlar Cilt I: 1919-1980,* ed. Baskın Oran, (İstanbul, İletişim Yayınları, 2018) 502.

security. Therefore the Turkish government wanted to form a new pact with the USSR on April 10, 1945.[145] However, the Soviet Union demanded Kars and Ardahan from Turkey, and Sarper reminded the Soviets that "the agreement was signed by Lenin himself".[146] This behavior of the Soviet Union alarmed the Turkish government about a possible Soviet aggression.[147] Molotov also demanded to change the Montreux Convention by claiming it was outdated.[148] Sarper said that it was an international issue and it could only be changed by the consents of the other states that signed the convention, and emphasized that a Soviet base in the Turkish Straits was out of question.[149]

In February 1945, during the Yalta Conference, Soviet Leader Josif Stalin expressed the Soviet Union's demand to renew the Montreux Convention by claiming it was outdated, and the American President, Franklin Delano Roosevelt found this argument "reasonable".[150] Turkey was all alone in defending Turkish control on the Turkish Straits through conserving the Montreux Convention.[151] On August 7, 1946, a diplomatic note was issued by the USSR, which accused Turkey of allowing the Axis powers to use the Straits during the Second World War.[152] In this note, the USSR made some demands that were clearly against the Turkish control of the Straits.[153] On August 22, 1946, Turkey responded to this diplomatic note with another diplomatic note by stating that she would not make a compromise regarding this issue under any circumstances.[154] Turkey also declared that this kind of a demand was against Turkish national security and that she would not hesitate to protect her national interests.[155] This was an explicit ultimatum from Turkey to the threat of the Soviet Union.[156]

Although the United States and the Soviet Union had a consensus on the revision of the Montreux Convention, the United States later decided to side with Turkey when the Soviet threat became more obvious. In the Potsdam Conference during the summer of 1945, the US President Harry S. Truman and the British Prime Minister Winston Churchill harshly reacted to the Soviet

145 Oral Sander, *Siyasi Tarih 1918-1914* (Ankara, İmge Kitabevi, 2016), 252.

146 Erel Tellal, 2018a, "SSCB'yle İlişkiler," 502.

147 Ibid.

148 Ibid.

149 Ibid.

150 Ibid.

151 Erel Tellal, 2018a, "SSCB'yle İlişkiler," 508-509.

152 Fahir Armaoğlu, *20. Yüzyıl Siyasi Tarihi (1914-1995),* 325-326.

153 Ibid.

154 Fahir Armaoğlu, *20. Yüzyıl Siyasi Tarihi (1914-1995),* 326.

155 Ibid.

156 Ibid.

demands about having military bases on the Turkish straits.[157] On March 12, 1947, the American President Harry S. Truman made his famous speech, "The Truman Doctrine", which was the declaration of the fact that the pact between the Soviet Union and the United States in the Second World War was over.[158] For the first time in history, an American president had declared that the world was divided between two ideological rivals.[159] In the same speech, President Truman emphasized the importance of Greece and Turkey for the Western world and demanded financial and military aid for both of these countries.[160] The possibility of Communism in Europe was a real threat, and Turkey with a geostrategic importance could not be left to the USSR.[161] If Turkey was lost to the Soviet Union, the oil sources in Iraq and Iran would also be lost and the trade routes in the Middle East would be cut.[162] Therefore, Turkey was defended by the United States against the threat of Communism and the USSR.

On May 23, 1947, a committee led by General Lunsford Oliver came to Ankara and announced that American aid was to be given to Turkey and demanded Turkey to modernize her weapons.[163] On July 12, 1947, Turkey accepted to sign the treaty and receive American aid.[164] Turkey quickly embraced the Truman Doctrine because she was facing the Soviet threat and needed foreign capital.[165] On September 1, 1947, the Turkish Grand National Assembly approved the military aid from the United States.[166]

On June 5, 1947 at Harvard University, the US Secretary of State, George Marshall hinted the upcoming Marshall Plan, the American financial aid to all of the European countries including the Soviet Union.[167] However, the USSR did not like the idea of the Marshall Plan as she perceived it as a continuation of the Truman Doctrine.[168] Turkey, which was a country with huge financial problems, embraced the Marshall Plan quickly with great enthusiasm.[169]

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157 Hüner Tuncer, *Türk Dış Politikası: 2. Cilt Cumhuriyet Dönemi (1920-2002)* (İstanbul, Kaynak Yayınları, 2017), 267.

158 Çağrı Erhan, 2018a, "ABD ve NATO'yla İlişkiler," in *Türk Dış Politikası: Kurtuluş Savaşından Bugüne Olgular, Belgeler, Yorumlar Cilt I: 1919-1980,* ed. Baskın Oran (İstanbul, İletişim Yayınları, 2018), 528.

159 Ibid.

160 Hüseyin Bağcı, *Türk Dış Politikasında 1950'li Yıllar* (Ankara, METU Press, 2001), 7-8.

161 Çağrı Erhan, 2018a, "ABD ve NATO'yla İlişkiler," 530-531.

162 Ibid.

163 Çağrı Erhan, 2018a, "ABD ve NATO'yla İlişkiler," 532.

164 Çağrı Erhan, 2018a, "ABD ve NATO'yla İlişkiler," 533.

165 Hüseyin Bağcı, *Türk Dış Politikasında 1950'li Yıllar,* 6-7.

166 Feroz Ahmad, *Demokrasi Sürecinde Türkiye,* trans. Ahmet Fethi (İstanbul, Hil Yayın, 2015), 402.

167 Çağrı Erhan, 2018a, "ABD ve NATO'yla İlişkiler," 538-539.

168 Çağrı Erhan, 2018a, "ABD ve NATO'yla İlişkiler," 539.

169 Çağrı Erhan, 2018a, "ABD ve NATO'yla İlişkiler," 539-542.

By the 1950s, Turkey became more and more integrated into the Western bloc. Due to the fear of the Soviet Union, Turkey wanted to join NATO since 1949.[170] The Menderes government of Turkey saw the Korean War as an opportunity to be a member state of NATO.[171] Turkey sent 25,000 soldiers into Korea.[172] This decision was taken by the Turkish government itself without the approval of the assembly, just to get closer to the West and become a member of NATO.[173] This decision of Turkey was praised by the United States and the process of Turkey's acceptance into NATO was accelerated.[174] On September 21, 1951, NATO Council advised the approval of the membership status of Greece and Turkey.[175] Ultimately, on February 18, 1952, Turkey officially entered NATO as a member state.[176] After NATO, Turkey also became members of other international organizations and military alliances such as the European Council, the Baghdad Pact, the Balkan Pact of 1954, the IMF, the World Bank and GATT.[177] Turkey's entrance into NATO did not mean just a military support for the defense of Turkey, but it also provided economic support from the West.[178] After the entrance of Turkey into NATO, the role of the Turkish military in shaping the foreign policy of Turkey increased.[179] As expected, the Soviet Union reacted negatively to Turkey's entrance into NATO.[180] The USSR sent a diplomatic note on November 3, 1951 to protest Turkey's membership and claimed that Turkey's entrance to NATO was an imperialist plan to attack the Soviet Union by establishing military bases on the Turkish lands.[181]

When the USSR saw that Turkey was getting closer to the Western bloc, the Soviet Union started to fix the already broken relations with Turkey during the 1950s. With the end of Stalin's Era in 1953, the Soviet Union tried to normalize her relations with Turkey by condemning Stalin

170 Çağrı Erhan, 2018a, "ABD ve NATO'yla İlişkiler," 543.

171 Gökhan Atılgan, "Tarımsal Kapitalizmin Sancağı Altında," in *Osmanlı'dan Günümüze Türkiye'de Siyasal Hayat,* eds. Gökhan Atılgan, Cenk Saraçoğlu and Ateş Uslu (İstanbul, Yordam Kitap, 2016), 503.

172 Yasemin Çelik, *Contemporary Turkish Foreign Policy* (Connecticut, Praeger, 1999), 37.

173 Türkkaya Ataöv, *NATO and Turkey* (Ankara, Sevinç Printing House, 1970), 109.

174 Yasemin Çelik, *Contemporary Turkish Foreign Policy,* 37.

175 Feroz Ahmad, *Demokrasi Sürecinde Türkiye,* 404-405.

176 Ibid.

177 Fatma Akkan Güngör, "3. Cumhurbaşkanı Celal Bayar," in *Cumhurbaşkanları ve Dış Politika,* ed. Haydar Çakmak. (Ankara, Kripto Kitaplar, 2016), 51.

178 Bruce R. Kuniholm, "Turkey and the West," *Foreign Affairs* 70, no. 2 (1991): 34.

179 Feroz Ahmad, "Military and Politics in Turkey," in *Turkey's Engagement with Modernity: Conflict and Change in the Twentieth Centur,* eds. Celia Kerslake, Kerem Öktem and Philip Robins (Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 95.

180 Feroz Ahmad, *Demokrasi Sürecinde Türkiye,* 405.

181 Ibid.

for ruining the Turkish-Soviet relations.[182] On May 30, 1953, the USSR sent a diplomatic note which declared that all of the demands of the Soviet Union since the end of the Second World War were dropped.[183] The USSR accused the Armenian and Georgian governments for their land claims and demands on the Turkish Straits.[184] The change in the foreign policy of the Soviet Union was a great relief for Turkey, but at the same time, it could be the reason for the end of American aids to Turkey.[185] Also, the Turkish government did not believe that the Soviet ambitions on the Turkish Straits were over.[186] Turkey responded the diplomatic note of the USSR with a diplomatic note in which the Turkish government welcomed the attempts of renormalization of the Turkish-Soviet relations but underlined that further steps had to be taken.[187] The Adnan Menderes government of Turkey did not want to make a compromise basically due to its anti-Communist stance towards the USSR.[188] According to Fuat Köprülü, this rapprochement attempts of the Soviet Union were fake.[189] Thus, the Turkish government continued to cooperate with the United States' Containment[190] policy against the Soviet Union.[191]

After the Suez Crisis[192], on January 5, 1957, the American President, Dwight Eisenhower explained his Eisenhower Doctrine, which expanded the previous Truman Doctrine to the Middle East.[193] The Turkish Prime Minister, Adnan Menderes supported this doctrine because he believed that the Eisenhower Doctrine would increase the importance of Turkey in the region, hence there would be more American military and financial aid to Turkey.[194] Therefore, the Turk-

182 Hüseyin Bağcı, *Türk Dış Politikasında 1950'li Yıllar,* 76.

183 Erel Tellal, 2018a, "SSCB'yle İlişkiler," 511-512.

184 Ibid.

185 Erel Tellal, 2018a, "SSCB'yle İlişkiler," 512.

186 Ibid.

187 Erel Tellal, 2018a, "SSCB'yle İlişkiler," 513.

188 Hüseyin Bağcı, *Türk Dış Politikasında 1950'li Yıllar,* 76.

189 Ibid.

190 The Containment Policy is the name of the US foreign policy in the Cold War which aimed to prevent the spread of Communism. The term of "Containment" belongs to the famous American diplomat, George F. Kennan.

191 Ali Balcı, *Türkiye Dış Politikası: İlkeler, Aktörler ve Uygulamalar* (İstanbul, ALFA Yayınları, 2017), 122.

192 The Suez Crisis is the name of the crisis when Egypt was invaded by Israeli forces that were supported by the Great Britain and France during the Second Arab-Israeli War due to the Egyptian nationalist leader Nasser's decision to nationalize the Suez Canal. After the pressure from both of the United States and the Soviet Union, The Great Britain, France and Israel were withdrawn from Egypt. This incident brought a diplomatic victory to the Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser and increased his popularity as a strong Arab nationalist figure while proving that either France or the Great Britain was not a great power anymore since the Cold War started.

193 Hüseyin Bağcı, *Türk Dış Politikasında 1950'li Yıllar,* 85.

194 Hüseyin Bağcı, *Türk Dış Politikasında 1950'li Yıllar,* 85-86.

ish Prime Minister Menderes stated in a press speech that he believed that the Eisenhower Doctrine would bring peace to the Middle East, which was a stance that was also supported by the opposition party of Turkey, CHP.[195] On February 24, 1955, the Baghdad Pact was established between Turkey and Iraq.[196] Later, Great Britain, Iran and Pakistan also joined this pact.[197] However, in the year 1954, Turkey faced a new threat in the Middle East when Syria experienced a coup d'état.[198]

In February 1954, the pro-Western President of Syria, Adib Shishakli was overthrown by a pro-Soviet opposition.[199] Since 1955, Syria was following a pro-Soviet foreign policy and became more aggressive against Turkey.[200] On August 12, 1957, the post-coup Syrian government claimed that Turkey and the United States were planning a coup d'état against the new Syrian President Shoukri Quwatly and tried to establish a pro-Western regime in Syria.[201] As a response to this, the United States declared the Syrian ambassador as persona non grata, and the Syrian Crisis of 1957 began.[202] The Turkish Prime Minister Adnan Menderes claimed that the Soviet planes and ships were carrying military officers, war supplies and warplanes into Syria.[203] The Eisenhower administration declared that it would send arms to all of the bordering countries of Syria. Nevertheless, the United States also underlined that there would be no military intervention into Syria.[204] When the Turkish Prime Minister Menderes realized that the Eisenhower administration really had no plans on making a military intervention, the Turkish government started to deploy its troops on the Turkish-Syrian Border.[205] On September 10, 1957, the USSR sent a letter to Turkey which

195 Hüseyin Bağcı, *Türk Dış Politikasında 1950'li Yıllar,* 86.

196 Armaoğlu, Fahir. *Türk-Amerikan İlişkileri 1919-1997.* İstanbul: Kronik Kitap, 2017, 170.

197 Gencer Özcan, "Ellili Yıllarda 'Dış' Politika," in *Türkiye'nin 1950'li Yılları,* ed. Mete Kaan Kaynar (İstanbul, İletişim Yayınları, 2015), 127.

198 Kaan Kutlu Ataç, "Soğuk Savaş Döneminde Türkiye-Rusya İlişkilerinde Suriye Boyutu: 1957 Suriye Krizi," in *Kuşku Ile Komşuluk,* eds. Gencer Özcan, Evren Balta and Burç Beşgül (İstanbul, İletişim Yayınları, 2017), 79-80.

199 Ahmet Ayhan Koyuncu, *Kuruluşundan Arap Baharı'na Suriye: Milliyetçilik ve Ulus İnşası* (İstanbul: Sude Yayınları, 2018), 104.

200 Feroz Ahmad, *Demokrasi Sürecinde Türkiye,* 410.

201 Douglas Little, "Cold War and Covert Action: The United States and Syria, 1945-1958," *Middle East Journal* 44, no. 1 (Spring 1990): 51.

202 Reem Abou-El-Fadl, "Turkey's Cold War Alliance: Nation-building and the Utility of the 1957 Syrian Crisis," in *Turkey-Syria Relations: Between Enmity and Amity,* eds. Raymond Hinnebusch and Özlem Tür (London, Ashgate, 2013), 47.

203 Kaan Kutlu Ataç, "Soğuk Savaş Döneminde Türkiye-Rusya İlişkilerinde Suriye Boyutu: 1957 Suriye Krizi," 80.

204 Atay Akdevelioğlu and Ömer Kürkçüoğlu, "Orta Doğu'yla İlişkiler," in *Türk Dış Politikası: Kurtuluş Savaşından Bugüne Olgular, Belgeler, Yorumlar Cilt I: 1919-1980,* ed. Baskın Oran (İstanbul, İletişim Yayınları, 2018), 630.

205 Ibid.

shared the Soviet Union's concerns about peace in the Middle East and threatened Turkey by stating that a war between Syria and Turkey would lead to huge disasters.[206] The Menderes government of Turkey denied the claims and said this reaction from the Soviet Union for the defense of Syria was shocking.[207] Later, on October 8, 1957, the Syrian government itself sent a diplomatic note to Turkey and accused the Turkish government for deploying soldiers on the border and threatening the Syrian airspace.[208] During this crisis, the United States openly declared her support for Turkey and accused Syria and the USSR, as the countries that want to break the peace in the Middle East.[209] Later, the USSR accused both Turkey and the US of following aggressive foreign policies in the Middle East.[210]

On October 22, 1957, the United Nations solved the Syrian Crisis of 1957 by demanding both Turkey and Syria to settle the problem through diplomacy.[211] In the late-October, the Soviet-Turkish relations were stabilized and on October 30, 1957, the USSR sent a letter to the Turkish Prime Minister Adnan Menderes with a soft tone.[212] Ultimately, Syria united with Egypt, a country that was really a neutralist rather than a pro-Soviet country like Syria, and established the United Arab Republic in 1958.[213] This unification completely put an end to the Turkish fear of having a pro-Soviet country at the border. Therefore, the Turkish government quickly recognized the United Arab Republic.[214] The Syrian Crisis of 1957 was an opportunity for the Menderes government because with this incident, the American aid to Turkey continued and the Menderes government overcame its financial struggles.[215]

On July 14, 1958, another crisis occurred in the Middle East.[216] Iraq, which was an ally of Turkey in the Baghdad Pact, was also overthrown by a pro-Soviet coup d'état led by General Kasim.[217] This coup in Iraq brought an end to the Baghdad Pact.[218] On July 16, 1958, the Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev warned Turkey against any potential intervention by the Menderes government into

206 Atay Akdevelioğlu and Ömer Kürkçüoğlu, "Orta Doğu'yla İlişkiler," 630-631.
207 Atay Akdevelioğlu and Ömer Kürkçüoğlu, "Orta Doğu'yla İlişkiler," 631.
208 Ibid.
209 Ibid.
210 Ibid.
211 Ibid.
212 Ibid.
213 Ibid.
214 Ibid.
215 Kaan Kutlu Ataç, "Soğuk Savaş Döneminde Türkiye-Rusya İlişkilerinde Suriye Boyutu: 1957 Suriye Krizi," 106.
216 Armaoğlu, Fahir. *Türk-Amerikan İlişkileri 1919-1997*. İstanbul: Kronik Kitap, 2017, 172.
217 Ibid.
218 Ibid.

Iraq.[219] Turkey gave a moderate response to the USSR on July 22, 1958.[220] On July 24, 1958, the USSR repeated her warning as a result of the Turkish Foreign Minister Fatih Rüştü Zorlu's interview for *Daily Mail*, which was perceived as a signal for intervention as the Turkish minority in Iraq was mentioned.[221] No military conflict was experienced between the new Iraqi government and the Menderes government of Turkey, mainly because of the inactivity of the United States against the Soviet Union's threat.[222]

In December 1957, deployment of Jupiter missiles to Turkey was one of the discussed topics in the Western bloc.[223] The Soviet Union sent four letters in the year 1957 and 1958 to the Turkish Prime Minister Adnan Menderes.[224] In those letters, the Soviet Union warned Turkey against accepting the deployment of nuclear missiles, otherwise she would be a target for a counter attack in the case of war.[225] Menderes replied to the fourth letter on February 28, 1958, stating that the deployment of nuclear missiles in Turkey was only for the purpose of self-defense.[226] Nonetheless, the Soviet Union was not convinced by Turkey's reply. The USSR issued a diplomatic note on December 13, 1958, which stated that Turkey as a nuclear base of NATO was acting completely against the USSR's interests and condemned the agreement for the deployment of nuclear missiles between Turkey and the United States.[227] Later, on March 25, 1958, the USSR claimed that this nuclear missile deployment was a part of the Eisenhower Doctrine and the Turkish-Soviet relations were severely damaged.[228] A secret agreement regarding the deployment of Jupiter missiles in Turkey was signed on October 25, 1959 in Paris.[229] The Turkish government of Adnan Menderes accepted the deployment of 15 Jupiter missiles.[230] According to this agreement, these missiles could only be fired with the consents of the American and Turkish governments.[231]

The U-2 Incident in 1960 was a short-term crisis between Turkey and the Soviet Union, like the Jupiter missiles crisis in the late 1950s. In May 1960, the Soviet Union shot down a U-2 Ameri-

219 Erel Tellal, 2018a, "SSCB'yle İlişkiler," 515.
220 Ibid.
221 Ibid.
222 Ibid.
223 Erel Tellal, 2018a, "SSCB'yle İlişkiler," 516.
224 Ibid.
225 Ibid.
226 Ibid.
227 Ibid.
228 Ibid.
229 Nasuh Uslu, *Türk-Amerikan İlişkileri* (Ankara, 21. Yüzyıl Yayınları, 2000), 137-138.
230 Ibid.
231 Hüner Tuncer, *27 Mayıs'tan 12 Mart'a Türk Dış Politikası* (İstanbul, Kaynak Yayınları, 2014), 70.

can spy plane, which was believed to have taken off from İncirlik airbase in Adana, Turkey. Thus, Turkey became a part of this crisis.[232] The Soviet Union harshly criticized these U-2 operations of the United States, but she also criticized the countries that allowed these operations, including Turkey.[233] On May 5, 1960, the Soviet Leader Nikita Khrushchev explicitly threatened Turkey.[234] The Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs published a statement on May 8, 1960 by saying that Turkey could not be blamed for this incident.[235] According to this statement, there was no American plane that entered the Soviet airspace with the approval of the Turkish government.[236] Turkey said that the U-2 plane had taken off from Pakistan, not Turkey.[237] The Eisenhower administration of the United States stepped back to end this crisis by saying "Nobody wants a new Pearl Harbour" in a press speech on May 11, 1960.[238]

In October 1962, as a response to the U-2 Incident, the Soviet Union secretly deployed nuclear missiles in Cuba which is 90 miles away from Florida, the United States.[239] The US President Kennedy reacted harshly against this move of the Soviet Union.[240] This action of the Soviet Union was nothing but a bluff by Nikita Khrushchev.[241] However, it was the first time in human history that the world was on the edge of a nuclear warfare.[242] On October 26, 1962, the Soviet Leader Nikita Khrushchev declared in his letter that he would withdraw the nuclear missiles from Cuba if the United States would agree to lift the blockade on the island and not attack Cuba.[243] Nonetheless, Khrushchev later sent a second letter to the American President Kennedy on October 27, which said that he would withdraw the nuclear missiles from Cuba if the Kennedy administration would do the same for the Jupiter missiles in Turkey.[244] This proposal of Khrushchev was initially rejected by the Kennedy administration because it would mean that the United States made a compromise when faced with a threat by the Soviet Union, which could lead to more demands

232 Çağrı Erhan, 2018a, "ABD ve NATO'yla İlişkiler," 573.
233 Ibid.
234 Çağrı Erhan, 2018a, "ABD ve NATO'yla İlişkiler," 574.
235 Ibid.
236 Ibid.
237 Fahir Armaoğlu, *20. Yüzyıl Siyasi Tarihi (1914-1995),* 459.
238 "Kimse yeni bir Pearl Harbour istemiyor." Ibid.
239 Ibid.
240 Ibid.
241 Paul Bushkovitch, *Rusya'nın Kısa Tarihi,* trans. Mehmet Doğan (İstanbul, Boğaziçi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2016), 386.
242 Fahir Armaoğlu, *20. Yüzyıl Siyasi Tarihi (1914-1995),* 460.
243 William Hale, *Turkish Foreign Policy since 1774,* 99.
244 William Hale, *Turkish Foreign Policy since 1774,* 99-100.

from the Soviet Union.[245] Accepting this demand would also mean a NATO ally like Turkey was let down just to appease the enemy.[246] But in the end, both sides agreed to secretly withdraw their nuclear missiles and on November 20, 1962, the United States ended the blockade on Cuba.[247] However, seeing the United States could make decisions that endanger the Turkish national security created suspicions about the US support for Turkey against the threat of the USSR.[248] Using Turkey as a tool for US interests by making a deal without her approval, destroyed the United States' "friend and ally" image among the Turkish ruling elites.[249]

§ 3.4 The Cyprus Question and the Turkish Rapprochement with the Soviet Union in the 1960s

The early 1960s were the years of normalization with the efforts of the Soviet Union's ambassador in Ankara, Rizhov.[250] After the coup d'état of 1960, Fahri Korutürk was appointed as the first Turkish ambassador to Moscow.[251] From 1961 to 1963, various technical agreements were made between the Soviet Union and Turkey.[252] When the Jupiter missiles in Turkey were removed in 1963, the Turkish-Soviet relations were slightly improved.[253] In 1963, a high-ranking Turkish parliamentary delegation made an official visit to the Soviet Union, which was the first official visit since 1932.[254] This official visit was followed by the Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs, Feridun Cemal Erkin's visit in 1964.[255]

The Cyprus Question led to the collapse of American-Turkish relations in 1964. The so-called Enosis plan, which was an effort to unite the Island of Cyprus with Greece, was creating tension

245 William Hale, *Turkish Foreign Policy since 1774,* 100.

246 Ibid.

247 Çağrı Erhan, 2018b, "ABD ve NATO'yla İlişkiler," in *Türk Dış Politikası: Kurtuluş Savaşından Bugüne Olgular, Belgeler, Yorumlar Cilt I: 1919-1980,* ed. Baskın Oran (İstanbul, İletişim Yayınları, 2018), 682-684.

248 Gökhan Atılgan, "Sanayi Kapitalizminin Şafağında," in *Osmanlı'dan Günümüze Türkiye'de Siyasal Hayat,* eds. Gökhan Atılgan, Cenk Saraçoğlu and Ateş Uslu (İstanbul, Yordam Kitap, 2016), 646.

249 Ibid.

250 Erel Tellal, 2018b, "SSCB'yle İlişkiler," in *Türk Dış Politikası: Kurtuluş Savaşından Bugüne Olgular, Belgeler, Yorumlar Cilt I: 1919-1980,* ed. Baskın Oran (İstanbul, İletişim Yayınları, 2018), 773.

251 Gökhan Atılgan, "Sanayi Kapitalizminin Şafağında," 650.

252 Erel Tellal, 2018b, "SSCB'yle İlişkiler," 774.

253 William Hale, *Turkish Foreign Policy since 1774,* 101.

254 Ibid.

255 Erel Tellal, 2018b, "SSCB'yle İlişkiler," 775.

between Turks and Greeks on the island.[256] On December 21, 1963, the incident known as "Bloody Christmas" had occurred, where the wife and three kids of a Turkish military officer were tragically killed in a bathtub while 109 evacuated Turkish villages were destroyed and more than 2000 Turkish houses were demolished.[257] After Bloody Christmas, the Turkish President, Cemal Gürsel wrote a letter to the President of the United States, Lyndon Baines Johnson on December 25, 1963, asking him to pressure the Cypriot Greeks to stop the massacre in Cyprus.[258] Although Turkey could not gain US support on the Cyprus issue, on March 13, 1964 the Turkish government of İsmet İnönü sent a letter to the Cypriot President Makarios which clearly said that the Turkish government would defend the Cypriot Turks' rights if attacks against them would not stop.[259] İnönü's letter was a clear message for the possibility of a Turkish military intervention.[260] On March 16, 1964, the Turkish Grand National Assembly gave the İnönü government right to conduct a military intervention to Cyprus if it would be necessary.[261]

The Johnson administration reacted harshly to this action Turkey had taken. The letter that the US President Johnson sent on June 5, 1964 was completely disappointing and disrespectful for Turkey.[262] "The Johnson Letter" was written with harsh words and explicit threats to the Turkish Prime Minister İsmet İnönü, which clearly stated that Turkey would not be allowed to make any kind of military intervention into Cyprus and if Turkey did so, then she would be alone in the face of the Soviet threat.[263] This response of President Johnson showed that the United States gave military aid to Turkey only for American interests.[264] The Turkish politicians perceived this letter as the end of the US support for Turkey, in favor of Greece.[265] In a meeting with cabinet members, the Turkish Prime Minister İsmet İnönü said, "Our friends and our enemies are united against us."[266]

256 Fahir Armaoğlu, *20. Yüzyıl Siyasi Tarihi (1914-1995),* 590-591.

257 Ulvi Keser, "Bloody Christmas of 1963 in Cyprus in the Light of American Documents," *Journal of Modern Turkish History Studies* 13, no. 26 (Spring, 2013): 265-266.

258 Çağrı Erhan, 2018b, "ABD ve NATO'yla İlişkiler," 685.

259 Ibid.

260 Ibid.

261 Ibid.

262 Fahir Armaoğlu, *20. Yüzyıl Siyasi Tarihi (1914-1995),* 593.

263 Fahir Armaoğlu, *20. Yüzyıl Siyasi Tarihi (1914-1995),* 593-594.

264 Kemal Çiftçi, *Türk Dış Politikası: Tarih, Kimlik ve Eleştirel Kuram Bağlamında* (Ankara, Siyasal Kitabevi, 2010), 280.

265 Nasuh Uslu, *Türk Amerikan İlişkilerinde Kıbrıs* (Ankara, 21. Yüzyıl Yayınları, 2000), 101.

266 "dostlarımız ve düşmanlarımız bize karşı el ele verdiler." Nasuh Uslu, *Türk Amerikan İlişkilerinde Kıbrıs,* 102.

On August 6, 1964, the Cypriot Greek army led by Grivas got involved in an armed conflict with Cypriot Turks in Erenköy.[267] After this conflict, the Turkish Cypriots in Erenköy were surrounded by Cypriot Greek forces and a blockade started.[268] The Turkish government demanded the United Nations and NATO to force Cyprus to end the blockade on August 7, 1964.[269] When Turkey's demands were not met, the Turkish government attacked on August 8 and 9 with airstrikes to end the blockade and the conflict in Erenköy.[270] 33 Cypriot Greeks were killed and 230 were injured during these airstrikes.[271]

The Turkish Prime Minister İsmet İnönü replied to the Johnson Letter, stating that the response of the US President was disappointing.[272] İnönü also said that a military intervention to Cyprus is justified, due to the rising oppression on the Cypriot Turks and the illegal activities of the Cypriot Greeks.[273] The Johnson Letter did not just destroy the American-Turkish relations, but also made Turkey to start questioning her NATO membership.[274] After the Johnson Letter, Turkey started to get closer to the Soviet Union.[275] Since 1967, Turkey started to accept loans from the USSR as an alternative to the American support.[276]

In 1966, Cypriot President Makarios tried to purchase arms from Czechoslovakia.[277] This action of Makarios attracted the reactions of Turkey and the United States, but Greece acted as a mediator to stop this process immediately.[278] The actual incident that shocked Turkey came on November 15, 1967, when Cypriot Greek forces attacked Cypriot Turkish villages of Geçitkale and Boğaziçi, killing 22 people and injuring 9.[279] The incident led the Turkish government of Süleyman Demirel to declare the decision of military intervention into the island of Cyprus.[280] Turkish fighter jets flew over the island and the Turkish government issued a diplomatic note to Greece on

267 Melek Fırat, "Yunanistan'la İlişkiler," in *Türk Dış Politikası: Kurtuluş Savaşından Bugüne Olgular, Belgeler, Yorumlar Cilt I: 1919-1980,* ed. Baskın Oran (İstanbul, İletişim Yayınları, 2018), 729.

268 Ibid

269 Ibid.

270 Ibid.

271 Ibid.

272 Fahir Armaoğlu, *20. Yüzyıl Siyasi Tarihi (1914-1995),* 594-595.

273 Ibid.

274 Çağrı Erhan, 2018b, "ABD ve NATO'yla İlişkiler", 689.

275 Hüner Tuncer, *İki Darbe Arasında Türk Dış Politikası 1971-1980* (İstanbul, Kaynak Yayınları, 2014), 65.

276 Ibid.

277 Melek Fırat, "Yunanistan'la İlişkiler," 735.

278 Ibid.

279 Melek Fırat, "Yunanistan'la İlişkiler," 737.

280 Ibid.

December 17, which demanded the withdrawal of the Greek forces from Cyprus.[281] The note also demanded Greece to allow Turkish Cypriots to establish their own self-defense forces and pay reparations for Cypriot Turks.[282] The US President Johnson quickly acted and settled down the crisis by putting pressure on the Greek government.[283] In the end, almost all of the demands of the Turkish government were accepted due to the pressure that was put on Greece by the United States.[284]

On July 15, 1974, the Cypriot Greek Fascist organization EOKA carried out a coup d'état in Cyprus and overthrew the Makarios government.[285] The coup was carried out with the support of the junta government in Greece.[286] Nikos Sampson, who was notorious for his extreme anti-Turkish sentiments, came into power after the coup d'état.[287] The first thing that he did was to change the name of the country to "The Hellenic Republic of Cyprus".[288] Cyprus under the authoritarian rule of Sampson left Turkey with no choice but a new military intervention into the island.

On July 20, 1974, the Turkish Prime Minister Bülent Ecevit declared that the Turkish government sent troops into the island of Cyprus to restore peace.[289] The first military intervention of Turkey ended on July 24, 1974, when the Cypriot President Nikos Simpson decided to step down due to the war with Turkey.[290] By July 25, 1974, conferences in Geneva were held between Great Britain, Turkey and Greece to find a solution for the Cyprus Question.[291] However, when the Geneva Conferences failed to reach an agreement, the second military intervention by Turkey began on August 14, 1974.[292]

The US Congress demanded to issue an arms embargo on Turkey with the claim that the Turkish government's second intervention to the island was unjust and demanded Turkey to leave the annexed lands in Cyprus immediately.[293] On September 19, 1974 the US Senate and on Sep-

281 Ibid.

282 Ibid.

283 Melek Fırat, "Yunanistan'la İlişkiler," 737-738.

284 Ibid.

285 Sina Akşin, *Kısa Türkiye Tarihi,* 270.

286 Faruk Sönmezoğlu, *Soğuk Savaş Döneminde Türk Dış Politikası 1945-1991* (İstanbul, Der Yayınları, 2016), 344.

287 William Hale, *Turkish Foreign Policy since 1774,* 112.

288 Faruk Sönmezoğlu, *Soğuk Savaş Döneminde Türk Dış Politikası 1945-1991,* 344.

289 Melek Fırat, "Yunanistan'la İlişkiler," 742.

290 Melek Fırat, "Yunanistan'la İlişkiler," 743.

291 Melek Fırat, "Yunanistan'la İlişkiler," 744.

292 Melek Fırat, "Yunanistan'la İlişkiler," 747-748.

293 Çağrı Erhan, 2018b, "ABD ve NATO'yla İlişkiler," 705.

tember 24, 1974 the US House of Representatives approved the bill to issue this embargo.[294] The weapons embargo on Turkey was enacted with the approval of US President Gerald Ford on December 30, 1974, and it officially started on February 5, 1975.[295] As a response to this embargo, Turkey declared that the Federal State of Turkish Cyprus was established on February 13, 1975.[296] The US weapons embargo on Turkey did not work as Turkey did not make a compromise. In fact, it severely damaged the relations between Turkey and the United States. With a diplomatic note on July 25, 1975, the Turkish government warned the United States by saying that the Treaty of Turkish-American Defense Cooperation that was signed on July 3, 1969 would be unilaterally terminated and all American military bases in Turkey, except İncirlik, would be taken under the full control of the Turkish Armed Forces.[297] However, in 1976, the issue of American arms embargo was solved when the Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs, İhsan Sabri Çağlayangil and the US Secretary of State, Henry Kissinger signed the Treaty of Defense and Economic Cooperation to remove the arms embargo on Turkey.[298] The US weapons embargo on Turkey would stay in effect until 1978.[299]

The US arms embargo and ban on the production of opium[300] in Turkey severely damaged Turkish-American relations.[301] All of these disagreements between the United States and Turkey pushed Turkey to search for new allies such as the Soviet Union. The Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs, Feridun Cemal Erkin visited Moscow from October 30 to November 6, 1964 to improve the relations with the Soviet Union after the disappointment of the Johnson Letter.[302] In January 1965, a Soviet parliamentary delegation visited Turkey.[303] In the same month, Turkey decided not to join NATO's Multilateral Military Power despite her earlier support for it.[304] Furthermore, a US nuclear submarine, *Savannah,* was not allowed by the Turkish government to visit the Istanbul

294 Hüner Tuncer, *İki Darbe Arasında Türk Dış Politikası 1971-1980,* 59.

295 Çağrı Erhan, 2018b, "ABD ve NATO'yla İlişkiler," 706.

296 Çağrı Erhan, 2018b, "ABD ve NATO'yla İlişkiler," 710.

297 Hüner Tuncer, *İki Darbe Arasında Türk Dış Politikası 1971-1980,* 59-60.

298 Çağrı Erhan, 2018b, "ABD ve NATO'yla İlişkiler," 708.

299 Çağrı Erhan, 2018b, "ABD ve NATO'yla İlişkiler," 710.

300 The ban of opium was imposed by the Richard Nixon administration of the United States in 1971 as a part of its "War on Drugs" campaign. The Nihat Erim government of Turkey accepted to ban the production of opium in 1971, but this agreement created a distrust towards to the United States in Turkish public opinion.

301 Ebru Deniz Ozan, "İki Darbe Arasında Kriz Sarmalı," in *Osmanlı'dan Günümüze Türkiye'de Siyasal Hayat,* eds. Gökhan Atılgan, Cenk Saraçoğlu and Ateş Uslu (İstanbul, Yordam Kitap, 2016), 743-744.

302 Melek Fırat, "Yunanistan'la İlişkiler," 731.

303 Erel Tellal, 2018b, "SSCB'yle İlişkiler," 776.

304 Ibid.

Port.[305] In the initial phase of the Cyprus Question, the Soviet Union used to support the Makarios government of Cyprus, as it had been the case since the Independence of Cyprus.[306] However, after improved relations with Turkey, the Soviet Union changed her foreign policy on Cyprus in favor of Turkey and even accepted "the federation thesis" of Turkey.[307] The Soviet Union also tried to act as a mediator by suggesting that the representatives of the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council and the representatives of Turkey, Greece and Cyprus could meet in a conference and find a solution for the Cyprus Question.[308] Nevertheless, the Turkish government refused this suggestion of the Soviet Union by stating that Turkey would only negotiate with the guarantor states of Cyprus, which were Greece and Great Britain.[309]

Good relations with the Soviet Union continued throughout the 1960s. In May 1965, the USSR's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Gromiko visited Turkey, which had been the first visit at this level since the year 1931.[310] In August 1965, the Turkish Prime Minister also visited the Soviet Union and it was followed by Soviet Prime Minister Kosigin's visit of Turkey in December 1966.[311] Although the relations were better, Turkey was suspicious towards the Soviet Union. Turkey did not accept to renew the Treaty of Non-Aggression and Neutrality of 1925.[312]

On March 25, 1967 the Soviet Union and Turkey signed The Treaty of Economic and Technological Cooperation, which allowed Turkey to take loans from the USSR and helped Turkey establish seven important factories.[313] After this agreement, the Turkish Prime Minister Süleyman Demirel made a visit to Moscow.[314] Also, Turkish President Cevdet Sunay visited the Soviet Union in November 1969, which was the first visit of a country's president to the Soviet Union.[315]

In April 1972, the Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, Nikolay Podgorni visited Turkey and the Declaration of Good Neighborhood Principles was signed between Turkey and the Soviet Union.[316] With this declaration, Turkey promised the USSR not to allow the use of military bases inside Turkish borders against the USSR, and the USSR promised

305 Faruk Sönmezoğlu, *Soğuk Savaş Döneminde Türk Dış Politikası 1945-1991,* 250.

306 Melek Fırat, "Yunanistan'la İlişkiler," 729-731.

307 Melek Fırat, "Yunanistan'la İlişkiler," 731.

308 Vefa Kurban, *Russian-Turkish Relations from the First World War to the Present,* 162.

309 Ibid.

310 Erel Tellal, 2018b, "SSCB'yle İlişkiler," 776.

311 Erel Tellal, 2018b, "SSCB'yle İlişkiler," 777.

312 Erel Tellal, 2018b, "SSCB'yle İlişkiler," 776.

313 Hüner Tuncer, *İki Darbe Arasında Türk Dış Politikası 1971-1980,* 65.

314 Erel Tellal, 2018b, "SSCB'yle İlişkiler," 778.

315 Ibid.

316 Erel Tellal, 2018b, "SSCB'yle İlişkiler," 778-779.

Turkey that she would not support any kind of Communist movement in Turkey.[317] In December 1972, a committee led by a Turkish Minister, Zeyyat Baykara signed an agreement with the Soviet Union in Moscow to increase the capacity of the Iron and Steel Plant in İskenderun, Turkey.[318] On April 17, 1973 and on December 29, 1973, the Soviet Union and Turkey agreed on some technical agreements about the redefinition of land borders and territorial seas.[319] Despite improving relations, Turkey's doubts about the Soviet Union were far from over. Since 1968, Turkey was dealing with the problem of "anarchy and terror" led by radical left-wing Marxist movements that were provoked by the publications of the Soviet Union.[320] This problem revived the perception of the Soviet threat, just as it was the case during the first decade of the Cold War.[321]

The Soviet Military Intervention in Afghanistan in 1979 was an act which Turkey did not approve.[322] The Afghan refugees in Turkey were seen as a consequence of this military intervention of the Soviet Union.[323] Moreover, the new harshly anti-Communist regime of Turkey which was established after a coup d'état led by Kenan Evren, was blaming the Soviet Union for the atmosphere of anarchy before the coup.[324] On the other hand, the Soviet Union condemned the coup d'état of September 12, asserting that it was carried out for US interests and with the cooperation of the US.[325] Nevertheless, the Soviet Union acted very pragmatically and did not overreact towards Turkey's new regime.[326] In the 1980s, Turkey and the Soviet Union started to shift away from an ideological warfare and tried to focus on the reconstruction of their economies, hence the Turkish-Soviet relations in the 1980s were based mainly on economic agreements.[327] In 1981, the Soviet Leader Leonid Brezhnev expressed his willingness to improve Turkish-Soviet relations.[328]

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317 Hüner Tuncer, *İki Darbe Arasında Türk Dış Politikası 1971-1980,* 66.

318 Erel Tellal, 2018b, "SSCB'yle İlişkiler," 779.

319 Ibid.

320 Fahir Armaoğlu, *20. Yüzyıl Siyasi Tarihi (1914-1995),* 625.

321 Ibid.

322 Kemal Çiftçi, *Türk Dış Politikası: Tarih, Kimlik ve Eleştirel Kuram Bağlamında,* 296.

323 Erel Tellal, 2018c, "SSCB'yle İlişkiler," in *Türk Dış Politikası: Kurtuluş Savaşından Bugüne Olgular, Belgeler, Yorumlar Cilt II: 1980-2001,* ed. Baskın Oran (İstanbul, İletişim Yayınları, 2018), 161.

324 Kemal Çiftçi, *Türk Dış Politikası: Tarih, Kimlik ve Eleştirel Kuram Bağlamında,* 296.

325 Didem Ekinci-Sarıer, "7. Cumhurbaşkanı Kenan Evren," in *Cumhurbaşkanları ve Dış Politika,* ed. Haydar Çakmak (Ankara, Kripto Kitaplar, 2016), 186.

326 Erel Tellal, 2018c, "SSCB'yle İlişkiler," 161.

327 Erel Tellal, 2018c, "SSCB'yle İlişkiler," 163.

328 Didem Ekinci-Sarıer, "7. Cumhurbaşkanı Kenan Evren," 186.

In September 1980, the Soviet Minister of Foreign Affairs, Andrei Gromyko met the Turkish Foreign Minister, İlter Türkmen in a UN meeting and said that Turkish-Soviet relations were stable and that they could be improved based on mutual interests.[329] The Treaty of Natural Gas signed in 1984 between the USSR and Turkey was a turning point in Turkish-Russian relations.[330] With this treaty, Turkey was allowed to enter the Soviet market and the USSR would use the money it earned from Turkey's gas purchases to buy Turkish exports.[331] In 1986, the Turkish Prime Minister, Turgut Özal visited Moscow, and Turkey started to purchase gas from the Soviet Union in 1987.[332] The problem of the territorial waters between the two countries in the Black Sea ended with the Treaty of Border and Coastal Trade that was signed by the Soviet Union and Turkey on July 6, 1989.[333] With this treaty, the Turkish cities on the Turkish-Soviet borders, such as Artvin, gained economic importance.[334] On the other hand, the loans borrowed by the Soviet Union from Eximbank between 1989 and 1991 would amount to 1 billion and 150 million USD in total.[335]

Besides economic agreements, there were few important visits between the Soviet Union and Turkey. When the Soviet Leader Yuri Andrapov died in February 1984, the Turkish Prime Minister, Turgut Özal attended his funeral.[336] The Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers, Tikhonov paid a visit to Ankara on December 25, 1984 upon the invitation of the Turkish Prime Minister, Turgut Özal.[337] During this visit, Tikhonov and Özal came to an agreement on a long-term program that would cover economic, commercial, scientific and technical cooperation between the two states from 1986 to 1996.[338]

329 Musa Qasımlı, *SSCB-Türkiye İlişkileri* (İstanbul, Kaknüs Yayınları, 2012), 138.

330 Ibid.

331 Erel Tellal, 2018c, "SSCB'yle İlişkiler," 163-164.

332 Didem Ekinci-Sarıer, "7. Cumhurbaşkanı Kenan Evren," 186.

333 Erel Tellal, 2018c, "SSCB'yle İlişkiler," 164.

334 Ibid.

335 Hüner Tuncer. *Özal'ın Dış Politikası (1983-1989)* (İstanbul, Kaynak Yayınları, 2015), 129-130.

336 Vefa Kurban, *Russian-Turkish Relations from the First World War to the Present*, 186.

337 Vefa Kurban, *Russian-Turkish Relations from the First World War to the Present*, 187-188.

338 Ibid.

§ 3.5 The Turkish-Russian Relations during the Post-Cold War Era

The year 1991 was a turning point for world history. The dissolution of the USSR in 1991 ended the Cold War and opened up a new era.[339] For Turkey, the collapse of the Soviet Union did not just bring an end to the old Cold War politics, but it also strengthened her position in the region. For the first time in history, the Russian threat against Turkey was removed with the establishment of buffer states such as Georgia.[340] Also, major ports of the Soviet Union in the Black Sea were lost with the independence of Ukraine. The existence of these two buffer states would play an important role in Turkish-Russian relations, especially when Russia became involved in conflicts with these two states in 2008 and 2014. Turkey sided with those two buffer states and supported their existence to protect herself from any Russian threats.

The first attempt to improve Turkey's relations with the newly established Russian Federation was the then Turkish President Turgut Özal's visit to Moscow on March 11-16th, 1991.[341] This was the first visit to Moscow by a Turkish president since 1969.[342] Three important treaties were signed on March 12, 1991: the Treaty on Principles of Friendship and Cooperation, the Double Taxation Agreement, and the Agreement on Trade, Economic, Scientific and Technical Cooperation.[343]

The President of Turkey, Turgut Özal launched the Black Sea Organization Project in June 1992 with a meeting at its headquarters in Istanbul, and the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Corporation (BSEC) was founded after this meeting.[344] The member states that were invited to this meeting were Turkey, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Russia, Armenia, Romania, Moldova, Ukraine, Greece and Albania.[345] The main goal of this organization was "to reduce or progressively eliminate obstacles (to trade) of all kinds" and create some joint projects on the conservation of the environment, mining, energy, transport and tourism.[346] In 1993, BSEC created a new institution by founding the Black Sea Foreign Trade and Development Bank, which was officially

339 James F Clarity, "END OF THE SOVIET UNION; On Moscow's Streets, Worry and Regret," *The New York Times,* November 26, 1991, https://www.nytimes.com/1991/12/26/world/end-of-the-soviet-union-on-moscow-s-streets-worry-and-regret.html.

340 Şener Aktürk, "Türkiye'nin Rusya ile İlişkileriin Yükselişi ve Gerilemesi, 1992-2015: Neorealist Bir Değerlendirme," in *Kuşku Ile Komşuluk*, eds. Gencer Özcan, Evren Balta and Burç Beşgül (İstanbul, İletişim Yayınları, 2017), 131.

341 Erel Tellal, "Rusya'yla İlişkiler," in *Türk Dış Politikası: Kurtuluş Savaşından Bugüne Olgular, Belgeler, Yorumlar Cilt II: 1980-2001*, ed. Baskın Oran (İstanbul, İletişim Yayınları, 2018), 540.

342 Ibid.

343 Ibid.

344 William Hale, *Turkish Foreign Policy since 1774,* 209.

345 Ibid.

346 Ibid.

opened in Salonica in 1997 after some delays.[347] Turkey's total trade with BSEC member countries increased from 6.8 billion USD to 48.1 billion USD in 2010, but 52% of this trade, which equals to 26.2 billion USD, was solely with Russia.[348]

In the 1990s, Turkey was suffering from an arms embargo by Western states due to her battle with the Kurdish secessionist group, the PKK.[349] As in the 1970s, Turkey looked for a partner to buy weapons from, and Turkey became the first country to buy arms from the newly established Russian Federation, with an agreement that was signed in the late 1993.[350]

Through the years of Cold War, Turkey had almost no relations with the Turkic people living in the Soviet Union. Rather than following an irredentist approach with the USSR, Turkey kept following Atatürk's foreign policy approach, "peace at home and peace in the world".[351] However, when the Soviet Union collapsed, new Turkic countries which had cultural ties with Turkey were founded. In this atmosphere, Turkey had a chance to increase her influence in the region and promote herself as a "secular and democratic model" for these newly born countries in Central Asia.[352] Turkey combined her foreign policy based on identity with economic and political pragmatism in Central Asia.[353] The new Turkic republics joined ECO, the Economic Cooperation Organization, and then BSEC with other Black Sea countries.[354] From Turkey's perspective, these international organizations were essential in stabilizing the region through financial cooperation and mutual aid while providing them an institutional link that would connect them to the entire world.[355]

"From the Adriatic Sea to the Great Wall", which was used to describe the emergence of the Turkic world, became one of the mottos of Turkey when Süleyman Demirel was the Prime Minister in 1992.[356] However when the years of euphoria were over, Turkey started to follow a policy of

347 Ibid.

348 William Hale, *Turkish Foreign Policy since 1774,* 210.

349 Erel Tellal, "Rusya'yla İlişkiler," 544.

350 Ibid.

351 Sabri Sayarı. "Turkish foreign policy in the post-Cold War era: The challenges of multi-regionalism," *Journal of International Affairs,* 54, no. 1, (Fall 2000): 173.

352 Şule Kut, "1990'larda Türk Dış Politikasının Anahatları," in *Günümüzde Türkiye'nin Dış Politikası,* eds. Barry Rubin and Kemal Kirişçi (İstanbul, Boğaziçi Üniversitesi Yayınevi, 2002), 13.

353 Faruk Sönmezoğlu, *Son Onyıllarda Türk Dış Politikası 1991-2015* (İstanbul, Der Yayınları, 2016), 71.

354 Mustafa Aydin, "Foucault's Pendulum: Turkey in Central Asia and the Caucasus," *Turkish Studies* 5 no. 2, (2004): 4.

355 Mustafa Aydin, "Foucault's Pendulum: Turkey in Central Asia and the Caucasus," 4-5.

356 Erel Tellal, "Rusya'yla İlişkiler," 543.

"cooperation instead of competition" with the Russian Federation in the region of Central Asia.[357] Yet, this normalization process with Russia did not last long.

During the Soviet years, Nagorno-Karabakh had been an autonomous region in Azerbaijan Soviet Socialist Republic since 1923, as a region that had a population of around 192.000 in 1989.[358] 70% of this population were Armenians.[359] On February 20, 1988, the Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Oblast demanded separation from Azerbaijan SSR to join Armenian SSR.[360] The Supreme Soviet of Azerbaijan SSR rejected this demand and the Supreme Soviet of the Soviet Union had to intervene by taking control of the Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Oblast in January 1989.[361]

The Armenian-Azeri conflict started in January of 1990 when the Soviet troops occupied Baku and killed several hundred Azeri citizens after some attacks on the Armenian local minority.[362] Turkey perceived this issue as an internal conflict and did not react.[363] Instead, the Turkish government supported Gorbachev's reforms in the region, but they did not solve anything.[364] In the end, both Azerbaijan and Armenia declared their independence by the end of 1991.[365]

After the independence of Armenia and Azerbaijan, Nagorno-Karabakh became a disputed land between the two countries. In 1992, the President of Turkey, Turgut Özal wanted to follow a hawkish foreign policy to restore the Azeri power in the region of Nagorno-Karabakh.[366] However, this idea of Özal had been rejected by the Turkish Prime Minister Süleyman Demirel, who was in favor of a peaceful diplomacy between Azeris and Armenians for the fate of the region.[367] On February 28, 1992, the Council for Security and Cooperation of Europe recognized the region of Nagorno-Karabakh as a part of Azerbaijan and condemned any kind of force to change the borders.[368] This decision of CSCE was approved by Turkey, but it did not stop the Armenian aggression on Nagorno-Karabakh.[369] The Armenian forces took the region under their control and

357 Ibid.

358 Mustafa Aydın, 2018a, "Kafkasya ve Orta Asya'yla İlişkiler," in *Türk Dış Politikası: Kurtuluş Savaşından Bugüne Olgular, Belgeler, Yorumlar Cilt II: 1980-2001*, ed. Baskın Oran (İstanbul, İletişim Yayınları, 2018), 401.

359 Ibid.

360 Ibid.

361 Ibid.

362 William Hale, *Turkish Foreign Policy since 1774,* 211.

363 Ibid.

364 Ibid.

365 Ibid.

366 William Hale, *Turkish Foreign Policy since 1774,* 212.

367 Ibid.

368 Ibid.

369 Ibid.

opened the Lachin corridor on the Azerbaijani soil.[370] Armenia annexed 14% of the Azerbaijani territory.[371] After this aggression of Armenia, Nakhichevan, an Azerbaijani region that shared borders with Turkey, also came under the Armenian threat.[372]

The Armenian aggression in the region of Nagorno-Karabakh raised the question of a possible Turkish intervention to stop the aggression and restore the Azerbaijani power.[373] The Turkish Commander of Land Forces, General Mühittin Füsünoğlu, declared that all necessary preparations had been made for a possible military action towards the region.[374] This threat from Turkey alarmed Russia. The Commander of the Armed Forces of the CIS, General Yevgeniy Shaposhnikov warned Turkey that any kind of military intervention could lead to a Third World War.[375] The Turkish Prime Minister, Süleyman Demirel acted rationally and went to Moscow to establish peace in the region.[376] After two meetings with the Russian President Boris Yeltsin on May 25 and 26, 1992, both the Turkish and Russian leader condemned the occupation of Lachin by the Armenian army and the clashes between Azeris and Armenians.[377]

One of the major problems for the Russian Federation was the bloody conflicts with Chechen secessionists in Chechnya. The Chechen Wars started in 1994 and continued until 2009 in two separate phases and constituted a serious internal problem for the Russian government. In this era, Russia abstained from major political developments in global affairs. From the Yugoslav War of the 1990s to the Color Revolutions and the War on Terror campaign of the Bush administration of the United States in the early 2000s, the Russian Federation was quite cautious and did act against the United States' aggressive foreign policy. However, the Chechen Crisis created a new regime under the leadership of Vladimir Putin that would establish a powerful central authority and make Russia rise again as a great power in international relations.

The Chechen secessionist groups in Chechnya, under the leadership of Dzhokhar Dudayev, declared independence on August 1991, by overthrowing the Soviet government in the region.[378] However, the new Russian President Boris Yeltsin did not recognize the independence of Chech-

370 Ibid.

371 Thomas De Waal, "Remaking the Nagorno-Karabakh Peace Process," *Survival* 52 (4), (2010): 159.

372 William Hale, *Turkish Foreign Policy since 1774,* 212.

373 William Hale, *Turkish Foreign Policy since 1774,* 212-213.

374 Ibid.

375 Gareth Winrow, "Türkiye, Orta Asya'da Bağımsızlığını Kazanmış Yeni Devletler ve Trans-Kafkasya," in *Günümüzde Türkiye'nin Dış Politikası* (İstanbul, Boğaziçi Üniversitesi Yayınevi, 2002), 264-265.

376 William Hale, *Turkish Foreign Policy since 1774,* 212-213.

377 Ibid.

378 Hüner Tuncer, *Küreselleşme Döneminde Dış Politika* (İstanbul, Kaynak Yayınları, 2016), 111.

nya.[379] In the summer of 1994, pro-Dudayev Chechen forces captured Grozny, the capital city of Chechnya.[380] In September 1994, Russian forces started to deploy troops on the borders of Chechnya when pro-Dudayev groups killed more than 15 members of the pro-Russian group led by Ruslan Labanazov.[381] After this incident, the Russian government decided to make an intervention into the region and tried to recapture the city from Chechen secessionist groups on December 11, 1994.[382] Ultimately, Russian forces failed to take back control of Grozny. However, after the assassination of the Chechen leader, Dzhokhar Dudayev on April 21, 1996, peace talks started to be discussed between Chechen secessionists and Russia.[383] With the treaty that was signed on May 12, 1997, Russia accepted to give some financial aid to Chechnya and withdraw the Russian forces from the region.[384] The Chechen groups won the First Chechen War and the cost of war for the Russian Federation was around 6 million US dollars.[385]

The Second Chechen War started in the summer of 1999 as the Russian government accused the Chechen government of allowing Islamic fundamentalists like Ibn-al Khattab and Shamil Basayev to establish their own autonomous power in the region.[386] On the last day of the year 1999, Russian President Boris Yeltsin stepped down and Prime Minister Vladimir Putin took power as the Acting President of Russia.[387] The first thing that the new Acting President of Russia did was to sign a presidential decree, which was approved on January 10, 2000, that allowed the Russian government to take harsh prevention measures against terror incidents in the Chechen War.[388] This presidential decree of Vladimir Putin would remain in effect until the end of the Second Chechen War in 2009.[389]

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379 Ibid.

380 Erel Tellal, "Rusya'yla İlişkiler," 545.

381 Tansu Yıldırım. "Çeçenistan Sorunu ve Türkiye," in *Değişen Dünya ve Türkiye*, ed. Faruk Sönmezoğlu (Ankara, Bağlam Yayıncılık, 1996), 203.

382 Ibid.

383 Erel Tellal, "Rusya'yla İlişkiler," 545.

384 Ibid.

385 Ibid.

386 Ibid.

387 Celestine Bohlen, "YELTSIN RESIGNS: THE OVERVIEW; Yeltsin Resigns Naming Putin as Acting President to Run in March Election," *The New York Times,* January 1, 2000, https://www.nytimes.com/2000/01/01/world/yeltsin-resigns-overview-yeltsin-resigns-naming-putin-acting-president-run-march.html.

388 "Указ Президента Российской Федерации от 10.01.2000 г. № 24," *Президент России,* January 1, 2000, Accessed May 22, 2019, http://kremlin.ru/acts/bank/14927.

389 Ibid.

The biggest problem between Russia and Turkey in the 1990s was the mutual accusation of supporting each other's separatist movements. Turkey accused the Russian government for supporting the PKK, while Russia accused the Turkish government for supporting Chechen groups.[390] The era of the First Chechen War was the time when Turkish-Russian relations dropped to the lowest point in the 1990s.[391]

The Turkish Prime Minister, Tansu Çiller tried to send Turkish humanitarian aid to Chechens by taking the consent of the Russian government.[392] During the First Chechen War, the Russian government accused the Turkish government of allowing Chechen rebels to operate in Turkey.[393] On January 16, 1996 a ferry named *Avrasya* was hijacked by pro-Chechen protestors in Turkey.[394] The Turkish courts accused the hijackers of "changing the route of the ship" rather than "hijacking a vehicle".[395] On the other hand, Dudayev's name was given to different places in Ankara and Istanbul.[396] Moreover, Dudayev met with the Turkish Prime Minister on two different occasions.[397] Nevertheless, this attitude of the Turkish government towards Chechen rebel groups would change as those groups would start to shift to Islamic fundamentalism during the Second Chechen War. However, the support of the far-right circles in Turkey for the Chechens continued.[398] A state minister from MHP (Nationalist Action Party), Abdülhaluk Çay, expressed his support for Chechen groups in his speech in February 2000, which ended up with a diplomatic note from Russia.[399]

As a response to this Chechen support of Turkey, Russia also supported the Kurdish secessionist groups. A conference about "History of Kurdistan" was hosted in Moscow on February 22, 1994.[400] A Kurdish house was established in Yaroslav on January 25, 1995.[401] In February, Russia

390 Hüner Tuncer, *Küreselleşme Döneminde Dış Politika*, 111.

391 Didem Ekinci, "Russia-Turkey Relations (1991-2016): Diverging Interests and Compelling Realities," in *Turkish Foreign Policy: International Relations, Legality and Global Reach,* ed. Pınar Gözen Ercan (Cham, Palgrave Macmillan, 2018), 158.

392 Duygu Bazoğlu-Sezer, "Rusya: Jeopolitik Yarışma ile Ekonomik Ortaklığı Bağdaştırmanın Zorlukları," in *Günümüzde Türkiye'nin Dış Politikası,* eds. Barry Rubin and Kemal Kirişçi (İstanbul, Boğaziçi Üniversitesi Yayınevi, 2002), 244.

393 Erel Tellal, "Rusya'yla İlişkiler," 545-546.

394 Ibid.

395 Ibid.

396 Ibid.

397 Ibid.

398 Ibid.

399 Ibid.

400 Ibid.

401 Ibid.

demanded Turkey to end the Turkish support for the Chechen rebels and terminate the activities of Caucasia-Chechnia Solidarity Associations in Turkey.[402] In late 1995, the Kurdish Parliament in Exile was allowed to gather in Moscow.[403] This meeting was followed by two more pro-Kurdish meetings.[404] In 1997, the State Duma of the Russian Federation accused the Turkish government of executing genocide against the Kurdish population in Turkey.[405] The tension increased when the leader of the PKK, Abdullah Öcalan's demand for asylum in Russia was approved by the Russian State Duma on 4 November 1998.[406] Nevertheless, both the Russian President Boris Yeltsin and the Russian Prime Minister Yevgeny Primakov refused to give right of asylum to the PKK leader Abdullah Öcalan.[407] This action of the Russian government stabilized the relations between the two countries.[408] In response to this positive act of the Russian government, the Turkish government of Bülent Ecevit avoided aiding the Chechen warriors or providing them a safe haven in Turkey.[409] Later, the good relations with Russia under the Ecevit government continued and Bülent Ecevit met with the Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin in November 1999 to sign the Joint Declaration on Cooperation against Terrorism and several other agreements.[410] In October 2000, the Russian Prime Minister, Mikhail Kasyanov visited Turkey.[411] The Joint Economic Commission Protocol, the Interstate Cooperation Protocol in Transportation Field and the Protocol on the Formation of a Joint Committee on Co-operation in Defense Industry were signed by Russia and Turkey during Kasyanov's visit.[412]

402 Ibid.

403 Erel Tellal, "Rusya'yla İlişkiler," 546.

404 Ibid.

405 Ibid.

406 Ibid.

407 Duygu Bazoğlu-Sezer, "Rusya: Jeopolitik Yarışma ile Ekonomik Ortaklığı Bağdaştırmanın Zorlukları," 243-244.

408 Ibid.

409 Didem Ekinci, "Russia-Turkey Relations (1991-2016): Diverging Interests and Compelling Realities," 159.

410 Oktay F. Tanrısever, "Turkey and the Russian Federation: Towards a Mutual Understanding?" in *Turkey's Foreign Policy in the 21st Century: A Changing Role in World Politics,* eds. Tariq Y. Ismael and Mustafa Aydın (Vermont, Ashgate, 2003), 131.

411 Oktay F. Tanrısever, "Turkey and the Russian Federation: Towards a Mutual Understanding?," 132.

412 Ibid.

4

The Turkish-Russian Relations in the Black Sea Region during the First Decade of the 21st Century

§ 4.1 The Turkish-Russian Relations in the Context of the American Neo-Conservative Era

On 11 September 2001, the whole world was shocked in the face of the biggest terrorist attack throughout history.[1] Al-Qaeda, a radical Islamic fundamentalist terrorist group led by Osama bin Laden, hijacked four passenger planes and three of them made kamikaze attacks on the World Trade Center and on the Pentagon building.[2] The last one crashed in Pennsylvania, before conducting another attack.[3] After the attacks, the Twin Towers of the World Trade Center collapsed and 2,996 people were killed while more than 6,000 people were injured.[4] After nine days of the attack, on September 20, 2001, the US President George Walker Bush said, "Every nation and every

1 James Barron, "Thousands Feared Dead as World Trade Center Is Toppled," *The New York Times*, September 11, 2001, https://www.nytimes.com/2001/09/11/national/thousands-feared-dead-as-world-trade-center-is-toppled.html.

2 Ibid.

3 Ibid.

4 Rick Jervis, "15 Years after Sept. 11, the Questions Still Remain in Our Minds," *USA Today*, September 11, 2016, https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/2016/09/09/sept-11-attacks-fifteen-years-anniversary/89745060/.

region now has a decision to make. Either you are with us or with terrorists."[5] He also gave some signals about the future plans of his administration by saying, "The Taleban must act and act immediately. They will hand over the terrorists, or they will share in their fate."[6]Almost a month later after 9/11, on 7 October 2001, the Operation Enduring Freedom was initiated with the bombings of the American and British forces in Afghanistan to destroy the Taliban regime and find Al-Qaeda's leader, Osama bin Laden, who was responsible for 9/11.[7] The invasion of Afghanistan was the starting point of the Bush administration's War on Terrorism which shaped international relations at the beginning of the 21st Century.

Terrorist organizations' major aim is to spread fear through shocking attacks that can be placed in headlines and 9/11 was definitely that kind of an act of terrorism. After 9/11, the concept of "radical Islam" became the new enemy for the United States as well as for many other Western countries. The 9/11 terrorist attacks created a rally-around-the-flag effect, which happens most of the time when a foreign threat appears, and suddenly increased the approval rate of President Bush from 50% up to 90%.[8] The incident of 9/11 shaped the foreign policy of the Bush administration that was dubbed as "the Bush Doctrine" and started a global war on terrorism. This shocking incident led to the implementation of authoritarianism inside the borders of the United States after President George Walker Bush declared emergency of state by citing the terrorist attack of 9/11.[9]

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5 "Bush: 'You Are Either With Us, Or With the Terrorists' - 2001-09-21," *Voice of America*, October 27, 2009, https://www.voanews.com/a/a-13-a-2001-09-21-14-bush-66411197/549664.html.

6 Ibid.

7 "Afghanistan wakes after nights of intense bombings," *CNN*, October 7, 2001, http://edition.cnn.com/2001/US/10/07/gen.america.under.attack/.

8 Marc J. Hetherington and Michael Nelson, "Anatomy of a rally effect: George W. Bush and the war on terrorism." *PS: Political Science & Politics* 36, no. 1 (2003): 38.

9 "Declaration of National Emergency by Reason Of Certain Terrorist Attacks," *The White House*. September 14, 2001, Accessed December 12, 2018, https://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2001/09/20010914-4.html.

The Bush administration of the United States accused Saddam Hussein's Baathist regime in Iraq of having links with Al-Qaeda, although there was no evidence.[10] On August 26, 2002, the Vice-President Dick Cheney made a speech at the Veterans of Foreign Wars' 103rd National Convention that signaled the Iraq War.[11] In that speech, Cheney said:

> Simply stated, there is no doubt that Saddam Hussein now has weapons of mass destruction. There is no doubt he is amassing them to use against our friends, against our allies, against us. And there is no doubt that his aggressive regional ambitions will lead him into future confrontations with his neighbors. Confrontations that will involve both the weapons he has today, and the ones he will continue to develop with his oil wealth.[12]

In Cincinnati, Ohio, President George Walker Bush made a very harsh speech against Saddam's regime by calling it "Arsenal of Terror" and said that "Saddam Hussein must disarm himself or for the sake of peace, we will lead a coalition to disarm him".[13] On November 8, 2002, the United Nations Security Council passed the Resolution 1441 which demanded Saddam Hussein's Iraqi government to give up all alleged weapons of mass destruction.[14] On October 2002, President George Walker Bush asked for the US Congress approval for a possible strike and both the US House and Senate gave the

10 Dylan Matthews, "No, really, George W. Bush lied about WMDs," *Vox,* June 9, 2016, https://www.vox.com/2016/7/9/12123022/george-w-bush-lies-iraq-war.

11 "Vice President Speaks at VFW 103rd National Convention," *The White House*. August 26, 2002, Accessed December 30, 2018, https://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/08/20020826.html.

12 Ibid.

13 "Bush Cites Saddam's 'Arsenal of Terror': Congress Debates Resolution," *CNN*, October 8, 2002, http://edition.cnn.com/2002/ALLPOLITICS/10/07/bush.iraq/index.html.

14 "Resolution 1441 (2002)," *United Nations*, November 8, 2002, Accessed December 30, 2018, http://www.un.org/Depts/unmovic/documents/1441.pdf.

president the power to declare war.[15] On March 21, 2003 "Operation Iraqi Freedom" was started by the coalition forces of the US and UK governments to enforce the UNSC Resolution 1441, although this military intervention was not approved by the United Nations.[16] On December 15, 2003 President George Walker Bush said, "Ladies and Gentleman, we got him" when Saddam Hussein was found in his secret base.[17] After the end of the Invasion of Iraq, President Bush celebrated this US victory by giving his "Mission Accomplished" speech and boosted his popularity in the US elections.[18] On December 31, 2006 Saddam Hussein was found guilty and was executed while Iraq was under the occupation of US forces.[19] Nevertheless, the claim that Saddam Hussein was producing and keeping mass destruction weapons proved to be inaccurate.[20] The false intelligence that the Bush and Blair administrations received destroyed the popularity of the two leaders of these countries in the later years.

Russia was not capable of reacting against the US intervention on Iraq in 2003, even though Saddam Hussein's regime was an ally of Russia.[21] The aggression of the Bush administration towards the Middle East brought Turkey and Russia closer as they had a common threat.[22] Both Turkey and Russia showed their stances by condemning the war in Iraq when the Russian Pres-

15 "'Shock and awe' campaign underway in Iraq," *CNN,* March 22, 2003, http://edition.cnn.com/2003/fyi/news/03/22/iraq.war/.

16 Ibid.

17 Andrew Buncombe, "'Ladies and gentlemen, we got him'," *The Independent,* December 15, 2003, https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/americas/ladies-and-gentlemen-we-got-him-82617.html.

18 "Bush makes historic speech abroad," *CNN,* May 2, 2003, http://edition.cnn.com/2003/US/05/01/bush.transcript/.

19 Ewen MacAskill and Michael Howard, "How Saddam died on the gallows," *The Guardian*, January 1, 2007, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2007/jan/01/iraq.iraqtimeline.

20 Sarah Left, "Iraq war 'waged on false intelligence'," *The Guardian,* July 9, 2004, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2004/jul/09/usa.iraq2.

21 Aleksey Vsevolodovich Malashenko, "Russia and the Arab Spring," *Carnegie Moscow Center,* 2013, 8. https://carnegieendowment.org/files/russia_arab_spring2013.pdf.

22 Şener Aktürk, "Turkey's Role in the Arab Spring and the Syrian Conflict," *Turkish Policy Quarterly* 15, no. 4 (Winter 2017): 90.

ident visited Turkey in 2004.[23] Although Turkey joined the coalition against Saddam's Iraqi regime during the First Gulf War in 1991, Turkey did not allow the United States to use the military base in İncirlik by a last minute decision.[24] Like Turkey, Russia did everything possible to stop the US military intervention in Iraq such as opposing the intervention in the United Nations Security Council.[25] Also, the Hood Event[26] on July 4, 2003, which was the incident that the US Forces in Iraq arrested Turkish soldiers in a humiliating way, created frustration in American-Turkish relations.[27] After all of these incidents, Turkey felt threatened by the United States and started to collaborate more with the Russian administration. As the Neorealist theory explains, states act according to their own national interests and they make short-term cooperations as a kind of an act for balance of power when they feel a common threat. In this example, that common threat was the Bush administration of the United States. Hence, both the Turkish and Russian governments were against the military intervention of Iraq as both of these countries mentioned the importance of the territorial integrity of Iraq, and they were in favor of removing UN sanctions against the Iraqi government since the Gulf War had ended.[28]

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23 Jean-Robert Jouanny, *Putin Ne İstiyor?* Trans. Merve Öztürk (İstanbul, İletişim Yayınları, 2017), 148.

24 William Hale, *Turkish Foreign Policy since 1774,* 167.

25 Şener Aktürk, "Russian-Turkish Relations in the 21st Century, 2000-2015," *Russian Analytical Digest,* No. 125 (March 25, 2013): 3.

26 The Hood Event is the name of the incident in which a group of Turkish commandos were captured in Sulaymaniyah, Iraq on July 4, 2003. The captured soldiers were taken with hoods on their heads and interrogated by the US military. After a phone conversation between the Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and the US Vice President Dick Cheney, all of the captured Turkish commandos were released, but the incident created a tension between the United States and Turkey.

27 Michael Howard and Suzanne Goldberg, "US arrests of soldiers infuriates Turkey," *The Guardian,* July 8, 2003, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2003/jul/08/turkey.michaelhoward.

28 Şener Aktürk, "Turkish–Russian Relations after the Cold War (1992–2002)," *Turkish Studies 7,* no.3 (2006): 358.

In the early 2000s, Russia was still dealing with the Second Chechen War, and the new Russian President Vladimir Putin was trying to start a new page with Turkey due to their common threat- the Bush administration of the United States. To establish an organization for the security of the Black Sea, BLACKSEAFOR was founded in April 2001.[29] The member states of BLACKSEAFOR were Ukraine, Bulgaria, Georgia, Romania, Russia and Turkey.[30] On November 26, 2001, Turkey and Russia signed the Joint Action Plan for Cooperation in Eurasia in New York.[31] On January 15, 2002, the Russian Chief of Staff Anatoly Kvashnin visited Turkey and the Framework Agreement on Military Affairs and the Agreement on Military Training was signed by the two states.[32] With this agreement, both of the countries took a step forward towards ending the old problem of supporting separatist groups, as both the Turkish and Russian government declared the PKK and Chechen guerillas as terrorists.[33] In 2004, the then Minister of Foreign Affairs, Abdullah Gül visited Moscow and returned with the names of Chechen guerillas living in Turkey.[34] Some Chechen refugees in refugee camps in Turkey were arrested, although they were later released due to lack of evidence.[35] In December 2004, the Russian President Vladimir Putin came to Ankara and became the first Russian president to visit Turkey since the collapse of the USSR.[36] After this visit of Putin, Turkey and Russia signed six agreements and partnership protocols.[37]

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29 Faruk Sönmezoğlu, *Son Onyıllarda Türk Dış Politikası 1991-2015*, 690.

30 Mustafa Aydın, 2018b, "Kafkasya ve Orta Asya'yla İlişkiler," in *Türk Dış Politikası: Kurtuluş Savaşından Bugüne Olgular, Belgeler, Yorumlar Cilt III: 2001-2012,* ed. Baskın Oran (İstanbul, İletişim Yayınları, 2018), 527-529.

31 Vefa Kurban, *Russian-Turkish Relations from the First World War to the Present,* 223.

32 Ibid.

33 Ibid.

34 Didem Ekinci, "Russia-Turkey Relations (1991-2016): Diverging Interests and Compelling Realities," 160.

35 Marc Brody, "The Chechen Diaspora in Turkey," *North Caucasus Weekly* 6, no. 7 (2005): 7.

36 Vefa Kurban, *Russian-Turkish Relations from the First World War to the Present*, 225.

37 Vefa Kurban, *Russian-Turkish Relations from the First World War to the Present*, 226.

In the first decade of the 21st Century, some post-Soviet republics were also experiencing regime changes called "The Color Revolutions". The Rose Revolution of Georgia in 2003, the Orange Revolution of Ukraine in 2004 and the Tulip Revolution of Kyrgyzstan in 2005 came out of a series of mass protests that changed domestic and international dynamics and created a hostile environment for the Russian Federation. In Georgia, Eduard Shevardnadze, the pro-Russian leader of Georgia, was overthrown when the pro-Western leader Mikheil Saakashvili stormed the Georgian parliament and took power in November 2003.[38] In Ukraine, pro-Russian Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma was replaced by another pro-Russian Ukrainian politician, Viktor Yanukovych, as he won the presidential elections of 2004.[39] Nevertheless, the rival candidate of Yanukovych, pro-Western leader Viktor Yushchenko, did not accept the results and claimed that the elections were rigged.[40] After a huge wave of protests in Ukraine, the Ukrainian parliament rejected the results and the elections were repeated.[41] With the results of the new elections, pro-Western Viktor Yushchenko became the President of Ukraine and Russian influence was further reduced in Eastern Europe.[42] Similarly in Kyrgyzstan, pro-Russian Kyrgyz dictator Asqar Akayev was ousted by nonviolent protesters who did not accept the election results, and Akayev fled to Russia with the invitation of the Russian President Vladimir Putin in March 2005.[43]

The Color Revolutions were series of humiliating defeats for Vladimir Putin. All of the old pro-Russian leaders were ousted and their pro-Russian

38 "How the Rose Revolution happened," *BBC News,* May 10, 2005, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/4532539.stm.

39 Adam Jay, "Q&A: The Ukraine election crisis," *The Guardian,* December 3, 2004, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2004/dec/03/ukraine.qanda.

40 Ibid.

41 Ibid.

42 C.J. Chivers, "Yushchenko wins 52% of Vote; Rival Vows a Challenge," *The New York Times,* December 28, 2004, https://www.nytimes.com/2004/12/28/world/europe/yushchenko-wins-52-of-vote-rival-vows-a-challenge.html.

43 "Ousted Kyrgyz leader flees to Russia," *Al-Jazeera,* March 26, 2005, https://www.aljazeera.com/archive/2005/03/200841012253872964 5.html.

regimes were replaced by pro-Western and pro-NATO leaders. The US and the EU enlarged their sphere of influence and their power in the countries neighboring Russia. Only in Uzbekistan, the status quo was protected due to the violent oppression of the opposition by Islam Karimov.[44] The Russian government perceived the Color Revolutions as a threat, even as a Western expansion to the East to encircle Russia. Nevertheless, Russia did not have enough power to prevent them.

In the face of the unilateral interventionism of the United States of America under the administration of George Walker Bush, both Russia and Turkey considered themselves threatened. In the early 2000s, the United States was trying to remain as the sole hegemonic power, and this created insecurity among other nations, particularly in Russia. The United States' supportive attitude concerning the Color Revolutions which replaced the governments in the region with pro-Western ones, made Russia nervous. In this atmosphere Turkey and Russia got closer. Nevertheless, during the invasion of Georgia by the Russian army in 2008, Turkey's reaction to this invasion would be in line with those of the Western countries.

§ 4.2 The Independence of Kosovo

The relations between Russia and the West worsened after 2008 when the European Union and the United States pushed for the independence of Kosovo from Serbia. Initially, all EU member states except six of them (Cyprus, Greece, Romania, Slovakia, Bulgaria and Spain) and the USA as well as Turkey and many other countries recognized the independence of Kosovo, although Serbia and Russia fiercely opposed it.[45] According to the President of Russia, Dimitry Medvedev, Kosovo for the European Union was similar to

44 Erel Tellal, "Eski Sovyet Coğrafyasında 'Devrimler'", *Ankara Üniversitesi SBF Dergisi* 60, no. 2 (2005): 278.

45 "U.S. and most of the EU recognize Kosovo," *The New York Times,* February 18, 2008, https://www.nytimes.com/2008/02/18/world/europe/18iht-kosovo.3.10148493.html.

what Iraq was for the United States.[46] Nevertheless, Kosovo declared its independence on February 17, 2008.[47] As expected, the Russian government did not recognize this move of the Kosovan parliament, and the Russian Foreign Ministry described the unilateral declaration of independence of Kosovo as an action "violating the sovereignty of the Republic of Serbia".[48] The Russian Foreign Ministry also declared the Russian government's support for the policy of Serbian leaders towards Kosovo and claimed that Kosovo's leadership has the potential "to create the risk of escalation of tension and an inter-ethnic violence" in the province.[49] The Russian government warned the Western countries about the consequences of the independence of Kosovo, which was literally an explicit threat to the Western world.[50] For the first time in a long time, a post-Soviet Russian government took a very decisive stance against the West by siding with Serbia against the independence of Kosovo. It was the first sign of the new Russian foreign policy which would challenge the hegemony of the US as an anti-Western, anti-EU and anti-NATO challenger.

Turkey, on the other hand, sided with independent Kosovo in this case as the Turkish government was one of the first countries to recognize Kosovo.[51] During the Yugoslav years in the 1990s, Turkey followed an active foreign policy on behalf of Bosnian Muslims in Bosnia and Herzegovina, but the Turkish government could not be so active during the Kosovo Crisis. Birgül

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46 Gordon N. Bardos, "The regional and international implications of Kosovo independence," *Mediterranean Quarterly* 19, no. 4 (2008): 55.

47 "Full Text: Kosovo Declaration," *BBC News,* February 17, 2008, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/7249677.stm.

48 "Statement by Russia's Ministry of Foreign Affairs on Kosovo," *The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation.* February 17, 2008. Accessed March 19, 2018. http://www.mid.ru/en/web/guest/foreign_policy/international_safety/conflicts/-/asset_publisher/xIEMTQ3OvzcA/content/id/348618?p_p_id=101_INSTANCE_xIEMTQ3OvzcA&_101_INSTANCE_xIEMTQ3OvzcA_languageId=en_GB.

49 Ibid.

50 Jean-Robert Jouanny, *Putin Ne İstiyor,* 108.

51 Evren Mesci. "Turkey to recognize Kosovo independence: Foreign Minister," *Reuters,* February 18, 2008, https://www.reuters.com/article/us-kosovo-serbia-turkey/turkey-to-recognize-kosovo-independence-foreign-minister-idUSANK00036720080218.

Coşkun Demirtaş explains this behavior of Turkey in the 1990s based on three reasons. First, Kosovo had an autonomous status in Yugoslavia while Bosnia-Herzegovina had the status of a republic.[52] Secondly, the Bosnian Muslims had cultural, historical and religious ties with Turkey due to their common Ottoman past, as they considered Turkey as their homeland, while the Kosovar Albanians were oriented towards Albania.[53] Lastly, when the interests of Kosovan Turks and those of the Albanians were in conflict, Albanian underground organization UÇK (Kosovo Liberation Army) was sometimes described as a terrorist organization by the Turkish governments in the 1990s.[54] Therefore, Turkey was quite cautious about Kosovo during the early 1990s, but ultimately the Turkish government supported NATO intervention in Kosovo in 1999.[55] When Kosovo's case for independence came up and was supported by the West, Turkey joined the Western camp and recognized Kosovo's independence.

§ 4.3 The Russo-Georgian War

In 2008, the question of South Ossetia and Abkhazia, which are regions in Georgia that seek independence, became a crisis between Russia and Georgia. The crisis actually started within the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), also known as the Russian Commonwealth, when the Russian government declared that the sanctions on Abkhazia, which were still active since 1992, are outdated and they will be lifted on March 6, 2008.[56] Cornell and Smith described this action of Russia as "de facto annexation", a kind of revenge against the Western countries due to their support for the independ-

52 Birgül Demirtaş Coşkun, "Kosova'nın Bağımsızlığı ve Türk Dış Politikası (1990-2008)," *Uluslararası İlişkiler* 7, no. 27 (Güz 2010): 59.

53 Birgül Demirtaş Coşkun, "Kosova'nın Bağımsızlığı ve Türk Dış Politikası (1990-2008)," 60.

54 Ibid.

55 Birgül Demirtaş Coşkun, "Kosova'nın Bağımsızlığı ve Türk Dış Politikası (1990-2008)," 65.

56 "Russia Lifts Abkhazia Sanctions," *BBC News*, March 6, 2008, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/7282201.stm.

ence of Kosovo in the same year.[57] By executing this military intervention against Georgia through using the conflicts in Abkhazia and South Ossetia, Russia created a huge shock in the world and shook the post-Cold War status quo, because it was the first explicit military aggression of a Russian government on another country since the collapse of the USSR. Hereafter, Russia followed an active and hawkish foreign policy and challenged the hegemony of the United States in international relations.

The new pro-Western government of Mikheil Saakashvili in Georgia came to power with the Rose Revolution in 2003 by ousting the old more-pro-Russian government of Eduard Shevardnadze.[58] Actually, a year before the Rose Revolution, there were already some pro-Western shifts in Georgia. Train and Equip program in February 2002 allowed the American military instructors to come to Georgia and train Georgian troops for counter-terrorism activities. The Georgian President Shevardnadze did not inform the Russian government about this program.[59] The Foreign Minister of Russia, Igor Ivanov, expressed Russian concerns by saying that the Russian government saw this program as a direct involvement of the US military and warned the US and Georgia by saying that it could "aggravate the situation in the region".[60] However, both the US and Georgian governments tried to calm Russia by stating it was just a training program, not a military operation.[61] Later in March 2003, the Georgian Parliament approved a bilateral security pact with the United States which allowed the US military members to enter or exit without a visa, while also allowing them to carry weaponry and de-

57 Svante E. Cornell and David J. Smith, "MOSCOW MOVES TO DE FACTO ANNEXATION OF GEORGIAN BREAKAWAY REGIONS," *Central Asia-Caucasus Analyst*, April 16, 2008, 4, https://www.gfsis.org/media/download/GSAC/Articles/Moscow_Moves_to_De_Facto_Annexation.pdf.

58 "How the Rose Revolution happened," *BBC News*.

59 Vitaly V. Naumkin, "Russian Policy in the South Caucasus," *Connections* 1, no. 3 (2002): 34.

60 Ibid.

61 Ibid.

ploy military hardware.[62] This would create tension between Russia and Georgia because of the increasing US presence in Georgia. When Mikheil Saakashvili took power after the Rose Revolution, the relations between Russia and Georgia worsened.

When Mikheil Saakashvili came to power in January 2004, the pro-Western shift of Georgia gained momentum.[63] The Individual Partnership Action Plan (IPAP) established the first relations between Georgia and NATO.[64] The Secretary of State of the Bush administration, Colin Powell, was invited to the inauguration of Saakashvili to discuss the closing of Russian military bases in Georgia.[65] Based on the agreement made with Russia in 2005, Georgia closed down all Russian bases inside Georgian borders in June 2007.[66] On February 15, 2006, the Georgian Parliament decided to force the Russian peacekeeping forces to leave South Ossetia, and the peacekeeping process was denounced by Georgian members of parliament as an annexation by Russia.[67] Losing military power in Georgia would be a huge geostrategic loss for Russia. In April 2006, as a response, Russia banned imports of wine from Georgia.[68] A month later, the Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili went further and declared that Georgia considers withdrawing from

62 Fatma Aslı Kelkitli, "Russian foreign policy in South Caucasus under Putin," *Perceptions: A Journal of International Affairs* 13 (Winter 2008): 78.

63 "Saakashvili Declared Winner of Georgia's Presidential Election – 2004 – 01 – 15," *Voice of America,* October 29, 2009, https://www.voanews.com/a/a-13-a-2004-01-15-9-saakashvili-67479057/281196.html.

64 Mustafa Aydin, "Turkey's Caucasus Policies," *UNISCI Discussion Papers,* no. 23 (May 2010): 184.

65 Ibid.

66 Margarita Antidze, "Russia closes last military bases in Georgia," *Reuters,* November 13, 2007, https://www.reuters.com/article/us-georgia-russia-bases/russia-closes-last-military-base-in-georgia-idUSL1387605220071113.

67 Jean-Christophe Peuch, "Georgia: Parliament Votes Russian Troops Out of South Ossetia," *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty,* February 15, 2006, https://www.rferl.org/a/1065805.html.

68 C. J. Chivers, "A Russian 'Wine Blockade' Against Moldova and Georgia," *The New York Times,* April 6, 2006, https://www.nytimes.com/2006/04/06/world/europe/06russia.html.

CIS, which is an organization under the influence of Russia.[69] On August 8, 2008, the Saakashvili government of Georgia decided to conduct a military operation on regions demanding separation, South Ossetia and Abkhazia, to restore the territorial integrity.[70] However, the Georgian government faced the military intervention of the Russian Federation, which acted as the guarantor state of these two separatist regions.[71]

The Russian-Georgian War lasted for only five days, but it changed the whole balance of power in the region. The Russian forces easily gained the upper hand by bombing cities such as Gori, Poti, Tskhinvali and Tblisi.[72] The Russian military aggression was condemned by Georgia, and the Georgian government accused Russia of violating international law.[73] On August 9, 2008, the Georgian troops were completely driven out from South Ossetia by Russian forces.[74] The death toll of the Russo-Georgian War was around 1,500.[75] With the mediating role of the French President, Nicolas Sarkozy, the Russian President Dmitry Medvedev agreed to a ceasefire on August 12, 2008 with humiliating demands from the Georgian President, Mikheil Saakash-

69 "Georgia Considering Withdrawal From CIS," *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty,* May 2, 2006, https://www.rferl.org/a/1068105.html.

70 Rovshan Ibrahimov, "Regional Evaluation of the Georgian Crisis," in *Yeni Dönemde Türk Dış Politikası: Uluslararası IV. Türk Dış Politikası Sempozyumu Tebliğleri,* eds. Osman Bahadır Dinçer, Habibe Özdal, Hacali Necefoğlu (Ankara, Uluslararası Stratejik Araştırmalar Kurumu (USAK), 2010), 336.

71 Ibid.

72 Peter Beaumont, Mathew Colin, Tom Parfitt, Helen Womack, Don Mclaughlin and Svetlana Graudt, "Russian Tanks Roll into Georgia as Cities Burn," *The Guardian*, August 10, 2008, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2008/aug/10/russia.georgia1.

73 "Statement by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia." *Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia,* August 7, 2008, Accessed December 20, 2018, http://www.mfa.gov.ge/News/saqartvelos-sagareo-saqmeta-saministros-ganck-(32).aspx?lang=en-US.

74 Rovshan Ibrahimov, "Regional Evaluation of the Georgian Crisis," 336.

75 Michael Schwirtz, Anne Barnard and C.J. Chivers, "1,500 Reported Killed in Georgia Battle," *The New York Times,* August 9, 2008, https://www.nytimes.com/2008/08/10/world/europe/10ossetia.html.

vili.[76] The US President George Walker Bush harshly condemned the Russian aggression into Georgia and praised the French President Nicholas Sarkozy's efforts for establishing the ceasefire.[77] The US Secretary of State, Condoleezza Rice also went to Tbilisi to help the mediator mission of Sarkozy.[78] On August 15, 2008, the Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili signed the ceasefire agreement in South Ossetia.[79]

After the Russo-Georgian War, the Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili declared that Georgia would completely withdraw from CIS.[80] The US President George Walker Bush supported the NATO memberships of Georgia and Ukraine to protect them from upcoming Russian invasions.[81] In late 2009, the withdrawal process of Georgia from CIS was complete and Saakashvili's Georgia completely cut her ties with Russia.[82] The US President Bush warned Russia and expressed that the US administration was "deeply concerned".[83] Nevertheless, the Russian government did not take the warning of the Bush administration into consideration and the Russian President Dimitry Medvedev signed the presidential decree that recognized the independence of South Ossetia and Abkhazia from Georgia on April 26, 2008.[84] As the winner of the war, Russia got what she wanted. After the military intervention into Georgia, Russia increased her sphere of influence in Caucasia

76 Ian Traynor and Luke Harding, "Surrender or Else, Russia Tells Georgia," *The Guardian*, August 12, 2008, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2008/aug/12/russia.georgia1.

77 "President Bush Discusses situation in Georgia, Urges Russia to Cease Military Operations," *The White House*, August 13, 2008, Accessed December 19, 2018, https://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2008/08/20080813.html.

78 Rovshan Ibrahimov, "Regional Evaluation of the Georgian Crisis," 337.

79 Ibid.

80 "Georgia Finalizes Withdrawal from CIS," *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty*, August 18, 2009, https://www.rferl.org/a/Georgia_Finalizes_Withdrawal_From_CIS/1802284.html.

81 Luke Harding, "Bush backs Ukraine and Georgia for Nato membership," *The Guardian,* April 1, 2008, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2008/apr/01/nato.georgia.

82 "Georgia Finalizes Withdrawal from CIS," *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty*.

83 "Bush warns Moscow over breakaway autonomy," *CNN,* August 25, 2008, http://edition.cnn.com/2008/WORLD/europe/08/25/russia.vote/index.html.

84 "Statement by President of Russia Dimitry Medvedev," *President of Russia*, August 26, 2008, Accessed December 20, 2018, http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/1222.

through recognizing the independence of South Ossetia and Abkhazia.[85] Hence, with this intervention, Russia did not just force Georgia to withdraw from South Ossetia, but also did not allow NATO and the European Union to increase their powers in the region of Transcaucasia, which could be a huge problem for her in the future. Therefore, the Russian intervention into Georgia was not just a military operation in another country to strengthen its military position, but also a move against Western expansion. Moreover, new Russian military bases had been established in Gudauta, Abkhazia as well as in Java and Tskhinvali in South Ossetia that contained 4,000 Russian soldiers.[86] Also, Russia decided to construct a naval base in Ochamchira, Abkhazia which would increase the power of Russia in the Black Sea.[87]

Turkey wanted to have a stable Georgia as a buffer zone between Turkey and Russia at the time of the conflict. Since the Rose Revolution, Turkey has supported Georgia's NATO membership as a guarantee against Russia.[88] The Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan openly expressed his concerns about the Russian-Georgian conflict, while underlining Turkey's support in favor of Georgia's national sovereignty.[89] The Turkish government followed a cautious approach towards this crisis. The Turkish officials criticized Russia softly due to the Turkish dependence on Russian gas[90], but the EU countries and the US harshly opposed the Russian military intervention.[91] In order not to lose the gas routes, the Turkish Prime Minister Recep

85 Emre Erşen, "2000'li Yıllarda Türkiye Rusya İlişkileri: 'Kompartmanlaştırma' Stratejisinin Sorunları," in *Kuşku Ile Komşuluk*, eds. Gencer Özcan, Evren Balta and Burç Beşgül (İstanbul, İletişim Yayınları, 2017), 152

86 Tracey German, "Securing the South Caucasus: Military Aspects of Russian Policy towards the Region since 2008," *Europe-Asia Studies* 64, no. 9. (2012): 1653-1654.

87 Tom Parfitt, "US-Russia stand-off looms as Moscow announces expansion of military bases," *The Guardian,* August 12, 2009, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2009/aug/12/us-russia-georgia-military-tension.

88 Mustafa Aydin, "Turkey's Caucasus Policies," 185.

89 "Gürcistan Başbakanı Ankara'da," *Amerika'nın Sesi,* December 23, 2008, https://www.amerikaninsesi.com/a/a-17-2008-12-23-voa10-88126677/868698.html.

90 Turkey's dependence on Russian gas was around 62% in 2008.

91 Emre Erşen, "2000'li Yıllarda Türkiye Rusya İlişkileri: 'Kompartmanlaştırma' Stratejisinin Sorunları," 152.

Tayyip Erdoğan quickly became involved in the crisis to play the mediator role between Russia and Georgia.[92] Without losing time, he proposed Caucasian Platform for Stability and Co-operation, also known as the Caucasian Alliance, among Turkey, Russia, Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan to create a peaceful alliance in the region as a solution to this crisis between Russia and Georgia.[93] This project of Erdoğan was supported by Russia. However, it was harshly criticized by the United States due to the exclusion of the United States and the European Union from the process.[94]

In 2014, the Russian influence in the region increased when the Agreement between the Russian Federation and the Republic of Abkhazia on Alliance and Strategic Partnership was signed, which allowed Russia to control the foreign policy of the Republic of Abkhazia and to integrate the Abkhazian economy into the Russian economy through the Eurasian Economic Union.[95] A similar agreement was also made by South Ossetia which gave the same advantages to the Russian Federation.[96] These two agreements ensured that Russia had a strong voice in Abkhazia and South Ossetia.

The Republics of South Ossetia and Abkhazia are seen as disputed lands between Russia and Georgia. The independence of these regions are not recognized by the United States or any other Western state. In addition to Russia, only Venezuela, Nicaragua and Nauru recognized the independence of these two republics.[97] Recently, Syria's Assad regime was added to the list as it

92 Henri J. Barkey, "Turkey and Great Powers," in *Turkey's Engagement with Modernity: Conflict and Change in the Twentieth Century,* eds. Celia Kerslake, Kerem Öktem and Philip Robins (Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 255.

93 Mitat Çelikpala, "Rusya Federasyonuyla İlişkiler," in *Türk Dış Politikası: Kurtuluş Savaşından Bugüne Olgular, Belgeler, Yorumlar Cilt III: 2001-2012,* ed. Baskın Oran (İstanbul, İletişim Yayınları, 2018), 540.

94 Emre Erşen, "2000'li Yıllarda Türkiye Rusya İlişkileri: 'Kompartmanlaştırma' Stratejisinin Sorunları," 152.

95 "Meeting with President of Abkhazia Raul Khadzhimba," *President of Russia*. November 24, 2014, Accessed December 20, 2018, http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/47057.

96 "Meeting talks with President of South Ossetia Leonid Tibilov," *President of Russia,* March 18, 2015, Accessed December 20, 2018, http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/47873.

97 "Countries that recognized South Ossetia's and Abkhazia's independence," *TASS Russian News Agency,* May 29, 2018, http://tass.com/world/1007058.

decided to recognize these two breakaway republics as a reward for the Russian support in the Syrian Civil War.[98] Nevertheless, the attitude of the Western world did not change. The European Union still demands Russia to reverse the recognition of these two disputed lands.[99] Also the current US administration of Donald Trump, which is the administration of the US President who was harshly criticized for being pro-Russian or too soft on Russia, sides with Georgia against Russia on this issue.[100] From a Neorealist perspective, it is not surprising to see that both the EU and the United States want to reverse the recognition of the breakaway regions of Georgia, due to the fear of the rising power of Russia in Eastern Europe. Turkey defended Georgia's territorial integrity and national sovereignty in the Russo-Georgian War since a stable buffer zone between Turkey and Russia was in her interest. Turkey did not recognize the independence of Abkhazia and South Ossetia, even when Turkish relations with Russia improved since the failed coup d'état attempt of July 15th, 2016.[101]

§ 4.4 The Russian Reset and the Akkuyu Nuclear Power Plant Project

In the first year of the Obama administration, the Russian Reset was started, which was an initiative started by the US President Barack Hussein Obama in 2009 to reduce the tension between the United States and Russia by focusing on security issues such as the War on Terrorism and the Iran Nuclear

98 "Syria recognises Russian-backed Georgia regions," *BBC News*, May 29, 2018, https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-44291091.

99 "EU Lawmakers Urge Russia To Reverse Recognition of Abkhazia, South Ossetia Independence," *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty,* June 14, 2018, https://www.rferl.org/a/eu-lawmakers-urge-russia-to-reverse-recognition-of-abkhazia-south-ossetia-independence/29290370.html.

100 "Georgian PM: Trump Offers 'Full Support' In Standoff With Russia Over Breakaway Regions," *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty,* May 8, 2017, https://www.rferl.org/a/georgia-kvirikashvili-trump-abkhazia-south-ossetia/28475046.html.

101 "Turkey supports Georgia's territorial integrity," *Hürriyet Daily News*, May 27, 2018, http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/turkey-supports-georgias-territorial-integrity-132420.

Crisis.[102] In his speech at New Economic School in Moscow, the US President Barack Obama demanded to move away from Cold War politics and re-establish Russian-American relations by inviting the Russian government for a co-operation to decrease nuclear weapons.[103] In April 2010, the US President Barack Hussein Obama and the Russian President Dimitry Medvedev signed the New Start in Prague which was an agreement to decrease the number of nuclear arsenals by a third.[104] This was the first step towards a new Détente, as US President Obama praised the moment by saying, "Together, we've stopped that drift, and proven the benefits of cooperation. Today is an important milestone for nuclear security and non-proliferation, and for US-Russia relations".[105] Just like the Era of Détente in the Cold War, this era of Russian Reset would not continue for long, either. However, it started a new phase that ended the diplomatic crisis between Washington and Moscow that had been going on since the Russian-Georgian War and stopped the aggressive foreign policy of Russia for a while.

In this new atmosphere, Turkey was cautious towards Russia due to the Russo-Georgian War of 2008. Since the Russian-Georgian War, Turkey felt the possibility of a Russian aggression was very real. When the aggressive stance of Russia was ended with the Russian Reset, at least for a short period of time, Turkey took this opportunity to make new energy agreements with the Russian Federation, even though she was on the side of the United States, rather than Russia, in the Arab Spring.

The first nuclear energy deal that was made between the Russian and Turkish governments was signed on May 12th, 2010 in Ankara for the con-

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102 Michael McFaul, *From Cold War to Hot Peace: The Inside Story of Russia and America* (Milton Keynes, Allen Lane, 2018), 88.

103 Luke Harding and Matthew Weaver, "Barack Obama calls for 'reset' in US-Russia relations," *The Guardian,* July 7, 2009, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2009/jul/07/barack-obama-russia-moscow-speech.

104 Mark Tran, "Barack Obama signs nuclear treaty with Russia," *The Guardian,* April 8, 2010, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2010/apr/08/barack-obama-nuclear-treaty-russia.

105 "Russian-US Treaty on Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms has been signed," *President of Russia*, April 8, 2010, Accessed December 20, 2018, http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/7396.

struction of the Akkuyu Nuclear Power Plant. This power plant would be constructed by ROSATOM, the Russian State Atomic Energy Cooperation.[106] Having a nuclear power plant was something that the Justice and Development Party government in Turkey had been promoting for a long time and it was perceived as a huge step forward for the economic growth of Turkey. This issue became a kind of advertisement for the government's efforts for a stronger Turkey.[107] Besides Akkuyu, two more projects for new nuclear power plants were planned by the Turkish government of Justice and Development Party despite the environmentalist reaction in the country since the deal was signed.[108] Also, foreign reactions from the European Union due to the concerns about nuclear energy led to the condemnation of the construction of the Akkuyu Nuclear Power Plant.[109]

The first ceremony of the nuclear plant was held on March 14, 2015.[110] Ironically, the construction of the power plant was halted by the end of the year due to worsening relations with Russia after the plane shooting incident.[111] It would be restarted in late 2016 when Russian-Turkish relations improve after the failed coup d'état attempt of July 15th.[112] In April 2018, the

106 "Milletlerarası Andlaşma," *Resmi Gazete*, October 6, 2010, Accessed December 20, 2018, http://www.resmigazete.gov.tr/eskiler/2010/10/20101006-6.htm.

107 "Nükleer Santrali AKP'nin 'Milli Güç' Yalanı," *Bianet,* May 27, 2015, https://m.bianet.org/bianet/toplum/164831-nukleer-santrali-akp-nin-milli-guc-yalani.

108 "Erdoğan: Üçüncü nükleer güç santrali projesiyle ilgili çalışmalarımızı başlattık," *Cumhuriyet*, July 10, 2017, http://www.cumhuriyet.com.tr/haber/cevre/778075/Erdogan__Ucuncu_nukleer_guc_santrali_projesiyle_ilgili_calismalarimizi_baslattik.html.

109 "AP'den Türkiye'ye: Akkuyu'yu durdur," *Cumhuriyet,* July 6, 2017, http://www.cumhuriyet.com.tr/haber/turkiye/775551/AP_den_Turkiye_ye__Akkuyu_yu_durdur.html.

110 "Mersin'de olaylı temel atma töreni," *Milliyet*, April 14, 2015, http://www.milliyet.com.tr/akkuyu-nukleer-santrali-nin-temeli/ekonomi/detay/2043889/default.htm.

111 Orhan Coskun, "UPDATE 1-Russia halts Turkey nuclear work, Ankara looks elsewhere," *Reuters*, December 9, 2015, https://www.reuters.com/article/mideast-crisis-turkey-russia-nuclear-idUSL8N13Y31G20151209.

112 Ibid.

second ceremony of the nuclear plant took place and it was reported that it would be completed by the year 2023.[113]

113 "Akkuyu Nükleer Güç Santrali'nin Temeli Atılıyor," *CNN Türk,* April 3, 2018, https://www.cnnturk.com/turkiye/akkuyu-ngsnin-temel-atma-toreni.

5

The Post-Euromaidan Revolution Turkish-Russian Relations in the Black Sea Region

§ 5.1 The Euromaidan Revolution and the Annexation of Crimea

On November 21, 2013, the pro-Russian president of Ukraine, Viktor Yanukovych from the Party of Regions decided to stop the implementation of the Ukraine-European Union Association Agreement due to pressure from the Russian government.[1] After this controversial act of president Yanukovych, many protesters in Kiev's Independence Square, now known as Euromaidan, took to the streets against President Yanukovych on February 18, 2014 and the riot quickly got bigger as deadly clashes were experienced.[2] However, President Yanukovych's answer to the protesters was not peaceful. On February 21, 2014, Ukraine experienced the bloodiest day in the protests when many people died due to the Ukrainian government's brutal approach

1 Ian Traynor and Oksana Grytsenko, "Ukraine suspends talks on EU trade pact as Putin wins the tug of war," *The Guardian*, November 21, 2013, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/nov/21/ukraine-suspends-preparations-eu-trade-pact.

2 "Ukraine: Deadly clashes around parliament in Kiev," *BBC News*, February 18, 2014, https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-26236860.

that included snipers and the use of live ammunition.[3] According to the Health Ministry of Ukraine, the death toll of the Euromaidan Protests reached to 102 by March 11, 2014.[4] Despite all efforts of Viktor Yanukovych to suppress the protesters, the protests could not be taken under control. The police brutality to suppress the protests actually made them bigger.[5] The country was once destabilized by these quick waves of protests and the Ukrainian protesters did not take a step back.

The reaction of the Western world to the Euromaidan Crisis came too quickly in a supportive way. Before the protests reached a critical point, the US Vice President, Joe Biden made a phone call on December 9, 2013, to the Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovych to warn him about the possibility of violence and demanded him to find a middle way with the opposition while underlining that the United States had good relations with the European Union.[6] The phone calls from Vice President Biden were repeated over and over again in January 2014, when the protests turned bloody due to the government's harsh response, but the tone of Vice President Biden became harsher. Biden condemned the violence from both sides and warned that violence against protesters might hurt the relations between the United States and Ukraine, and demanded Yanukovych to pull back the troops.[7][8] On

3 Ian Traynor, "Ukraine's bloodiest day: dozens dead as Kiev protesters regain territory from police," *The Guardian*, February 21, 2014, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/feb/20/ukraine-dead-protesters-police.

4 "Ukrainian unrest death toll reaches 102 people – Health Ministry," *Interfax*, March 11, 2014, https://en.interfax.com.ua/news/general/195405.html.

5 Leonid Peisakhin, "Euromaidan Revisited: Causes of Regime Change in Ukraine One Year On," Kenan Cable No 5, (February 2015), *The Kennan Institute*. 3-4. https://www.wilsoncenter.org/sites/default/files/5-kennan%20cable-Peisakhin.pdf.

6 "Readout of Vice President Biden's Call with President Yanukovych of Ukraine," *The White House,* December 9, 2013, Accessed December 18, 2018, https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2013/12/09/readout-vice-president-bidens-call-ukrainian-president-viktor-yanukovych.

7 "Readout of Vice President Biden's Call with President Yanukovych of Ukraine," *The White House*, January 23, 2014, Accessed December 18, 2018, https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2014/01/23/readout-vice-president-bidens-call-ukrainian-president-viktor-yanukovych.

February 21, 2014, The European Union held an emergency meeting to impose sanctions on Ukrainian officials which included a travel ban and an asset freeze, although EU members failed to reach a consensus on a weapons embargo for Ukraine.[9] A similar reaction also came from the Obama administration of the United States as it declared that sanctions on Ukrainian officials would be imposed if the Ukrainian government's oppression on the protestors continued and demanded the Ukrainian forces to be withdrawn from the sites of the protests.[10] After the bloody events on February 21, 2014, the pro-Russian President of Ukraine had no chance but to accept defeat and give up. The overthrow of a pro-Russian, anti-EU and anti-Western government in Ukraine and its replacement by a pro-EU, Pro-Western and anti-Russian government seemed to be a victory for the West.

The Euromaidan Protests were the largest political protests in Ukraine since the Orange Revolution in 2004 that came out of claims of rigged elections. Ironically, the protests of the Orange Revolution were also targeting the same person, Viktor Yanukovych, when he was the Prime Minister of Ukraine and the conflict was again between pro-Western Ukrainian leaders and pro-Russian ruling elites. As an ally of Yanukovych and an anti-EU/anti-Western great power, the Russians tried to keep the Yanukovych's government in power. On December 18, 2013 the Russian President Vladimir Putin rewarded Yanukovych's anti-EU decision by buying Ukrainian government

8 "Readout of Vice President Biden's Call with President Yanukovych of Ukraine," *The White House,* January 27, 2014, Accessed December 18, 2018, https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2014/01/27/readout-vice-president-bidens-call-president-yanukovych-ukraine.

9 Phillip Olterman and Paul Lewis, "EU foreign ministers agree sanctions against Ukrainian officials," *The Guardian,* February 21, 2014, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/feb/20/ukraine-eu-foreign-ministers-agree-sanctions-officials.

10 "US piles pressure on Yanukovych over bloody crackdown in Ukraine," *The Guardian*, February 21, 2014, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/feb/21/us-pressure-yanukovych-crackdown-in-ukraine.

bonds that is worth 15 billion USD and reducing the price of gas.[11] The Euromaidan Protests became the break point between the United States and Russia, just like the Russo-Georgian War of 2008. This conflict between the great powers on the issue of Ukraine would destroy the achievements of the Russian Reset and it would create a new quasi-Cold War atmosphere.

Ukranian parliamentary staff's blockage of the bill about curbing the power of the president in the Ukrainian parliament created a huge controversy on February 18, 2014.[12] This bill would curb the power of the president by restoring the old Ukrainian constitution of 2004.[13] Nevertheless, the bill did not pass and the opposition leader, Arseniy Yatsenyuk, accused President Yanukovych by claiming that he personally ordered to stop the bill.[14] After this parliamentary crisis, President Yanukovych tried to find a middle way with the Ukrainian opposition to stop bloodshed. On February 21, 2014, he signed a deal with the opposition leaders which promised to hold an early presidential election, to form a national unity government and most importantly, restore the old constitution of 2004.[15] However, after the deal was signed, President Yanukovych understood that he lost the battle. Although he said that he has no intention of resigning or leaving Ukraine, he denounced the incidents as a coup against him and he fled from Kiev to Kharkov in Eastern Ukraine.[16] Protests continued the whole night of February

11 Shaun Walker, "Vladimir Putin offers Ukraine financial incentives to stick with Russia," *The Guardian,* December 18, 2013, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/dec/17/ukraine-russia-leaders-talks-kremlin-loan-deal.

12 "Ukraine: bill to return to 2004 constitution blocked," *Euronews*, February 18, 2014, https://www.euronews.com/2014/02/18/ukraine-bill-to-return-to-2004-constitution-blocked.

13 Ibid.

14 Ibid.

15 Ian Traynor, "Ukraine opposition leaders sign deal with government," *The Guardian*, February 21, 2014, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/feb/21/ukraine-president-says-deal-has-been-reached-opposition-bloodshed.

16 Hannah Strange, "Ukraine crisis: Viktor Yanukovych denounces 'coup' as he leaves Kiev," *The Telegraph*, February 22, 2014, https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/ukraine/10655398/Ukraine-crisis-Opposition-demands-Viktor-Yanukovych-resign.html.

22nd, 2014 and the jailed former Prime Minister of Ukraine and the arch-enemy of Viktor Yanukovych, Yulia Timoshenko, was released from prison.[17] On the same day, the Ukrainian Parliament impeached Viktor Yanukovych, and the Ukrainian army as well as police forces declared that they are with the people and they will not make any kind of intervention.[18] By February 23rd, 2014, the reign of Viktor Yanukovych and the Russian influence on Ukraine had ended. Due to the fear of a possible Russian military intervention to restore the status quo, the National Security Advisor of the Obama administration, Susan Rice harshly warned Russia not to intervene by saying it would be a "grave mistake" on NBC's *Meet the Press*, and she also expressed her suspicion about the sudden disappearance of Viktor Yanukovych.[19]

The Western world quickly embraced this Euromaidan Revolution of Ukraine as the Foreign Secretary of the United Kingdom, William Hague declared that the European Union as well as the United Kingdom would support the new government of Ukraine.[20] Even though a very far-right extremist ultranationalist Neo-Nazi parties called Svoboda (Freedom) and Praviy Sektor (Right Sector) participated in the new government of Ukraine, the Western world still supported it as a pro-EU and pro-Western front against Russia.[21] The United States made a similar move as expected and President Barack Hussein Obama praised the Euromaidan Revolution by

17 Shaun Walker, "Ukraine's former PM rallies protesters after Yanukovych flees Kiev," *The Guardian*, February 23, 2014, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/feb/22/ukraine-president-yanukovych-flees-kiev.

18 Ibid.

19 Josh Hicks, "Susan Rice says Russia should not involve troops in Ukraine," *The Washington Post,* February 23, 2014, https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/susan-rice-says-russia-should-not-involve-troops-in-ukraine/2014/02/23/374dc380-9cab-11e3-9080-5d1d87a6d793_story.html?utm_term=.a44e7fb15649.

20 Shaun Walker, "Ukraine MPs appoint interim president as Yanukovych allies dismissed," *The Guardian*, February 23, 2014, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/feb/23/ukraine-crisis-interim-president-turchynov-yanukovych-tymoshenko.

21 Harriet Salem, "Who exactly is governing Ukraine?" *The Guardian*, March 4, 2014, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/mar/04/who-governing-ukraine-olexander-turchynov.

stating how the protesters "reminded us that human beings have a universal right to determine their own future".[22] The US support for the new anti-Russian government of Ukraine continued after the Euromaidan Revolution. The Obama administration financially aided the new Ukrainian government with 92 million USD with the FY2013 State/USAID funds and 86 million USD from the FY2014 funds and provided a 1 billion USD loan.[23]

Just like the Orange Revolution of 2004, the Euromaidan Protests ended with Viktor Yanukovych's removal from office, and anti-Russian political figures took control of the government once more under the interim governments of Oleksandr Turchynov and Arseniy Yatsenyuk.[24] The regime change, from a pro-Russian government to a pro-Western and Pro-EU government, was completely against Russian interests. Just on the day of the revolution, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov claimed that the protests were started by fringe extremist groups which are pogromists, and asked the EU member states to force the Ukrainian opposition to stick to the deal that was signed with Yanukovych on February 22, 2014, rather than create new demands.[25] Nonetheless, this reaction of the Russian government could not save the Yanukovych government. After all of these events, the ousted-President Viktor Yanukovych managed to flee to Russia with the help of the Russian President Vladimir Putin, and was granted asylum.[26] The Russian Prime Minister, Dimitry Medvedev claimed the new government of Ukraine

22 "Statement by the President on Ukraine," *The White House*, February 28, 2014, Accessed December 18, 2018, https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2014/02/28/statement-president-ukraine.

23 "Russia's Destabilization of Ukraine," *U.S. Department of State*, May 8, 2014, Accessed December 18, 2018, https://2009-2017.state.gov/p/eur/rls/rm/2014/may/225773.htm.

24 Conal Urquhart, "Ukraine MPs appoint interim president as Yanukovych allies dismissed – 23 February as it happened," *The Guardian,* February 23, 2014, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/feb/23/ukraine-crisis-yanukovych-tymoshenko-live-updates.

25 Shaun Walker, "Ukraine's former PM rallies protesters after Yanukovych flees Kiev."

26 "Putin: Russia helped Yanukovych to flee Ukraine," *BBC* News, October 24, 2014, https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-29761799.

to be illegitimate.[27] However, the crisis was not over. Crimea and Eastern Ukraine, the Ukrainian regions with strong Russian populations, would now be the targets of the Russian government. The intervention of Russia would be quite aggressive, and it would lead to a huge diplomatic conflict between the Western world and Russia while creating civil wars in the Eastern parts of Ukraine.

The Putin administration of Russia reacted very harshly to the Euromaidan Revolution by conducting a military intervention into Crimea which was a region that had an ethnic Russian majority of 60% in the region.[28] The new Ukrainian government's interim President Oleksandr Turchynov had warned the officials of the government about the ethnic Russian separatism in Crimea.[29] After the Euromaidan Revolution in Ukraine, Crimean Russians started to protest against the change of the government, and some clashes took place between the ethnic Russians and ethnic Ukrainians of Crimea.[30] In these clashes, one person was killed.[31] The White House issued a state-

27 Howard Amos, Shaun Walker and Haroon Siddique, "Ukraine's new government is not legitimate," *The Guardian.* February 24, 2014, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/feb/24/ukraine-viktor-yanukovych-arrest-warrant.

28 Laura Smith-Spark, Phil Black and Frederik Pleitgen, "Russia flexes military muscle as tensions rise in Ukraine's Crimea region," *CNN,* February 27, 2014, https://edition.cnn.com/2014/02/26/world/europe/ukraine-politics/index.html.

29 David Blair and Roland Oliphant, "Ukraine interim president Oleksandr Turchynov warns against Crimea separatism," *The Telegraph,* February 25, 2014, https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/ukraine/10661476/Ukraine-interim-president-Oleksander-Turchynov-warns-against-Crimea-separatism.html.

30 Laura Smith-Spark, Phil Black and Frederik Pleitgen, "Russia flexes military muscle as tensions rise in Ukraine's Crimea region."

31 Harriet Salem, Shaun Walker and Oksana Grytsenko, "Russia puts military on high alerts as Crimea protests leave one man dead," *The Guardian,* February 26, 2014, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/feb/26/ukraine-new-leader-disbands-riot-police-crimea-separatism.

ment to warn the new Ukrainian government to avoid divisive politics in a country that was already ethnically and linguistically divided.[32]

The tension increased when Russia placed troops on her Western borders for a military exercise.[33] The Russian Minister of Defense, Sergei Shoigu said that the Russian army in Western Russia was there only to exercise.[34] Nevertheless, this sudden exercise created suspicions about a possible Russian military aggression into Ukraine. The US Secretary of State, John Kerry, repeated the warning of Susan Rice by stating that a Russian intervention would be a grave mistake.[35] Unfortunately, both Susan Rice and John Kerry were right about their suspicions. On February 27, 2014, the pro-Russian armed groups took control of the Crimean parliament in Simferopol and raised the flag of the Russian Federation.[36] A day later, these armed groups seized two airports in Crimea and some Russian military vehicles were reported to be seen in Crimean cities.[37] The Russian Foreign Ministry said that the Russian military vehicles were a part of the Russian Black Sea Fleet which went to Crimea to secure the Russian base in Sevastopol.[38] However, it was also reported that the Ukrainian government was not informed about

32 "Statement by the Press Secretary on Ukraine," *The White House*, February 26, 2014, Accessed December 18, 2018, https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2014/02/26/statement-press-secretary-ukraine.

33 Harriet Salem, Shaun Walker and Oksana Grytsenko, "Russia puts military on high alerts as Crimea protests leave one man dead."

34 Laura Smith-Spark, Phil Black and Frederik Pleitgen, "Russia flexes military muscle as tensions rise in Ukraine's Crimea region."

35 Harriet Salem, Shaun Walker and Oksana Grytsenko, "Russia puts military on high alerts as Crimea protests leave one man dead."

36 Harriet Salem, Shaun Walker and Luke Harding. "Crimean parliament seized by unknown pro-Russian gunmen," *The Guardian*, February 27, 2014, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/feb/27/crimean-parliament-seized-by-unknown-pro-russian-gunmen.

37 Harriet Salem and Shaun Walker, "Russian armored vehicles on the move in Crimea," *The Guardian,* February 28, 2014, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/feb/28/gunmen-crimean-airports-ukraine.

38 Ibid.

this movement of the Russian military vehicles in Crimea.[39] The US Secretary of State, John Kerry said that he talked with the Russian Foreign Minister, Sergei Lavrov and warned the Russian government against doing anything that could be interpreted as an act of aggression.[40] The new de facto Prime Minister of Crimea, Sergei Aksyonov, who was pro-Russian, invited the Russian government to intervene, which was harshly condemned by the Obama administration.[41] The American government sent a warning stating that a Russian military action would have consequences.[42] Nonetheless, the Russian military intervention was already initated on March 1, 2014 when the Russian parliament approved Putin's decision to send troops into Crimea.[43] This decision of the Russian parliament was harshly condemned by Western countries including the United States and United Kingdom as well as the United Nations.[44] On March 1st, the Ukrainian government claimed that 2,000 Russian troops landed on Crimea.[45]

The armed groups in Crimea with military uniforms that had no insignia were dubbed as "Little Green Men" on the internet and the Ukrainian media described them as "Russian invaders".[46] However, the Russian President Vladimir Putin denied all claims about their links to the Russian military by stating they are just local pro-Russian militia groups in Crimea.[47] Neverthe-

39 Ibid.

40 Ibid.

41 Paul Lewis, Ian Traynor and Luke Harding, "Crimea crisis: pro-Russian leader appeals to Putin for help," *The Guardian,* February 28, 2014, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/feb/28/barack-obama-vladimir-putin-ukraine-russia.

42 Ibid.

43 "Russian parliament approves troop deployment in Ukraine," *BBC News,* March 1, 2014, https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-26400035.

44 Ibid.

45 Shaun Walker, Harriet Salem and Ewen MacAskill, "Russian 'invasion' of Crimea fuels fear of Ukraine conflict," *The Guardian,* March 1, 2014, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/feb/28/russia-crimea-white-house.

46 Vitaly Shevchenko, ""Little Green Men" or "Russian invaders"?" *BBC News*, March 11, 2014, https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-26532154.

47 Ibid.

less, in the end, it was found out that these little green men were members of the Russian army. Even the Russian President Vladimir Putin admitted it when he declared Russia's victory in Crimea.[48] The Russian President Putin did not accept the Russian military deployment into Crimea as an "invasion".[49] He claimed that 20,000 Ukrainian troops with stockpiles of weapons and S-300 anti-aircraft missiles were deployed at the time of the Crimean referendum, and the Russian operation was an act of defense to protect the Crimean people against the Ukrainian government.[50]

The controversial referendum in Crimea was held on March 16, 2014 and results were in favor of a union with Russia by 96.8% of votes.[51] After this referendum, the Obama administration quickly issued a statement, which stated that the United States recognized the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine since the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991, hence rejected the results of the referendum.[52] In the same statement issued by the Press Secretary of the Obama administration, it was noted that the United States had concerns about the military aggression of Russia due to the deployment of Russian soldiers into the Crimean Peninsula.[53] Another concern for the American government was the fact that at the United Nations Security Council, Russia vetoed a resolution that would allow international monitors into Crimea for ensuring the rights of ethnic Russians.[54] A day later, a similar statement was made by the US President Barack Hussein

48 "Putin acknowledges Russian military servicemen were in Crimea," *Russia Today,* April 17, 2014, https://www.rt.com/news/crimea-defense-russian-soldiers-108/.

49 Ibid.

50 Ibid.

51 Shaun Walker and Luke Harding, "Crimea applies to be part of Russian Federation after vote to leave Ukraine," *The Guardian,* March 17, 2014, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/mar/17/ukraine-crimea-russia-referendum-complain-result.

52 "Statement by the Press Secretary on Ukraine," *The White House*, March 16, 2014, Accessed December 14, 2018, https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2014/03/16/statement-press-secretary-ukraine.

53 Ibid.

54 Ibid.

Obama himself, which condemned the Russian deployment of troops into Crimea and spoke in favor of the Ukrainian government by saying "the future of Ukraine must be decided by the people of Ukraine. That means Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity must be respected, and international law must be upheld."[55] With this statement, President Obama declared that sanctions on Russia would be expanded.[56] The international community also condemned Russia, and the European Union imposed its own sanctions on the Russian government.[57] Even though these sanctions really hurt the Russian economy as the Russian Ruble fell sharply, the Crimean Peninsula was illegally annexed by the Russian Federation.[58] Nevertheless, this annexation was never recognized by any NATO member, including the United States, and it is still not-recognized in the year 2019.[59]

The Turkish governments of Justice and Development Party (AKP) during these crises in Ukraine and Crimea, always stood with the Western side against Russia. After the fall of Viktor Yanukovych's regime in Ukraine, the new Ukrainian government was quickly recognized by the Turkish government.[60] Turkey also considered the annexation of Crimea by Russia as illegal and did not recognize the referendum.[61] This position of Turkey still continues even in 2019 when Turkey and Russia actually got closer since the failed

55 "Statement by the President on Ukraine," *The White House*, March 17, 2014, Accessed December 14, 2018, https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2014/03/17/statement-president-ukraine.

56 Ibid.

57 Ibid.

58 "Russians ditch ruble en masse, data shows," *Reuters,* May 12, 2014, https://www.reuters.com/article/us-russia-rouble-cenbank/russians-ditch-ruble-en-masse-data-shows-idUSBREA4B02820140512.

59 "US will 'never recognize Russia's annexation of Crimea'," *Al-Jazeera*, July 25, 2018, https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2018/07/recognise-russia-annexation-crimea-180725190209701.html.

60 Adam Balcer, "Dances with the Bear: Turkey and Russia After Crimea," Working Paper 8. *Istituto Affari Internazionali*, July 2014, 2, https://www.iai.it/sites/default/files/gte_wp_08.pdf.

61 Ibid.

coup d'état on July 15th, 2016.[62] When the new Ukrainian government was established after the fall of Viktor Yanukovych, the Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ahmet Davutoğlu was the first foreign minister to visit Ukraine after the Euromaidan Revolution.[63] In this meeting, Davutoğlu declared that Turkey wanted to help decrease the tension between Ukraine and Russia and to act as a mediator state to settle down the issue of Crimea.[64] He also put emphasis on the importance of Crimean Tatars for Turkey.[65] Turkey recognized the winner of the Ukrainian Presidential Election of 2014, Petro Poroshenko, as the new president of Ukraine.[66] In the international organizations, Turkey's support for Ukraine within the Western block continued as Turkey approved NATO's sanctions on Russia and voted in favor of a UN resolution that condemned the Russian invasion of Crimea and recognized Crimea as an integral part of Ukraine.[67]

Turkey tried to keep the status quo in a region like Crimea which has a Turkic Tatar minority and historical ties with Turkey. More importantly, the geostrategic importance of Crimea made the new situation more alarming for Turkey. Crimea is a port that can allow Russia to control the whole Black Sea. A strong great power like Russia that is so close to the Turkish borders or Turkish territorial seas is a natural threat to the national security of Turkey. Even though Turkey's political stance towards Russia in the Middle East changed after 2016, her classic Russian policy continued in the Black Sea region because the developments in Crimea were not in Turkey's interest.

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62 "Erdoğan ve Poroşenko'dan ortak açıklama: Kırım'ın yasa dışı ilhakını tanımıyoruz," *Sputnik Türkiye,* November 4, 2018, https://tr.sputniknews.com/turkiye/201811031035978906-erdogan-porosenko-gorusme-basin-aciklamasi/.

63 Adam Balcer, "Dances with the Bear: Turkey and Russia After Crimea," 2.

64 "Foreign Minister Davutoğlu "Turkey is ready to contribute to decrease the tensions and to settle the problems in Crimea"," *Republic of Turkey Ministry of Foreign Affairs*, March 1, 2014, Accessed January 9, 2019, http://www.mfa.gov.tr/foreign-minister-davutoglu-_turkey-is-ready-to-contribute-to-decrease-the-tension-and-to-settle-the-problems-in-crimea.en.mfa.

65 Ibid.

66 Adam Balcer, "Dances with the Bear: Turkey and Russia After Crimea," 2.

67 Ibid.

Also, having a relatively weaker and neutral state in the north such as Ukraine, which keeps Russia away as a buffer zone just like Georgia in the Transcaucasia region, is important for Turkish national security.

§ 5.2 The Eastern Ukrainian Crisis and the Armed Conflicts in Donbass

Besides Crimea, there are two regions in Eastern Ukraine that have ethnic Russian majority. These two regions on the Eastern Russian-Ukrainian border, which are known as Donetsk and Lugansk or collectively Donbass, became the center of competition between Ukraine and Russia. The tension in these two regions was at an extreme level and conflicts were much worse than Crimea due to the clashes between armed groups from both sides. The conflicts began in April 2014, when pro-Russian rebel groups seized the government buildings in Donetsk, Lugansk and Kharkov on April 7, 2014.[68] Just like in the Crimean annexation, the pro-Russian militias put up Russian flags and called for a referendum.[69] However, the response of the new Ukrainian government came quickly as it did not want to repeat the same mistake it made Crimea. This time, the Ukrainian government, as well as the Western world, were more prepared for the Russian aggression. On April 9, 2014, the Ukrainian government expressed its harsh stance against the Pro-Russian unrest in Eastern Ukraine, when the Ukrainian Interior Minister Arsen Avakov issued an ultimatum by saying "For those who want dialogue, we propose talks and a political solution. For those who want conflict, they will get a forceful answer from the Ukrainian authorities" and gave 48 hours to the rebel groups to make a decision.[70] The Russian government said that using force to end the unrest would lead to a civil war in Ukraine.[71] The German

68 "Ukraine: Pro-Russians storm offices in Donetsk, Luhansk, Kharkiv," *BBC News,* April 7, 2014, https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-26910210.

69 Ibid.

70 "Ukraine in 48-hour ultimatum to east's pro-Russia activists," *BBC News,* April 9, 2014, https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-26953113.

71 Ibid.

Chancellor, Angela Merkel accused the Russian President Vladimir Putin for not doing anything to ease the situation in Ukraine, while the US Secretary of State, John Kerry harshly accused the Russian government for being behind the unrest.[72] The Russian President Putin said that the Russian government had no intention of invading Ukraine. However, he underlined that Russia had every right to protect the interests of the Russians in Ukraine.[73]

Throughout the year 2014, the situation of Donetsk and Lugansk were not so different than Yemen or Syria. Russia was arming the Russian separatist rebels in Donetsk and Lugansk called NAF (The United Armed Forces of Novorossiya) while the new Ukrainian government was trying to suppress these groups by allowing even the Neo-Nazi militias called the Azov Battalion to join the conflict against the Russian separatists.[74] Many Neo-Nazi militants from Western countries were recruited for the Azov Battalion to fight against the pro-Russian rebel group NAF.[7576] In April 2014, the expectation of a Russian military intervention was very high, hence the US Secretary of State, John Kerry warned about it.[77] Nevertheless, the Ukrainian government's harsh attacks into the region against pro-Russian rebels never stopped, either. Human Rights Watch reported that the Ukrainian govern-

72 Ibid.

73 Ibid.

74 Shaun Walker, "Azov fighters are Ukraine's greatest weapon and may be its greatest threat," *The Guardian,* 2014, September 10, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/sep/10/azov-far-right-fighters-ukraine-neo-nazis.

75 Kevin Rawlinson, "Neo-Nazi groups recruit Britons to fight in Ukraine," *The Guardian*, March 2, 2018, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/mar/02/neo-nazi-groups-recruit-britons-to-fight-in-ukraine.

76 Sean Rubinsztein-Dunlop, Susan Dredge and Michael Workman, "From Neo-Nazi to militant: The foreign fighters in Ukraine who Australia's law won't stop," *ABC News*, May 7, 2018, https://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-05-01/foreign-fighters-return-to-australia-with-military-training/9696784.

77 Paul Lewis, Shaun Walker and Oksana Grytsenko, "Moscow may be planning intervention in Eastern Ukraine, US warns," *The Guardian*, April 9, 2014, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/apr/08/us-moscow-crimea-style-intervention-eastern-ukraine.

ment used an illegal weapon called "cluster munition" in its operations in Donetsk in early October 2014.[78]

In July 2014, a new international crisis emerged in Donetsk when a passenger plane that had taken off from Amsterdam, the Netherlands and was flying to Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia was shot down by a missile from Eastern Ukraine.[79] 298 passengers were killed by this missile attack.[80] In September 2016, an international investigation was done on this incident. The results showed that the missile was a Russian product brought from a Russian territory, and it was fired from a field in Eastern Ukraine which was controlled by pro-Russian separatist groups.[81] The Russian government denied any involvement and accused the Ukrainian side for the attack.[82] Furthermore, the Russian government accused the international investigation team as "biased and politically motivated".[83] After this incident, the United States and European countries decided to increase sanctions on Russia that had been in effect since March 2014.[84] As a response to this decision of the Western world, Russian President Vladimir Putin signed a presidential decree that imposed an embargo on the Western export of agricultural goods.[85]

An agreement for ceasefire between pro-Russian rebel groups and the new Ukrainian government was signed on September 5, 2014 in Minsk, the capital city of Belarus, to end the ongoing conflicts in Eastern Ukraine. The Minsk Protocol was signed by representatives of the Russian government, Ukrainian government, as well as representatives of the Donetsk People's

78 "Ukraine: Widespread Use of Cluster Munitions," *Human Rights Watch,* October 20, 2014, https://www.hrw.org/news/2014/10/20/ukraine-widespread-use-cluster-munitions.

79 "MH17 Ukraine plane crash: What we know," *BBC News,* September 28, 2018, https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-28357880.

80 Ibid.

81 Ibid.

82 "Russia: Missile That Shot Down Flight MH17 was Ukrainian," *Voice of America,* September 17, 2018, https://www.voanews.com/a/russia-ukrainian-missile-shot-down-malaysia-flight/4574786.html.

83 "MH17 Ukraine plane crash: What we know," *BBC News.*

84 Jean-Robert Jouanny, *Putin Ne İstiyor?* 131.

85 Ibid.

Republic and the Lugansk People's Republic under the observation of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE).[86] However, partial conflicts between the Ukrainian government and Donetsk continued including the very controversial cluster munition attack of the Ukrainian government in October.[87] Ultimately, the Minsk Protocol failed to end the crisis as new conflicts emerged in Lugansk and Donetsk by the beginning of 2015, which destroyed the progress that was made in the ceasefire process of the Minsk Protocol.[88] A new initiative called Minsk II was started on February 11, 2014 by the French President François Hollande and the German Chancellor Angela Merkel to revitalize the previous Minsk Protocol between Ukraine and Russia, under the observation of the OSCE.[89] This new summit revived the ceasefire; however, the tension in the region is still too high and the sanctions imposed on Russia by the Western world are still in effect.

The first Minsk Protocol was a failure and there is no guarantee that Minsk II will work. The annexation of Crimea by Russia is still a problematic dispute between Russia and Ukraine. The last controversial elections of 2018 in Donetsk and Lugansk were won by two separatist Russian nationalist parties which jeopardize the Minsk Protocol between Russia and Ukraine.[90] Ukraine does not recognize these elections as legitimate and the UN envoy of Ukraine called them "fake" and "a provocation" and said that the results could be used by the Russian government as a justification for intervention.[91] Even though, the Russian nationalist parties of Donetsk and Lugansk

86 Shaun Walker, "Ukraine ceasefire 'agreed for east of country' at Minsk peace talks," *The Guardian*, September 5, 2014, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/sep/05/ukraine-ceasefire-east-minsk-peace-talks.

87 Ibid.

88 "Ukraine conflict: Battle rages in Donetsk and Luhansk," *BBC News,* January 19, 2015, https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-30878406.

89 Roland Oliphant, "Ukraine Peace Deal: What was agreed in Minks," *The Telegraph,* February 12, 2015, https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/ukraine/11407768/Ukraine-ceasefire-agreement-key-points-what-we-know-so-far.html.

90 "Donetsk, Lugansk say their elections constitute no breach of Minsk deal," *TASS Russian News Agency*, October 31, 2018, http://tass.com/world/1028626

91 Ibid.

claimed that the election results would not violate the Minsk agreement, it is still hard to say that the conflict in the region of Donbass will be resolved soon.[92] By the end of 2017, the death toll of the conflicts of Donetsk and Lugansk reached 10,000.[93]

§ 5.3 The TurkStream Project

After the Ukrainian Crisis, in the late 2013 and early 2014, there was a dispute about energy routes for the transportation of gas from Russia to European countries. The new Ukrainian government, which was very anti-Russian and had ongoing conflicts with the Russian government, could be a huge problem for the gas transfer, as Ukraine stood in the gas trade route. The Russian President Vladimir Putin shocked the world when he declared that Russia withdrew from the South Stream Pipeline Project due to the conflicts in Ukraine after the Euromaidan Crisis.[94] Turkey gained a huge opportunity from this broken relationship which resulted from the withdrawal of Russia. She could profit from reselling the Russian gas.[95] When the Russian President Vladimir Putin visited Ankara on December 1, 2014, he made an agreement for a new natural gas pipeline that would transport the gas from Russia to Turkey through the underwater pipelines in the Black Sea to reach European countries through Greek borders.[96] The project was planned to be

92 Ibid.

93 Julian Coman, "On the frontline of Europe's forgotten war," *The Guardian,* November 12, 2017, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/nov/12/ukraine-on-the-front-line-of-europes-forgotten-war.

94 Şener Aktürk, "Toward a Turkish-Russian Axis? Conflict in Georgia, Syria and Ukraine, and Cooperation over Nuclear Energy," *Insight Turkey* 16, no. 4 (Fall 2014): 20.

95 Şener Aktürk, "Toward a Turkish-Russian Axis? Conflict in Georgia, Syria and Ukraine, and Cooperation over Nuclear Energy," 20-21.

96 Neil MacFarquhar, "Warming Relations in Person, Putin and Erdogan Revive Pipeline Deal," *The New York Times,* October 10, 2016, https://www.nytimes.com/2016/10/11/world/europe/turkey-russia-vladimir-putin-recep-tayyip-erdogan.html.

constructed by the Russian company Gazprom, and it would allow Turkey to buy cheaper gas from Russia as a part of the deal.[97]

The project TurkStream was expected to replace the scrapped gas pipeline project of South Stream. Maintaining the South Stream Project was quite hard for Russia when the Russian Ruble faced a dramatic loss due to sanctions from Western countries, which damaged the Russian economy. With this new TurkStream Project, Russia does not only bypass Ukraine in the region for gas transportation, but also saves 10 billion USD.[98] Although Turkish-Russian relations were not very intense by the year 2014, this pragmatic approach of the Russian government to create an alternative route for gas transportation that would save billions of dollars gave Turkey a great advantage. Nevertheless, after the plane shooting incident in the late 2015, the Russian government stopped the construction of the TurkStream pipeline, just like the construction of the Akkuyu Nuclear Power Plant. After the quick normalization process of the Turkish-Russian relations in the post-15th July era, agreement for the construction of the TurkStream was re-signed on October 10th, 2016.[99] The construction of the TurkStream pipeline was started in May 2017, and the TurkStream Project was officially completed by November 19th, 2018.[100]

§ 5.4 The Independence of the Ukrainian Church

The crisis between Ukraine and Russia in 2013-2014 created a new Ukrainian nationalism that sought independence from the Russian culture and integration with the Western culture. The de-Russification of the historical and cul-

97 Ibid.

98 Merve Erdil, "İşte Türk Akımı," *Hürriyet,* December 5, 2014, http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/ekonomi/iste-turk-akimi-27697527.

99 Neil MacFarquhar, "Warming Relations in Person, Putin and Erdogan Revive Pipeline Deal."

100 "Full stream ahead! Russia & Turkey officially complete construction of joint gas pipeline," *Russia Today,* November 19, 2018, https://www.rt.com/business/444344-russia-turkish-stream-opening/.

tural institutions was an important part of this process. The church of Ukraine was no exception to it.

The schism between the Russian and Ukrainian churches started on September 7, 2018 when the Orthodox Church in Fener, Istanbul[101] sent two bishops from Canada and the United States to Kiev, Ukraine to discuss the situation of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church.[102] The Russian Orthodox Church harshly condemned this move of the Orthodox Church in Istanbul by issuing a statement on September 8, 2018.[103] On the same day, the Russian Orthodox Patriarch, Metropolitan Hilarion also condemned the Orthodox Church in Istanbul in his interview on *Russia-24* by saying, "I think that Patriarch Bartholomew will bear personal responsibility before the judgement of God and the judgement of history".[104] On September 14, the Russian Orthodox Patriarchate once again condemned the activities of the Orthodox Church in Istanbul by saying that the Ecumenical Patriarchate violated the ecclesiastical law and made an unacceptable intervention to a local church while underlining the historical ties of the Russian Patriarchate to Ukraine.[105] On September 23, 2018, the Orthodox Patriarch Dimitri Bartholomew I in Istanbul did not step back and said that he hoped an independent

101 The Orthodox Church in Fener, Istanbul is accepted as the Ecumenical Orthodox Church among Orthodox Christians although Turkey does not recognize this status of it.

102 "Ecumenical Patriarchate sends Legates to Ukraine," *Ecumenical Patriarchate Permanent Delegation to the World Council of Churches*, September 7, 2018, Accessed January 4, 2019, https://www.ecupatria.org/2018/09/07/ecumenical-patriarchate-sends-legates-to-ukraine/.

103 "Russian Orthodox Church Holy Synod Statement as of September 8, 2018," *The Russian Orthodox Church*, September 8, 2018, Accessed January 4, 2019, https://mospat.ru/en/2018/09/08/news163522/.

104 "Metropolitan Hilarion: Patriarch Bartholomew will bear personal responsibility before the judgement of God and the judgement of history," *The Russian Orthodox Church*, September 8, 2018, Accessed January 4, 2019, https://mospat.ru/en/2018/09/08/news163543/.

105 "Statement of the Holy Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church concerning the uncanonical intervention of the Patriarchate of Constantinople in the canonical territory of the Russian Orthodox Church," *The Russian Orthodox Church*, September 14, 2018, Accessed January 4, 2019, https://mospat.ru/en/2018/09/14/news163803/.

Ukrainian Church would be established despite the existing opposition.[106] In the early October of 2018, the Patriarch Bartholomew I accelerated the process for the establishment of the independent Ukrainian Orthodox Church with an announcement.[107] In this announcement, the Patriarch declared that the Synodal Letter of 1686, which was the agreement that granted Russia to establish an Orthodox Church independent from the Patriarchate in Fener, would be revoked.[108] The Russian Patriarchate condemned this announcement of the Ecumenical Patriarchate as "unlawful decision".[109]

For more than three centuries, the Ukrainian Orthodox Church was under the influence of Russia as a part of the Russian Orthodox Church. However, due to conflicts in late 2013 between Russia and Ukraine, the relations between the two countries were already severely damaged. As a part of the de-Russification of the Ukrainian culture and political life, the post-revolution Ukrainian administration of Petro Poroshenko quickly embraced the offer of the Patriarch Dimitri Bartholomew I about the independence of the Ukrainian Church. Just after the Ecumenical Patriarchate's announcement for granting independence to the Ukrainian Church on October 11, 2018, the Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko declared his support for the independence of the Ukrainian Church with a statement citing religious references.[110] On December 15, 2018, the Ukrainian President Poroshenko appointed Sergiy Dumenko as the head of the new Ukrainian Orthodox

106 "Bartholomew 'hopes' for independent Ukrainian church," *Hürriyet Daily News,* September 24, 2018, http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/bartholomew-hopes-for-independent-ukrainian-church-137169.

107 "Announcement (11/10/2018)," *The Ecumenical Patriarchate*, October 11, 2018, Accessed January 4, 2019, https://www.patriarchate.org/-/communiq-1.

108 Ibid.

109 "Statement by the Holy Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church concerning the encroachment of the Patriarchate of Constantinople on the canonical territory of the Russian Church," *The Russian Orthodox Church*, October 15, 2018, Accessed January 4, 2019, https://mospat.ru/en/2018/10/15/news165263/.

110 "Statement by the President of Ukraine regarding the decision of the Holy Synod of the Ecumenical Patriarchate," *President of Ukraine*, October 11, 2018, Accessed January 4, 2019, https://www.president.gov.ua/en/news/zayava-prezidenta-ukrayini-u-zvyazku-iz-rishennyam-sinodu-vs-50346.

Church.[111] The President Poroshenko underlined the significance of an independent Ukrainian Orthodox Church as a "matter of national security" rather than a simple religious conflict.[112] The accord about the independence of the Ukrainian church was signed by the Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko and the Patriarch Dimitri Bartholomew I on November 3rd, 2018.[113]

The Russian President Vladimir Putin condemned the creation of the independent Ukrainian Orthodox Church.[114] As a response to this move of the Orthodox Church in Istanbul, the Russian Orthodox Church decided to cut all its ties with Istanbul on October 15, 2018.[115] In late December 2018, Ukrainian nationalist religion policy took a new step further when the Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko signed the law that was forcing the Orthodox Churches in Ukraine which had ties with the Russian Patriarchate to change their names.[116] By January 5, 2019, the independence of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church was officially declared.[117] Turkey, as a country that hosts the Patriarchate in Fener, Istanbul supported this process of Ukraine by not making any kind of intervention, even though the Turkish

111 "Ukraine set to establish new church, secure split from Russia," *Al-Jazeera*, December 15, 2018, https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2018/12/ukraine-set-establish-church-secure-split-russia-181215075840519.html.

112 Ibid.

113 "Poroshenko, Bartholomew sign accord on independent Ukraine church," *Hürriyet Daily News,* November 4, 2018, http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/poroshenko-bartholomew-sign-accord-on-independent-ukraine-church-138548.

114 "Putin Condemns Creation of Independent Ukraine Church," *Voice of America,* December 20, 2018, https://www.voanews.com/a/putin-condemns-creation-of-independent-ukraine-church/4709006.html.

115 Andrew Roth and Harriet Sherwood, "Russian Orthodox Church cuts ties with Constantinople," *The Guardian,* October 15, 2018, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/oct/15/russian-orthodox-church-cuts-ties-with-constantinople.

116 "Ukraine's President Signs Law Forcing Russia-Affiliated Church to Change Name," *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty,* December 22, 2018, https://www.rferl.org/a/ukraine-s-president-signs-law-forcing-orthodox-church-to-change-its-name/29671193.html.

117 Carlotta Gall, "Ukrainian Orthodox Christians Formally Break from Russia," *The New York Times,* January 6, 2019, https://www.nytimes.com/2019/01/06/world/europe/orthodox-church-ukraine-russia.html.

government was trying to improve her relations with the Russian Federation since 2016. Nevertheless, concerns about this new schism in the Orthodox Church are still high due to the possibility of a new Russian-Ukrainian conflict over the properties of the church as well as the possibility of a religious conflict between Greeks and Slavs in the Balkans.[118]

§ 5.5 The Kerch Strait Crisis

On November 21, 2018, the Russian Foreign Ministry issued a statement about the Kerch Strait in the Black Sea.[119] It rejected Ukrainian accusations of Russian aggression and illegal operations in the Kerch Strait and the Sea of Azov while underlining that the restoration attempts for the bilateral relations between Ukraine and Russia were undermined by these accusations.[120] In the same statement, the Russian government claimed that the unification of the Republic of Crimea and the City of Sevastopol with the Russian Federation gave the Russian government the right for military exercise in the area and that this was consistent with international law.[121] The statement also said that the Russian government's actions in the Sea of Azov and the Kerch Strait were solely intended to protect the national security of Russia and that all of these actions were also consistent with the international law.[122] This statement of the Russian Foreign Ministry was signalling the upcoming Russian aggression in the Black Sea. The Ukrainian government's concerns about the Russian activities in the Sea of Azov and the Kerch Street proved to be true, as a new conflict occurred at the end of the same week.

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118 Laurence Peter, "Orthodox Church split: Five reasons why it matters," *BBC News,* October 17, 2018, https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-45877584.

119 "Foreign Ministry statement," *The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation*, November 21, 2018, Accessed December 30, 2018, http://www.mid.ru/en/foreign_policy/news/-/asset_publisher/cKNonkJE02Bw/content/id/3414549.

120 Ibid.

121 Ibid.

122 Ibid.

On the morning of November 25, 2018, a sea clash between Russia and Ukraine took place when Russian forces shot and seized Ukrainian navy vessels in the Kerch Strait.[123] After this incident, the Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko proposed a 30-day martial law and it was accepted by the Ukrainian parliament.[124] This incident between Russia and Ukraine scared the world since it had the potential to turn into another international crisis. On November 26, 2018, the Russian Foreign Ministry issued a new statement about the Kerch Strait Incident which defended the Russian position and accused "the Kiev Regime and its Western patrons" for provoking Russia to impose new sanctions on her and boost Poroshenko's support for the upcoming elections of Ukraine.[125] The Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko raised the tension further and told on the Ukrainian national television that the Russian government of Vladimir Putin is pushing for a "full-scale war".[126] In his interview for *Bild*, a German newspaper, Poroshenko accused Russia of irredentist neo-imperialism when he said "Putin wants the Old Russian Empire back…Crimea, Donbass, the whole country. As Russian tsar, as he sees himself, his empire cannot function without Ukraine. He sees us as his colony."[127] Due to the fear of a Russian aggression, President Poroshenko

123 Matthew Bodner and Patrick Greenfield, "Ukraine president proposed martial law after Russia seizes ship," *The Guardian,* November 26, 2018, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/nov/25/russia-border-guards-ram-tugboat-ukraine-navy-crimea.

124 "Ukraine parliament backs Poroshenko's 30-day martial law in Russia border areas after Kerch standoff," *Russia Today,* November 26, 2018, https://www.rt.com/news/444891-poroshenko-signs-martial-law-decree/.

125 "Foreign Ministry Statement," *The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation.* November 26, 2018, Accessed December 30, 2018, http://www.mid.ru/en/foreign_policy/news/-/asset_publisher/cKNonkJE02Bw/content/id/3420678.

126 Andrew Roth, "Ukraine president warns Russia tensions could lead to 'full-scale war'," *The Guardian,* November 28, 2018, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/nov/27/russia-to-charge-ukrainian-sailors-as-kerch-crisis-deepens?CMP=Share_iOSApp_Other.

127 Thomas Escritt and Andrew Osborn, "Ukrainian leader says Putin wants his whole country, asks NATO for help," *Reuters,* November 29, 2018, https://www.reuters.com/article/us-

asked NATO to send warships to the Sea of Azov.[128] Poroshenko also requested from Turkey to shut down the Bosphorus Strait to Russian ships.[129] On November 30, 2018, the Ukrainian government went further and banned Russian men aged 16-60 from entering Ukraine.[130] All of these actions of the Ukrainian government showed the Ukrainian fear of a possible secret Russian army intervention like the little green men incident during the Crimean Crisis of 2014.[131]

The United States reacted quickly to this new crisis in the Black Sea. The Secretary of State of the Trump administration, Mike Pompeo called the Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko on December 26, 2018 and told him that the US strongly supports the national sovereignty of Ukraine and her territorial integrity including her territorial waters.[132] Pompeo also issued a press statement which condemned the Russian aggression against Ukraine and demanded from Russia to return the confiscated Ukrainian vessels and crew members that were detained.[133] The same statement also declared that the United States supported the sovereignty and the territorial integrity of Ukraine while underlining that the United States rejects the Russian annexation of Crimea.[134] The US President Donald Trump also expressed that he

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ukraine-crisis-russia/ukrainian-leader-says-putin-wants-his-whole-country-asks-for-nato-help-idUSKCN1NY1K5.

128 Ibid.

129 "Ukraine to Ask Turkey to Close Bosphorus to Russian Ships Amid Kerch Strait Rift," *Sputinik,* November 29, 2018, https://sputniknews.com/world/201811291070237869-ukraine-bosphorus-russia-turkey-kerch-strait/.

130 Andrew Roth, "Ukraine bans entry to Russian men 'to prevent armies forming'," *The Guardian,* November 30, 2018, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/nov/30/ukraine-bans-russian-men-from-entering-the-country.

131 Ibid.

132 "Secretary Pompeo's Call with Ukrainian Petro Poroshenko," *U.S. Department of State*, November 26, 2018, Accessed December 30, 2018, https://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2018/11/287558.htm.

133 "Russia's Dangerous Escalation in the Kerch Strait," *U.S. Department of State*, November 26, 2018, Accessed December 30, 2018, https://www.state.gov/secretary/remarks/2018/11/287554.htm.

134 Ibid.

could cancel his trip to the G20.[135] Ultimately, President Trump canceled his G20 Summit as a reaction to the Russian intervention into the lands of Ukraine, especially Crimea.[136]

In the Kerch Strait Incident, Turkey supported the Ukrainian government just as in the Crimean Crisis. Turkey had concerns about the increasing presence of a great power like Russia in the Black Sea region. Since the annexation of Crimea in March 2014, Russia increased its military spending for her Black Sea Fleet.[137] In August 2016, the S-400 air defense system was already placed in Crimea.[138] In this new Black Sea, where Russia has more power than Turkey, the territorial integrity of Ukraine was important as to keep away Russia from Turkish borders as well as the Turkish territorial waters and essential for Turkey's national security. Therefore, Turkey supported Ukraine although she had better relations with Russia since the failed coup of 15th July 2016, and wanted to be a mediator between the two countries to reduce the tension in the region.[139] Turkey did not recognize the annexation of Crimea and keeps calling Russia to leave the Crimean Peninsula to the Ukrainian government and stresses that the government of Turkey will never

135 Phillip Rucker, Josh Dowsey and Anne Gearan, "'I don't like that aggression: Trump threatens to cancel Putin meeting over clash with Ukraine." *The Washington Post,* November 28, 2018, https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/i-dont-like-that-aggression-trump-threatens-to-cancel-putin-meeting-over-clash-with-ukraine/2018/11/27/45bd59b6-f27e-11e8-80d0-f7e1948d55f4_story.html.

136 Julian Borger, "Trump cancels Putin after at G20 over Ukraine standoff," *The Guardian*, November 29, 2018, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/nov/29/trump-putin-g20-meeting-buenos-aires-kremlin-white-house.

137 Mitat Çelikpala and Emre Erşen, "Turkey's Black Sea Predicament: Challenging or Accommodating Russia?" *Perceptions* 23, no. 2 (Summer 2018): 80.

138 Bilgehan Öztürk, "Türkiye'nin Rusya ve Kafkasya Politikası 2018," in *Türk Dış Politikası Yıllığı 2018*, eds. Burhanettin Duran, Kemal İnat and Mustafa Caner (İstanbul, SETA Yayınları, 2019), 248.

139 "Turkey could play 'mediator role' in Russia-Ukraine Crisis: Erdoğan," *Hürriyet Daily News,* November 29, 2018, http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/turkey-could-play-mediator-role-in-russia-ukraine-crisis-erdogan-139317.

recognize Crimea as a part of Russia.[140] On December 2018, the Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov declared that Russia will not start a war against Ukraine but called the Ukrainian government a Nazi regime.[141] However, he also mentioned that there is no alternative to the Minsk Protocol.[142]

140 "Ukrinform: Erdoğan says Turkey will never recognize annexation of Crimea," *Kyiv Post,* November 4, 2018, https://www.kyivpost.com/ukraine-politics/ukrinform-erdogan-says-turkey-will-never-recognize-annexation-of-crimea.html.

141 "Lavrov vows Russia will not wage war against Ukraine," *TASS Russian News Agency,* December 17, 2018, http://tass.com/politics/1036360.

142 Ibid.

6

The Turkish-Russian Relations in the Context of the Middle East: The Arab Spring and the Syrian Civil War

§ 6.1 The Arab Spring in Tunisia and Egypt

The Arab Spring came out as a quite unexpected riot in Tunisia when a street vendor, a 26 year-old Tunisian man named Mohammad Bouazizi, burned himself in Sidi Bouzid on December 17, 2010, because a Tunisian police officer confiscated his scales due to Bouazizi's refusal to pay the bribe.[1] This simple outrage of one Tunisian citizen against government officials who confiscated his cart started a wave of anti-government demonstrations against the authoritarian Tunisian government of Zine El Abidine Ben Ali. The action of Mohammad Bouazizi was combined with rising cost of living, economic problems, social and political problems in Tunisia.[2] The ongoing socioeconomic and legitimacy problems in Arab countries, including Tuni-

1 Thessa Lageman, "Mohammad Bouazizi: Was the Arab Spring worth dying for?" *Al-Jazeera,* January 3, 2016, https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2015/12/mohamed-bouazizi-arab-spring-worth-dying-151228093743375.html.

2 Abdullah Taşkesen, "Arap Dünyasında Demokratikleşme Hareketleri," *Journal of Academic Inquiries* 6, No. 2 (2011): 264.

sia, created a deep hatred and strong opposition to the old regime.[3] The riot suddenly got bigger and was faced with the rage of the Tunisian President Ben Ali as he declared that he would punish the protesters.[4] Despite this threat by President Ben Ali, the riots in Tunisia continued.[5] On January 14, 2011, the authoritarian Tunisian regime of 24 years was overthrown when the Tunisian army decided to take over by surrounding the presidential palace of Tunisia.[6] The Tunisian President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali fled to Saudi Arabia.[7]

This simple civilian unrest in Tunisia ignited a huge fire for the whole region. Egypt experienced a regime change just like Tunisia when the military regime of President Hosni Mobarak, who was in power for 30 years, was ended. On February 11, 2011, Hosni Mobarak resigned and left the government to the Egyptian military.[8] After the revolution in Egypt, Mohammad Morsi, a candidate that had ties with the Muslim Brotherhood, won the presidential election and became the new president of Egypt.[9] However, unlike the Tunisian case, Egyptian people experienced a coup d'état by Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi on July 3, 2013. The coup was openly supported by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, the two major Gulf States that saw the Muslim Brotherhood as a threat and tried to re-establish the pre-

3 Meliha Benli Altunışık, "Arap Ayaklanmaları: Dönüşümü Etkileyen Faktörler," *Mülkiye* 35, no. 272 (2011): 94.

4 Hamid Dabashi, *Arap Baharı: Post Koloniyalizmin Sonu,* trans. Aslı T. Esen (İstanbul, Sümer Yayıncılık, 2015), 43.

5 Ibid.

6 James L. Gelvin, *Modern Orta Doğu Tarihi 1453-2015,* trans. Güneş Ayas (İstanbul, Timaş Yayınları, 2016), 373.

7 Angelique Chrisafis and Ian Black, "Zine al-Abidine Ben Ali forced to flee Tunisia as protesters claim victory," *The Guardian,* January 15, 2011, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2011/jan/14/tunisian-president-flees-country-protests.

8 Numan İsmail Telci, "Arap İsyanları Sürecinde Türkiye-Mısır İlişkilerinin Dönüşümü," in *AK Parti'nin 15 Yılı: Dış Politika,* eds. Kemal İnat, Ali Aslan and Burhanettin Duran (İstanbul, SETA Yayınları, 2017), 307.

9 David D. Kirkpatrick, "Named Egypt's Winner, Islamist Makes History," *The New York Times,* June 24, 2012, https://www.nytimes.com/2012/06/25/world/middleeast/mohamed-morsi-of-muslim-brotherhood-declared-as-egypts-president.html.

Arab Spring status quo in the Middle East.[10] This unexpected coup d'état of Al-Sisi, an officer who was appointed as the Minister of Defense by President Mohammad Morsi himself, was a shocking event for the whole world as it was the first sign of Arab Spring losing its power and the old regime in Egypt returning. This process had begun in Egypt and would take back almost all the achievements of the revolution and curb many civil liberties while creating a cult of personality around the image of Al-Sisi.

The revolution in Tunisia became successful, and a democratic system was founded due to the lack of military power in Tunisia. Habib Bourguiba, the founder of Tunisia, limited the power of the military due to the fear of a possible coup d'état against his regime.[11] However, in Egypt, the regime was established by a coup d'état of the nationalist military members under the leadership of Gamal Abdel Nasser. Thus, Egypt was always a country where the military had a strong presence in the state.[12] Therefore, seeing a coup d'état in Egypt and the establishment of a successful democracy in Tunisia was not a big surprise.[13] Nevertheless, post-revolution Tunisia is now won by a moderate name from the old regime of Ben Ali, Mohammed Beji Caid Essebsi, as he won the Tunisian presidential elections on December 22, 2014.[14] Egypt and Tunisia were the only successful Arab Spring countries that experienced regime change, but the new leaders in these countries would lose their powers after a while. In the end, just like other Arab countries, these two countries lost all of the early achievements of the Arab Spring. Only Tu-

10 Agustino Fontevecchia, "Coup D'Etat in Egypt: Military Removes President Morsi And Suspends The Constitution," *Forbes,* July 3, 2013, https://www.forbes.com/sites/afontevecchia/2013/07/03/revolution-in-egypt-military-removes-president-morsi-and-suspends-the-constitution/.

11 Risa Brooks, "Abandoned at the Palace: Why the Tunisian Military Defected from the Ben Ali Regime in January 2011," *Journal of Strategic Studies* 36, no. 2 (2013): 207-209.

12 Ferihan Polat and Ayşegül Durmuş, *Immanuel Wallerstein Pespektifinde Arap Baharı: Tunus Örneği* (Konya, Çizgi Kitabevi, 2015), 117-118.

13 Ibid.

14 "Tunisia election: Essebsi claims historic victory," *BBC News,* December 22, 2014, https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-30569318.

nisia has a completely new constitution and a new government system that is truly democratic.

§ 6.2 The Reactions of the United States, Russia and Turkey to the Revolutions of Tunisia and Egypt

In the case of Tunisia, both of the great powers, Russia and the United States, supported the regime change just like the Turkish government. The regimes of Bourguiba and Ben Ali in Tunisia, a very isolated Francophone country in North Africa, had no major relations with Turkey, the United States or Russia.[15] The end of the Ben Ali regime in the face of popular riots was a sign that the status quo was going to change in Tunisia. On the day of the fall of the Tunisian dictator, Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, the United States Secretary of State, Hillary Rodham Clinton was supportive towards these radical changes of the authoritarian regimes of the Middle East when, at the Forum for the Future in Doha, Qatar on January 13, 2011, she said "in too many places, in too many ways, the region's foundations are sinking into the sand. The new and dynamic Middle East that I have seen needs firmer ground if it is to take root and grow everywhere" and expressed the support of the Obama administration towards the revolutions of the Arab Spring.[16] On January 14, 2011, the US President Barack Hussein Obama makes a statement that openly condemns the violence of the Ben Ali regime and praises "the courage and dignity of the Tunisian people."[17] After the first elections on October 24, 2011, which was won by Rached Al-Ghannouchi's moderate Islamist party El-Nahda Movement, the US President Obama congratulated Tunisians and

15 Fatma Aslı Kelkitli, *Turkish-Russian Relations: Competition and Cooperation in Eurasia,* (New York, Routledge, 2017), 87.

16 "Forum for the Future: Partnership Dialogue Panel Session with Q&A Session," *U.S. Department of State,* January 13, 2011, Accessed December 28, 2018, https://2009-2017.state.gov/secretary/20092013clinton/rm/2011/01/154635.htm.

17 "Statement by the President on Events in Tunisia," *The White House*, January 14, 2011, Accessed December 28, 2018, https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2011/01/14/statement-president-events-tunisia.

said, "The United States reaffirms its commitment to the Tunisian people as they move toward a democratic future that offers dignity, justice, freedom of expression, and greater economic opportunity for all" while describing the election in Tunisia as "an important step forward".[18]

Russia's attitude towards the Jasmine Revolution of Tunisia was quite positive, just like the United States. The President of Russia, Dimitry Medvedev showed his support for the revolution of Tunisia at the World Economic Forum in Davos on January 26, 2011.[19] In that speech, he described the Tunisian Revolution as:

> a big lesson for governments all around the world… When governments fail to keep with social change and fail to meet people's hopes, disorganisation and chaos ensue, sadly. This is a problem of governments themselves and the responsibility they bear. Even if governments in power find many of the demands made unacceptable, they still must remain in dialogue with all the different groups because otherwise they lose their real foundation.[20]

Even though the new government was formed by Islamist En-Nahda Movement, the Russian government kept its support for the new regime of Tunisia. On March 4, 2014, the Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov visited Tunisia and met the Tunisian President Moncef Marzouki.[21] During that

18 Jonathan Mitchell and Richard Spencer, "Tunisia election turnout more than 90 per cent," *The Telegraph,* October 24, 2011, https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/africaandindianocean/tunisia/8845108/Tunisia-election-turnout-more-than-90-per-cent.html.

19 "Dmitry Medvedev addressed the World Economic Forum in Davos," *President of Russia*, January 26, 2011, Accessed December 28, 2018, http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/10163.

20 Ibid.

21 "Comment by the Russian Foreign Minister, Sergey Lavrov, for the mass media summarizing the results of his meeting with the President of Tunisia, Monsef Marzouki, Tunisia, 4 March 2013," *The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation*, March 4, 2014, Ac-

meeting, Lavrov confirmed the Russian government's support for the transition process of the new Tunisian regime and promised more support for the Russian Orthodox Church in Tunisia.[22] Even though En-Nahda Movement has connections with the Muslim Brotherhood, which is seen as a terrorist organization in Russia due to their support for Chechens in the Chechen Wars, Russia accepted the existence of a Tunisian government that is led by the En-Nahda Movement.

The Tunisian Revolution was embraced with great enthusiasm in the Turkish Press. Turkey supported the Tunisian Revolution since the beginning because the government of Justice and Development Party of Turkey believed that it would have influence on the Muslim Brotherhood movements due to their common Islamic roots.[23] After the revolution in Tunisia, the Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ahmet Davutoğlu expressed his support for the revolution and said, "None of the leaders should think that they would be in office forever" on March 13, 2011, in Doha, Qatar.[24]

The experiment of the Tunisian democracy could be the spark of the expansion of "the Turkish Model". As a democratic and secular republic with a Muslim majority, which is the identity that Turkey will use for her political interests, Turkey can be a leading figure for the countries that experienced regime change with the Arab Spring like Tunisia.[25] The leader of the En-Nahda Movement, Rached Al-Ghannouchi, said that they had been inspired by the Turkish leader Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and his Justice and Develop-

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cessed December 28, 2018, http://www.mid.ru/en/press_service/minister_speeches/-/asset_publisher/7OvQR5KJWVmR/content/id/72466.

22 Ibid.

23 Meliha Altunışık, "The AKP's Middle East Policy: Amidst Domestic and Regional Challenges," in *The Uncertain Path of the New Turkey,* ed. Valeria Talbot (Milan, ISPI, 2015), 69.

24 "Hiçbir lider sonsuza dek iktidarda kalacağını düşünmesin." "Dışişleri Bakanı Davutoğlu, Katar'da," *Cumhuriyet,* March 13, 2011, http://www.cumhuriyet.com.tr/haber/diger/229558/Disisleri_Bakani_Davutoglu__Katar_da.html.

25 Cihan Tuğal, "Democratic Janissaries?" *the New Left Review* 76 (July-August 2012): 19.

ment Party in Turkey.[26] The Minister of Foreign Affairs of Turkey, Ahmet Davutoğlu was one of the first foreign ministers who visited Tunisia after the revolutions.[27] Davutoğlu said that Turkey supported the Jasmine Revolution in Tunisia since the first day.[28] He also praised the Tunisian Model and said that as people who have the same background and future, the Arab and Turkish societies have the same destiny.[29]

Before the revolution, Turkey did not have a strategic or economic interest in Tunisia.[30] The old Bourgiba and Ben Ali regimes of Tunisia had very limited relations with Turkey, such as a free trade agreement.[31] However, the new regime in Tunisia was hungry for new investments and seeking allies in the region. Turkey could be a great partner for this small, not threatening state in North Africa. On September 15, 2011, the Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan signed the Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation with Tunisia that would allow annual meetings at Prime Ministerial level.[32] After this treaty, new steps were taken as of January 22nd, 2012. The Turkish Minister of Economy visited and announced the grant of a credit card line of 500 million USD by Turkish Eximbank for the business people in Tunisia, as well as the increment of the imports quota for dates from 2 tons to 5 tons.[33] Also, an office for the Turkish International Cooperation and Development Agency (TIKA) would support development projects and provide assistance in the

26 "Gannuşi: Erdoğan'ı örnek alıyoruz," *Sabah,* November 8, 2015, https://www.sabah.com.tr/gundem/2015/11/08/gannusi-erdogani-ornek-aliyoruz.

27 Fatma Aslı Kelkitli, *Turkish-Russian Relations: Competition and Cooperation in Eurasia,* 88.

28 Taha Özhan, Ahmet Davutoğlu, Rafik Abdessalem, "Arab Spring, Tunisia and Turkey," SETA. No. 7, (January 2012): 7, http://file.setav.org/Files/Pdf/arab-spring-tunisia-and-turkey.pdf.

29 Taha Özhan, Ahmet Davutoğlu, Rafik Abdessalem, "Arab Spring, Tunisia and Turkey," 13.

30 William Hale, *Turkish Foreign Policy since 1774,* 243.

31 Akin Algan, "The '14 January Revolution'in Tunisia and Turkish–Tunisian Relations," *Turkish Policy* (2014): 75.

32 Akin Algan, "The '14 January Revolution'in Tunisia and Turkish–Tunisian Relations," 76.

33 Ibid.

fields of disease, agricultural development, education, irrigation and energy.[34]

For Egypt, the stances of the United States and Russia were quite the opposite. Gamal Abdel Nasser's Egypt was an ally of the Soviet Union, but his successor Anwar Sadat made a U-turn towards the United States.[35] Sadat's successor, Hosni Mobarak continued this pro-American foreign policy of Egypt.[36] The Secretary of State of the Obama Administration during the Arab Spring, Hillary Rodham Clinton, described Hosni Mobarak as "a key strategic ally for decades" in her memoir, *Hard Choices*.[37] According to the same book, she had an interview with a journalist on the first day of the protest in Egypt, in which she defended the Mobarak regime by saying, "But our assessment is that the Egyptian Government is stable and is looking way to respond the legitimate needs and interests of the Egyptian people."[38] However, the Obama administration left Mobarak and his regime to its fate when the end of Mobarak became obviously unavoidable. On February 1, 2011, President Obama talked positively about the Egyptian Revolution, although he was not very enthusiastic as he was during the Tunisian Revolution, and he demanded democratic transition from the Egyptian President Mobarak.[39] On February 30, 2011, the Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton appeared in five different American Sunday morning shows, where she demanded a real democracy from Egypt and warned about faux democracies like Iran.[40] When the coup was carried out by Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi on July 3, 2013, the new Secretary of State of the Obama Administration, John Kerry quickly defended the coup and Al-Sisi:

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34 Akin Algan, "The '14 January Revolution'in Tunisia and Turkish–Tunisian Relations," 76-77.

35 Fatma Aslı Kelkitli, *Turkish-Russian Relations: Competition and Cooperation in Eurasia,* 88.

36 Ibid.

37 Hillary Clinton Rodham, *Hard choices* (Simon & Schuster, 2015), 283.

38 Ibid.

39 "Remarks by the President on the Situation in Egypt," *The White House*, February 1, 2011, Accessed December 30, 2018, https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2011/02/01/remarks-president-situation-egypt.

40 Ben Smith and Byron Tau, "Clinton calls for 'real democracy'," *Politico,* January 30, 2011, https://www.politico.com/story/2011/01/clinton-calls-for-real-democracy-048433.

> The military was asked to intervene by millions and millions of people, all of whom were afraid of a descendance into chaos, into violence. And the military did not take over, to the best of our judgment so – so far. To run the country, there's a civilian government. In effect, they were restoring democracy.[41]

It is not surprising to see that the US Secretary of State, John Kerry refused to call the ousting of Morsi a coup d'état. He even defended the coup by claiming that "the military intervention" was demanded by the Egyptian people to "restore democracy" because Al-Sisi's coup meant returning to the status quo, which means the restoration of the US-Egyptian relations as it was in the eras of Sadat and Mobarak. The Obama Administration partially cut military aid to Egypt in the following months of the coup, as a response to Al-Sisi's brutal suppression against protesters, especially the Rab'a Massacre in Cairo on August 14, 2013.[42][43] However, the normalization of relations came in June 2014. The US resumed almost all of its suspended aid to Egypt and the Secretary of State, John Kerry visited the Egyptian President Abdel Fettah Al-Sisi.[44] In this meeting's joint statement, John Kerry thanked "the people of Egypt for their hard work in transitioning to a democracy through their election and in making difficult choices with respect to their economy and the future", although Al-Sisi became the President of Egypt after a coup

41 "Interview With Hamid Mir of Geo TV," *U.S. Secretary of State*, August 1, 2013, Accessed December 30, 2018, https://2009-2017.state.gov/secretary/remarks/2013/08/212626.htm.

42 "All According to Plan," *Human Rights Watch,* August 12, 2014, https://www.hrw.org/report/2014/08/12/all-according-plan/raba-massacre-and-mass-killings-protesters-egypt.

43 Spencer Ackerman and Ian Black, "US trims aid to Egypt as part of diplomatic 'recalibration'," *The Guardian*, October 9, 2013, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/oct/09/obama-cuts-military-aid-egypt.

44 Patrick Kingsley, "John Kerry meets Egyptian president and foreign minister in Cairo," *The Guardian,* June 22, 2014, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/jun/22/john-kerry-meets-eyptian-president-sisi-cairo-us-aid.

and a rigged election.[45] These good relations of the Obama Administration with Al-Sisi's dictatorship in Egypt continued in the later years. The US Secretary of State, Kerry kept praising Egypt's role in the Middle East as "critical to the peace and security of the entire region", although the authoritarianism and crackdown on opposition continued in Al-Sisi's Egypt.[46] And the cooperation between these two states continued even in the next administration of Donald J. Trump as well.[47]

The Russian government celebrated the Egyptian Revolution of 2011. The Russian President, Dimitry Medvedev expressed his hope for a swift restoration of a democratic mechanism in Egypt.[48] Nonetheless, when the Muslim Brotherhood's candidate, Mohammad Morsi took power in the first elections of Egypt, the Russian attitude towards Egypt changed. The Muslim Brotherhood was seen as a terrorist organization by Russia due to their support for Chechens in the Chechen Wars.[49] However, the Russian Federation approved the regime change even though she had problems with the Muslim Brotherhood. In November 2012, the Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Sergei Lavrov declared that Russia was ready to cooperate with the Muslim Brotherhood, and he delivered the invitation from the Russian President Putin to

45 "Secretary of State John Kerry and Egyptian Foreign Minister Shoukry Joint Statements After Meeting With Egyptian President al-Sisi," *U.S. Department of State,* July 22, 2014, Accessed December 28, 2018, https://2009-2017.state.gov/secretary/remarks/2014/07/229626.htm.

46 "Remarks After Meeting With Egyptian President Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi," U*.S. Department of State*, April 20, 2016, Accessed December 28, 2018, https://2009-2017.state.gov/secretary/remarks/2016/04/256408.htm.

47 "Secretary Pompeo's Meeting With Egyptian Foreign Minister Sameh Shoukry," *U.S. Department of State*, August 8, 2018, Accessed December 28, 2018, https://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2018/08/285041.htm.

48 "Statement by the President of Russia on the situation in Egypt," *President of Russia,* February 12, 2011, Accessed December 28, 2018, http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/10321.

49 Dmitri Trenin, "The Mythical Alliance: Russia's Syria Policy" *The Carnegie Papers*. February 2013, The Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 15, https://carnegieendowment.org/files/mythical_alliance.pdf.

President Mohammad Morsi for a visit to Moscow.[50] Although the Russian Federation did not sympathize with the Muslim Brotherhood, one of the major allies of the United States in the Middle East was gone with the fall of Hosni Mobarak. Therefore, the new regime of Egypt meant new opportunities in the region for Russia.

Unlike Tunisia, Egypt was not ruled by a government in a two-headed parliamentary state; it was ruled by a presidential system that had a single-headed government formation which overempowered the President of Egypt. Hence, the Muslim Brotherhood and their leader Mohammad Morsi in Egypt had too much influence on the government. When Morsi's presidency was ended by the coup d'état of Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi, the Russian government embraced this new authoritarian counter-revolutionary regime with much enthusiasm. Even before Al-Sisi announced his candidacy in the Egyptian Elections of 2014, the Russian President Vladimir Putin endorsed Al-Sisi for leadership.[51] After the controversial election of Al-Sisi in May 2014, the Russian President Putin was one of the first leaders who congratulated Al-Sisi for his victory.[52] Just recently, on October 17, 2018, the Russian President Putin signed an agreement called the Agreement on Comprehensive Partnership and Strategic Cooperation with the Egyptian President Al-Sisi,[53] President Putin also declared his support for Al-Sisi's decision to sign a free trade agreement with the Eurasian Economic Union, an international organization for free trade which includes 5 post-Soviet states where Russia has a huge sphere of influence.[54] In the same press statement, President Putin

50 Aleksey Vsevolodovich Malashenko, "Russia and the Arab Spring," 9.

51 "Vladimir Putin pre-empts presidency bid by Egypt's military chief," *The Guardian,* February 13, 2014, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/feb/13/vladimir-putin-backs-sisi-military-president-egypt-russia.

52 "Telephone conversation with Abdel Fattah El-Sisi, winner of the presidential election in Egypt," *President of Russia*, May 30, 2014, Accessed December 30, 2018, http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/45803.

53 "Press statements following talks with President of Egypt Abdel Fatah el-Sisi," *President of Russia,* October 17, 2018, Accessed December 30, 2018, http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/58842.

54 Ibid.

discussed the bilateral cooperation in the energy sector, which included a Russian-constructed nuclear power plant in Egypt by ROSATOM and a Russian investment for 7 billion USD in the Suez Canal of Egypt as a center of logistics and the restoration of tourism plans.[55]

The Egyptian Revolution of 2011 was good news for the Turkish government. When the Egyptian President Mobarak declared his resignation, the Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan supported this decision.[56] The first president that visited Egypt after the revolution was the Turkish President Abdullah Gül.[57] The election of the Muslim Brotherhood's candidate, Mohammad Morsi, as the 5th president of Egypt, was definitely a great moment of victory for the supporters of the Arab Spring, including the Turkish government. The Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan also visited Egypt on September 12, 2011.[58] In this visit, Prime Minister Erdoğan said "Don't be afraid of secularism" to the Egyptian public.[59] This speech was made to promote "the Turkish model", which was seen as "secular Muslim democracy" against the Salafist alternative. This statement of Erdoğan angered the supporters of the Muslim Brotherhood and some other Islamist groups.[60] However, Turkey's support for Morsi's Egypt continued for a long time. According to an interview with Erdoğan in 2015, Turkey and Qatar were the only countries that financially supported Morsi's government.[61] When the coup d'état against Morsi happened on July 3, 2013, the Turkish Prime Minister Erdoğan strongly condemned the coup and criticized the

55 Ibid.

56 Emel Parlar Dal, "Assessing Turkey's 'Normative' Power in the Middle East and North Africa," *Turkish Studies* 14, no. 4 (December 2013): 721.

57 Ahmet Uysal, "Türkiye'nin Mısır, Cezayir ve Fas Politikası 2011," in *Türk Dış Politikası Yıllığı 2011,* eds. Burhanettin Duran, Kemal İnat and Ali Resul Usul (İstanbul, SETA Yayınları, 2012), 318.

58 Ahmet Uysal, "Türkiye'nin Mısır, Cezayir ve Fas Politikası 2011," 319.

59 "laiklikten korkmayın." Ahmet Uysal, "Türkiye'nin Mısır, Cezayir ve Fas Politikası 2011," 321.

60 Ibid.

61 "Erdoğan: Mursi'den bunları duyunca şok oldum," *Haber 7,* June 1, 2015, http://www.haber7.com/siyaset/haber/1391604-erdogan-mursiden-bunlari-duyunca-sok-oldum.

Western world for not calling this incident a coup while praising the African Union for suspending Egypt's membership.[62] A similar reaction also came from the Turkish President Abdullah Gül.[63] Many anti-coup protests were made in Ankara and Istanbul as well as some smaller provinces of Turkey.[64] On July 15, 2013, the Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ahmet Davutoğlu said, "Mohammad Morsi is still the President of Egypt for us."[65] After the Rab'a Massacre in Cairo on August 14, 2013, the Justice and Development Party as well as President Erdoğan embraced the symbol of Rab'a as a symbol of solidarity with the Egyptian people, which is still used by the supporters of Erdoğan. When the Egyptian President Mohammad Morsi was sentenced to death penalty on June 16, 2015 with 106 other people, the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs condemned the sentence by calling it "arbitrary, unlawful and far from meeting international standards, would not contribute under any circumstances, to social peace and stability that is needed in Egypt."[66] Since the day of the Al-Sisi's coup, Turkey does not have good relations with Egypt.

§ 6.3 Civil Wars and the Arab Winter

Other countries of the Arab world have also been affected by the movement of the Arab Spring. Nonetheless, it is hard to say that the outcome was better than the experiences in Tunisia or Egypt. The Sudanese authoritarian leader

62 "Erdoğan'dan Batı'ya 'Mısır darbesi' eleştirisi," *BBC News,* July 5, 2013, https://www.bbc.com/turkce/haberler/2013/07/130705_misir_cuma_gosteri.

63 Ibid.

64 Ibid.

65 "Bizim için Mısır'ın Cumhurbaşkanı Muhammed Mursi'dir." "Dünyanın sustuğu kanlı darbenin üzerinden 4 yıl geçti," *Sabah,* June 26, 2017, https://www.sabah.com.tr/gundem/2017/06/26/dunyanin-sustugu-kanli-darbenin-uzerinden-4-yil-gecti.

66 "No: 176, 16 June 2015, Press Release Regarding the Confirmation of the Death Sentence Issued for Egypt's Elected President Mr. Morsi," *Republic of Turkey Ministry of Foreign Affairs,* June 16, 2015, Accessed December 28, 2018, http://www.mfa.gov.tr/no_-176_-16-june-2015_-press-release-regarding-the-confirmation-of-the-death-sentence-issued-for-egpyt_s-elected-president-mr_-morsi.en.mfa.

Omar Al-Bashir declared that he would not seek a re-election.[67] However, Omar Al-Bashir stayed in power as the President of Sudan despite his promise not to seek re-election.[68] By late December 2018, new protests had been started in Sudan due to the high price of bread in the country.[69] On April 10, 2019, the Sudanese army made a coup d'état against the Sudanese President Omar Al-Bashir.[70] But the military leaders' rule could not stop the crowds that were protesting for a democracy and the new military leader of Sudan, Ahmed Awaf Ibn Auf stepped down on April 12, 2019.[71]

In Iraq, another divisive figure, Nouri Al-Maliki, declared that he would not seek re-election, either, just like Omar Al-Bashir.[72] Unlike Al-Bashir, Nouri Al-Maliki stepped down by his own decision.[73] A civil war came out in the country due to the rise of a radical Islamist terrorist organization called ISIS and the war continued for three years, until December 9, 2017 when Iraq's new Prime Minister Haidar Al-Abadi declared Iraqi victory over ISIS.[74]

To the south of the Persian Gulf and Levant, the outcome of the rebellions was not positive, either. The protests in Jordan forced Prime Minister Marouf Al-Bakhit to resign on February 1, 2011 and a new government was

67 Kamal Eldin Osman Salih, "The roots and causes of the 2011 Arab uprisings," *Arab Studies Quarterly 35*, no. 2 (2013): 185.

68 Ibid.

69 Borzou Daragahi, "Anger at price of bread explodes into nationwide protests in Sudan," *The Independent,* December 24, 2018, https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/africa/sudan-bread-price-protests-rebellion-government-khartoum-a8697986.html.

70 "Sudan Coup: Why Omar al-Bashir was overthrown," *BBC News*, April 16, 2019, https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-47852496.

71 Ibid.

72 Kamal Eldin Osman Salih, "The roots and causes of the 2011 Arab uprisings," 185.

73 Martin Chulov, Julian Borger and Spencer Ackerman, "Embattled Iraqi prime minister Nouri al-Maliki to step aside," *The Guardian,* August 14, 2014, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/aug/14/iraqi-prime-minister-maliki-step-aside-abadi.

74 Margaret Coker and Falih Hassan, "Iraq Prime Minister Declares Victory Over ISIS," *The New York Times,* December 9, 2017, https://www.nytimes.com/2017/12/09/world/middleeast/iraq-isis-haider-al-abadi.html.

established by Awn Shawkat Al-Khasawneh.[75] However, the demands of the Jordanian people were not met as new protests were sparked in 2012 due to rising fuel prices.[76] Some major protests also occurred in Morocco, Algeria, Bahrain and Oman as well as some minor ones such as the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and Kuwait, but all of them ended quickly.[77] In the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, the protests did not lead to a regime change, but the absolute monarchies in these two countries survived by enacting some reforms.[78] In Morocco, the protests of the Arab Spring led to a radical reform in the government system. On June 17, 2011, the Moroccan King Mohammed VI declared new reforms that turned Morocco from an absolute monarch to a constitutional monarchy to stop the protests.[79] Only Bahraini protests became a regional issue and provoked other regional powers to intervene against the threat of the rise of pro-Iranian Shia groups, which was the same reason why Yemeni protests would also turn into a bloody civil war.

In Bahrain, the predominantly Shia rebel groups were crushed quickly in March 2011 by the foreign intervention of the other two Gulf States, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, which was demanded by Bahrain.[80] With the declaration of martial law and three-month state of emergency on March 15, 2011, the King Hamad bin Issa Al-Khalifa

75 Ian Black, "Jordan's king sacks prime minister," *The Guardian,* October 17, 2011, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2011/oct/17/jordan-king-sacks-prime-minister.

76 Jodi Rudoren and Ranya Kadri, "Protests Over Gas Prices in Jordan Turns Deadly," *The New York Times,* November 14, 2012, https://www.nytimes.com/2012/11/15/world/middleeast/jordan-protests-turn-deadly-on-second-day.html.

77 Kamal Eldin Osman Salih, "The roots and causes of the 2011 Arab uprisings," 184.

78 James L. Gelvin, "Arap İsyanlarını Anlamak," in *Ortadoğu: Direniş, Devrim, Emperyalizm,* ed. Y. Doğan Çetinkaya (İstanbul, İletişim Yayınları, 2016), 69.

79 "King declares Morocco a constitutional monarchy," *CBS News,* June 12, 2011, https://www.cbsnews.com/news/king-declares-morocco-a-constitutional-monarchy/.

80 William Butler, "Saudi Arabian intervention in Bahrain driven by visceral Sunni fear of Shias," *The Guardian,* March 20, 2011, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2011/mar/20/bahrain-saudi-arabia-rebellion.

secured his rule and preserved the status quo.[81] Although the British Foreign Secretary, William Hague, condemned the state of emergency in Bahrain, the Obama administration supported the rule of the Bahraini king and the intervention of the Gulf States by claiming it was not an invasion.[82] Later in the summer of 2017, Bahrain, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, with the support of the Trump administration of the United States and Al-Sisi government of Egypt, would create a crisis by cutting their links with Qatar and accusing Qatar for funding terrorism due to Qatari government's support for the Arab Spring.[83] The Qatari crisis did nothing but make Qatar get even much closer to Iran and Turkey while alienating her from other Gulf States which see Qatar as a challenging power in the region.[84]

On February 17, 2011, a huge protest in Benghazi turned into an awful civil war when the Libyan military forces opened fire against protestors.[85] The killings of the protesters by the Libyan military forces continued during the protests after this day. The death toll quickly increased to more than 100, just in the first week after the first attack of the Libyan army on protestors.[86] On February 22, 2011, the Libyan dictator Gaddafi made a speech to express that he would not step down like Ben Ali or Mobarak by saying "I am not going to leave this country" and demanded from his loyalists to take the con-

81 Martin Chulov, "Three killed as Bahrain declared martial law," *The Guardian*, March 15, 2011, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2011/mar/15/bahrain-king-declares-martial-law.

82 Ibid.

83 "Qatar crisis: What you need to know," *BBC News*, July 19, 2017, https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-40173757.

84 Declan Walsh, "Qatar Restores Full Relations With Iran, Deepening Gulf Feud," *The New York Times,* August 24, 2017, https://www.nytimes.com/2017/08/24/world/middleeast/qatar-iran-boycott-saudi-arabia.html.

85 Ian Black, "Libya cracks down on protesters after violent clashes in Benghazi," *The Guardian,* February 17, 2011, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2011/feb/16/libya-clashes-benghazi.

86 Jo Adetunji, Peter Beaumont and Martin Chulov, "Libya protests: More than 100 killed as army fires on unarmed demonstrators," *The Guardian,* February 20, 2011, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2011/feb/20/libya-protests-benghazi-muammar-gaddafi.

trol of the streets from protestors whom he called as "greasy rats".[87] By the month of February, the Libyan Air Force jets conducted air strikes to prevent the rebel groups from reaching weapons, and the death toll reached 233, according to Human Rights Watch.[88] By March 4, 2011, the protests had spread to Gaddafi's main stronghold, Tripoli, the capital city of Libya.[89]

The Libyan crisis suddenly turned into a major global problem. The Justice Minister Mustafa Abdul Jalil resigned after the violent response of Gaddafi and demanded no-fly zone to be created against the massive killings of the Libyan Air Forces.[90] And this time, the Obama administration did not passively watch the events like in Tunisia or Egypt.[91] The Gaddafi regime declared ceasefire for a while, but the Libyan troops kept on pushing against the rebel groups which provoked the Obama administration to make a military intervention.[92] On February 26, 2011, the US President Barack Obama signed an executive order that imposed financial sanctions on Gaddafi, which froze his assets.[93] On the same day, the United Nations Security Coun-

87 Ian Black, "Gaddafi urges violent showdown and tells Libya 'I'll die a martyr'," The Guardian, February 22, 2011, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2011/feb/22/muammar-gaddafi-urges-violent-showdown.

88 Richard Spencer, "Libya: Muammar Gaddafi fires on his own people," *The Telegraph,* February 21, 2011, https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/africaandindianocean/libya/8339347/Libya-Muammar-Gaddafi-fires-on-his-own-people.html.

89 "Libya: Protests hit Gaddafi stronghold in Tripoli," *BBC News,* March 4, 2011, https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-12644435.

90 Anjali Kamat and Ahmad Shokr, "Libya," in *Arap Baharı'ndan Kesitler: Yeni Ortadoğu'yu Anlamak*, eds. Paul Amar and Vijay Prashad, trans. Ömer Can Fürtun, Seyit Ümmetoğlu and Yankı Deniz Tan (İstanbul, İntifada Yayınları, 2014), 231.

91 Hasan B Yalçın, "Obama Stratejisi ve Ortadoğu," in *Akademik Ortadoğu* 9, no. 2 (2015): 58.

92 William Branigin, Liz Sly, and Sudarsan Raghavan, "Obama Demands Pull-back of Libyan Troops; Tripoli Declares Cease-fire," *The Washington Post*, March 18, 2011, https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/europeans-say-intervention-in-libya-possible-within-hours-of-un-vote/2011/03/17/ABSb9pl_story.html?utm_term=.d605de13e8e5.

93 "Libya: Barack Obama announces Gaddafi Sanctions," *BBC News,* February 26, 2011, https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-12435110.

cil passed a resolution that also froze the assets of Muammar Gaddafi.[94] On March 17, 2011, the United Nations Security Council approved the Resolution 1973 which allowed the multinational force to conduct airstrikes to Libya in order to protect Libyan civilians.[95] On March 19, 2011, a NATO-led coalition made a military intervention in Libya to stop the ongoing conflict and implement the UN Security Council Resolution 1973.[96]

The Gaddafi regime was an ally of Russia. The two states had signed an 8 billion USD deal for energy, defense and construction sectors in the past.[97] Therefore, Russia wanted the Gaddafi regime in Libya to stay in power.[98] Like the US Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton, who tried to convince Mobarak before his fall, Russia did the same for Qaddafi, but eventually it failed.[99] When it was clear that there was no other option to save the Gaddafi regime, Russia allowed the Western powers to take action against the Gaddafi regime by not vetoing the UN Security Council Resolution 1973.[100] In the end, Russia regretted this decision and she would not repeat the same mistake in the case of Syria.[101]

The situation of Russia in the Libyan Crisis was quite similar to the situation of Turkey. There were Turkish investments in Libya worth more than 10 billion USD, mostly in the sector of construction.[102] One of the biggest concerns of the Turkish government was protecting the rights of those Turkish

94 Colum Lynch, "U.N. votes to impose sanction on Gaddafi," *The Washington Post,* February 26, 2011, http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2011/02/26/AR2011022603386.html.

95 "Libya resolution: UN security council air strikes vote – as it happened," *The Guardian,* March 17, 2011, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2011/mar/17/libya-united-nations-air-strikes-live.

96 Ibid.

97 Aleksey Vsevolodovich Malashenko, "Russia and the Arab Spring," 12.

98 Aleksey Vsevolodovich Malashenko, "Russia and the Arab Spring," 11.

99 Ibid.

100 Nikolay Kozhanov, "Russian Policy Across the Middle East: Motivations and Methods," *The Chatham House*, 2018, 2, https://www.chathamhouse.org/publication/russian-policy-across-middle-east-motivations-and-methods.

101 Michael McFaul, *From Cold War to Hot Peace: The Inside Story of Russia and America,* 333.

102 Fatma Aslı Kelkitli, *Turkish-Russian Relations: Competition and Cooperation in Eurasia*, 91

firms in Libya.[103] Libya was also the center of the most important markets for Turkish contractors in Africa and more than 25,000 Turkish workers were living there.[104] The evacuation of these Turkish workers was another problem that Turkey had to solve.[105] Turkey evacuated 25,000 Turkish citizens and 10,000 foreign nationals from Libya in one week.[106]

Due to these reasons, Turkey was against a military intervention towards Libya at the beginning, which was also expressed by the President of Turkey, Abdullah Gül.[107] The Prime Minister of Turkey, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan said that the NATO operation against the Gaddafi regime was unnecessary and that it could lead to dangerous consequences.[108] The Then Minister of Foreign Affairs of Turkey, Ahmet Davutoğlu declared that Turkey was searching for an alternative approach rather than a military intervention and warned that the mistakes made in Iraq should not be repeated again; otherwise, Libya would be divided.[109] The Turkish Minister of European Union Affairs, Egemen Bağış also warned against a military intervention and demanded a diplomatic solution.[110] However, in the end, Turkey supported the military intervention of the Western powers when she understood that Gaddafi had no future. Thus, instead of insisting for a pro-Gaddafi foreign policy which was quite futile, the Turkish government acted pragmatically and changed sides by recalling the ambassador from Tripoli and recognizing the rebelling

103 Emel Parlar Dal, "Assessing Turkey's 'Normative' Power in the Middle East and North Africa," 722.

104 Fahrettin Sümer, "Turkey's Changing Foreign Policy and the Arab Spring," *The Innovation Journal: The Public Sector Innovation Journal* 18, no. 1 (2013): 20.

105 Emel Parlar Dal, "Assessing Turkey's 'Normative' Power in the Middle East and North Africa," 722.

106 Ibid.

107 Özden Zeynep Oktav, "The Syrian civil war and Turkey-Syria-Iran relations," *Syria Studies* (2015): 4-5

108 Emel Parlar Dal, "Assessing Turkey's 'Normative' Power in the Middle East and North Africa," 722.

109 Cenap Çakmak, "Türkiye'nin Tunus ve Libya Politikası 2011," in *Türk Dış Politikası Yıllığı 2011,* eds. Burhanettin Duran, Kemal İnat and Ali Resul Usul (İstanbul, SETA Yayınları, 2012), 354.

110 Ibid.

Transnational National Council which was also recognized by the Western powers.[111] Turkey also issued an embargo on Gaddafi's regime and participated in the multilateral operations of NATO with limited military assistance for humanitarian aid.[112] Nonetheless, Turkey warned that she was against any unilateral action of NATO and criticized the leading role of the French government of Nicolas Sarkozy in the air strikes against the pro-Gaddafi forces.[113] Turkey declared that she would not join any direct military operations and Prime Minister Erdoğan said that "Turkey will never be on the side that is holding a gun against the Libyan people."[114]

The Libyan Civil War ended when the last stronghold of Gaddafi in Serrt was captured by the Transnational National Council on October 20, 2011.[115] At the end of this civil war, the charismatic leader of Libya, Muammar Gaddafi was captured and lynched by an angry mob.[116] His 42 year-old regime of Jamahiriya collapsed. In 2014 the country was divided among powerful figures, and political violence was in full swing. The radical Salafist groups such as Ansar Al Sharia were active in the country.[117] The second Libyan civil war still continues in 2019. Khalifa Haftar, a military leader that once rebelled against the Gaddafi regime with the support of the US and lived in exile until

111 Özden Zeynep Oktav, "The Syrian civil war and Turkey-Syria-Iran relations," 5.

112 Tarık Oğuzlu, "The 'Arab Spring' and the Rise of the 2.0 Version of Turkey's 'zero problems policy with neighbors' Policy," *SAM Papers,* no. 1 (February, 2012): 5.

113 Emel Parlar Dal, "Assessing Turkey's 'Normative' Power in the Middle East and North Africa," 722.

114 "Türkiye asla ve asla Libya halkına silah doğrultan taraf olmayacaktır." Cenap Çakmak, "Türkiye'nin Tunus ve Libya Politikası 2011," 355.

115 Kamal Eldin Osman Salih, "The roots and causes of the 2011 Arab uprisings," 185.

116 Gordon Raynor, "Rebels argued over whether to kill Gaddafi as he begged for his life," *The Telegraph,* October 21, 2011, https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/africaandindianocean/libya/8842021/Rebels-argued-over-whether-to-kill-Gaddafi-as-he-begged-for-his-life.html.

117 Chris Stephen, "War in Libya – Guardian briefing," *The Guardian,* August 29, 2014, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/aug/29/-sp-briefing-war-in-libya.

the death of Gaddafi, rose as the strongman of Libya by the year of 2019.[118] On May 6, 2019, Haftar declared war against his rivals and demanded from his troops to use every means necessary to suppress them.[119] It is hard to predict whether Haftar will be able to establish his own regime, unite the country and end the civil war soon, but foreign powers started to see him as the new leader of Libya, despite his controversial authoritarianism against his rivals.[120]

The poorest country of the Arab world, Yemen, experienced a much bloodier conflict than the civil war of Libya. Protests inspired by the other Arab Spring movements came out in 2011, which ended the administration of the autocratic rule of Ali Abdullah Saleh.[121] However, the downfall of Saleh turned into a civil war between Shia Houthis and Sunni government, which was another proxy war between the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the Islamic Republic Iran as a Shia-Sunni conflict.[122] The biggest cholera outbreak in history also came out during this civil war which killed 612,703 civilians, and famine in many regions continues as the civil war still goes on.[123]

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118 "Profile: Khalifa Haftar," *Al-Jazeera,* April 19, 2018, https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2018/02/haftar-vies-power-libya-shifting-sands-180226143054107.html.

119 "Libya's Haftar urges troops to 'wipe out' military opponents," *Al-Jazeera,* May 6, 2019, https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2019/05/libya-haftar-urges-troops-wipe-military-opponents-190506185152700.html.

120 Patrick Wintour, "Khalifa Haftar can still be part of future Libya government, says Hunt," *The Guardian,* May 7, 2019, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/may/07/khalifa-haftar-can-still-be-part-future-libya-government-jeremy-hunt.

121 David Blair, "Yemen's President step down after 33 years," *The Telegraph.* November 23, 2011, https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/middleeast/yemen/8910946/Yemens-president-steps-down-after-33-years.html.

122 Zvi Bar'el, "Backed by Iran, Yemen's Houthi Fighters Flout Saudi Arabia's Might," *Haaretz*, August 3, 2018, https://www.haaretz.com/middle-east-news/.premium-backed-by-iran-yemen-s-houthi-fighters-flout-saudi-arabia-s-might-1.6340292.

123 Tom Miles, "Yemen's cholera epidemic hits 600,000 confounding expectations," *Reuters*, September 5, 2017, https://www.reuters.com/article/us-yemen-cholera/yemens-cholera-epidemic-hits-600000-confounding-expectations-idUSKCN1BG158.

The case of Syria was quite different than other regions. Syria is a country that was ruled by a dictatorship of the Assad family who were Alawite Muslims, one of the minority groups in Syria which constituted approximately 13% of the population where Sunni population made up 74% of the Syrian population, according to CIA Factbook.[124][125] Due to this heterodox structure of Syria, the civil war was fought among different parties with complex relations, and many of these groups also had different external supporters who also had conflicts with one another. For example, the Turkish government was supporting the anti-Assad rebel groups such as the Free Syrian Army and the Al-Nusra Front during the course of the war with the United States.[126][127] But the United States also supported the YPG during the Syrian Civil War.[128] The YPG was a Kurdish separatist group that had ties with the PKK, hence Turkey could never tolerate that group in the region. For Turkey, the Assad regime might be the enemy, but the issue of the YPG was more important for national security due to the war with the PKK inside her borders. Thus, the Syrian Civil War was a complex civil war among different ethnic and religious groups, but it was also a proxy war fought by regional and global powers.

The Syrian Civil War lasted longer than other conflicts caused by the Arab Spring and it did not end with a regime change like in the examples of Tunisia, Egypt, Libya or Yemen, due to the aid from Russia and Iran to the

124 "The World Factbook: Middle East – Syria," *Central Intelligence Agency*, January 15, 2019, Accessed February 10, 2019, https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/sy.html.

125 The social structure of Syria was similar to Saddam's Iraq where there was a minority group's regime in power. In Iraq, more than 60% of the people were belonging to Shia Islam while Saddam Hussein was a Sunni Muslim. See CIA's World Factbook page for Iraq for more information about the social structure of Iraq. https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/iz.html.

126 Faruk Sönmezoğlu, *Son Onyıllarda Türk Dış Politikası 1991-2015*, 583.

127 Gencer Özcan, "Rusya'nın Suriye Bunalımına Müdahalesi ve Türkiye," in *Kuşku ile Komşuluk,* eds. Gencer Özcan, Evren Balta and Burç Beşgül (İstanbul, İletişim Yayınları, 2017), 270-271.

128 Şener Aktürk, "Turkey's Role in the Arab Spring and the Syrian Conflict," 88.

Assad regime of Syria. Also, unlike those countries, the Syrian President Bashar Al-Assad established the state security apparatus by electing its members very selectively.[129] Thus, during the Arab Spring, the Syrian army mostly sided with the Assad regime instead of forcing the government to step down like in Tunisia, Egypt or Yemen.[130] At the beginning of the protests, on January 31, 2011, the Syrian President Bashar Al-Assad made an infamous interview to the Wall Street Journal, in which he ironically claimed that stability continued in Syria, although the whole region was battling with microbes and pollution due to foreign intervention by the United States; however, the Syrian regime was safe because it was closely linked to the Syrian people's belief, according to the Syrian President Assad.[131] Nevertheless, the truth was quite different than what Syrian President Assad said in this interview. Syria was also affected by the Arab Spring as riots quickly came out in the capital city Damascus, when a traffic policeman attacked a merchant's son in Harika on February 2011.[132] Even though the protesters did not target the Assad regime in these early demonstrations, they demanded some reforms by saying "The Syrian people cannot be humiliated."[133] Nonetheless, the only response they got was oppression from Syrian security forces as the protestors started to make demonstrations about solidarity with the Egyptian Revolution or Libyan uprising.[134] The actual outrage from dissident citizens of Syria came out on March 6, 2011 when teenager schoolboys were arrested, brutally tortured and some of them even were kille d duringthe interrogations of the Syrian security forces in a very poor rural village of Daraa, just for spraying

129 Adam Baczko, Gilles Dorronsoro and Arthur Quesnay, *Suriye: Bir İç Savaşın Anatomisi*, trans. Ayşe Meral (İstanbul, İletişim Yayınları, 2018), 91-92.

130 Ibid.

131 "Interview with Syrian President Bashar Al-Assad," *The Wall Street Journal*, January 31, 2011, https://www.wsj.com/articles/SB10001424052748703833204576114712441122894.

132 Paulo Gabriel Hilu Pinto, "Suriye," in *Arap Baharı'ndan Kesitler: Yeni Ortadoğu'yu Anlamak*, eds. Paul Amar and Vijay Prashad, trans. Ömer Can Fürtun, Seyit Ümmetoğlu and Yankı Deniz Tan (İstanbul, İntifada Yayınları, 2014), 280.

133 Ibid.

134 Ibid.

graffiti on a wall which said "The people want to topple the regime".[135] After this sparking incident, the biggest protest in Syria came out in this border town which was brutally suppressed by the regime. However, its message quickly spread to entire Syria as anti-regime protestors chanted the slogan of "Daraa is Syria" as a kind of solidarity.[136] But, the protests happened only in poor rural places of Syria and a couple of times in the very poor working-class districts of Aleppo and Damascus.[137] The President Assad's use of authoritarian power to suppress the people of Daraa undermined the legitimacy of his regime. The only response that Assad could give to regain legitimacy against protestors was to link these rebellions to the very brutal Islamist uprisings in Aleppo between 1979 and 1982.[138] Although the protestors and rebel groups in Syria were quite pluralistic, Assad's plan created a national conservative unity to protect the status quo against the dissident movements by claiming that the oppositional groups solely contain some Sunni Salafist Radical Islamists or members of the Muslim Brotherhood, which somehow especially worked for two major cities, Aleppo and Damascus.[139] The protestors expected to see demonstrations from Aleppo and Damascus, but people from these two cities mostly sided with the Assad regime and the rebellion mostly occurred in the poor rural communities of Syria.[140]

The Obama administration's response to the protests in Syria was clear. The United States and the other countries of the Western world were in favor of a regime change. On August 18, 2011, the US President Obama demanded the resignation of Bashar Al-Assad:

> The future of Syria must be determined by its people, but President Bashar al-Assad is standing in their way… We have consistently said

135 Paulo Gabriel Hilu Pinto, "Suriye," 281.

136 Joe Sterling, "Daraa: The spark that lit the Syrian flame," *CNN,* March 1, 2012, https://edition.cnn.com/2012/03/01/world/meast/syria-crisis-beginnings/index.html.

137 Paulo Gabriel Hilu Pinto, "Suriye," 285.

138 Paulo Gabriel Hilu Pinto, "Suriye," 297-298.

139 Paulo Gabriel Hilu Pinto, "Suriye," 297-301.

140 Paulo Gabriel Hilu Pinto, "Suriye," 293.

> that President Assad must lead a democratic transition or get out of the way. He has not led. For the sake of the Syrian people, the time has come for President Assad to step aside.[141]

In the same speech, President Obama also declared that the United States would start imposing sanctions on Syria.[142] The United States later tried to condemn the Syrian government in the United Nations Security Council, but this attempt was vetoed by both Russia and China.[143] The US Secretary of State, Hillary Rodham Clinton, explicitly declared the position of the United States against the Assad regime of Syria by saying "the world will not waver, Assad must go" at a meeting in Istanbul.[144] At the end of this meeting, all of the 83 countries including the United States and Turkey agreed to recognize the opposition group in Syria, the Syrian National Council, as the sole representative of the Syrian people and to call Syrian soldiers for disobedience in case of an attack against Syrian civilians.[145] On January 31, 2012, the United Nations published a draft resolution on Syria which said that there would be consequences if the Syrian President Assad would not step down.[146] Nevertheless, the Syrian President Bashar Al-Assad did not listen to any of these calls from the West and declared that he would continue to fight.[147]

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141 "Statement by President Obama on the Situation of Syria," *The White House*. August 18, 2011, Accessed April 15, 2019, https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2011/08/18/statement-president-obama-situation-syria.

142 Ibid.

143 Duygu Dersan Orhan, "Syrian Crisis as a Proxy War: A New Cold War Started?" *Akademik Ortadoğu* 10, no. 2 (2016): 95.

144 "Clinton: "The world will not waver, Assad must go"," *BBC News*, April 1, 2012, https://www.bbc.com/news/av/world-middle-east-17578802/clinton-the-world-will-not-waver-assad-must-go.

145 Ibid.

146 "UN Draft resolution on Syria," *The Guardian,* January 31, 2012, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2012/jan/31/un-security-council-draft-resolution-syria.

147 Mona Mahmood and Luke Harding, "Bashar al-Assad says there is no end sight to Syrian civil war," *The Guardian,* August 29, 2012, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2012/aug/29/bashar-al-assad-syria-war.

The back-door policy between Turkey and Syria, which was conducted by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Turkey, Ahmet Davutoglu during his visit in August 2011, did not work; Turkey became one of the most prominent actors that wanted a regime change in Syria.[148] Just like the United States, Turkey also believed that the Assad regime in Syria was collapsing. To have a presence in the new Syria after Assad, the Turkish government got involved in the Syrian Civil War.[149] Besides, this was an opportunity for Turkey to increase its influence and power in the Middle East through Syria. On the other hand, the threat to Turkish national security by the Kurdish separatist groups would increase after the fall of the Assad regime. Hence, the Turkish government decided to become involved in the Syrian Civil War as it joined the arms embargo of NATO in September 2011 and started to impose economic sanctions on Syria by December 1, 2011.[150] In June 2011, Turkey allowed the defected Syrian soldiers to enter Turkey and helped them to establish the Free Syrian Army, one of the major anti-Assad forces in the Syrian Civil War.[151] Since the year of 2012, Turkey has cut all diplomatic ties with Syria and supported the oppositional groups in Syria.[152]

Nevertheless, the Obama administration was unsure about the possibility of intervention due to the fear of rising radical Islamist groups that was threatening the United States and the lack of support from the other great power, the Russian Federation.[153] According to Michael McFaul, the former American ambassador to the Russian Federation, the US President Barack Hussein Obama did not want to arm the rebel groups properly because of the possibility that weapons could fall in the hands of terrorist groups, as it was the case of Al-Mujahedeen in Afghanistan.[154] Also, failure to establish

148 Ali Balcı, *Türkiye Dış Politikası: İlkeler, Aktörler ve Uygulamalar,* 338.

149 Ömer Göksel İşyar, *Suriye Krizi ve Türk Dış Politikası* (Bursa, Sayda Yayınları, 2018), 55.

150 Ali Balcı, *Türkiye Dış Politikası: İlkeler, Aktörler ve Uygulamalar,* 338.

151 Raymond Hinnebusch, "Back to Enmity: Turkey-Syria Relations Since the Syrian Uprising," *Orient* 1, (2015): 15.

152 Ali Balcı, *Türkiye Dış Politikası: İlkeler, Aktörler ve Uygulamalar,* 338.

153 Michael McFaul, *From Cold War to Hot Peace: The Inside Story of Russia and America,* 330-331.

154 Michael McFaul, *From Cold War to Hot Peace: The Inside Story of Russia and America,* 331.

peace after the military intervention in Libya made the Obama administration more cautious about a new military intervention in Syria.[155] Back in 2011, the United States was considering the Assad regime in Syria as an authoritarian regime about to collapse.[156] In her memoir, the Former US Secretary of State, Hillary Rodham Clinton wrote "In the early day of the fighting many assumed Assad's fall was inevitable."[157] However, Russia believed that Assad could remain in power through brute power and with the support of Russia, like Kadyrov's regime in Chechnya.[158] When it was clear that the Assad regime would not collapse due to Russian support, contrary to expectations, the United States became gradually less active in the Syrian Civil War.[159]

However, the Western world, including Turkey, kept their anti-Assad position and supported Syrian rebel groups such as the Free Syrian Army and the Al-Nusra Front. On the other hand, a new jihadist threat would emerge: the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria, ISIS. A Kurdish armed group YPG, which was linked to the PKK, was another actor in the Syrian Civil War. The Obama administration started to take a cautious step towards the Assad regime in Syria after the rise of ISIS. After the rise of ISIS and the Syrian refugee crisis, the United States and other Western countries started to use Turkey as a buffer state to keep these two crises away from the Western world.[160]

§ 6.4 Turkey and the Syrian Civil War

The last conflict between Turkey and Syria came out when the Kurdish terrorist group PKK's leader Abdullah Öcalan was living in Syria. The Turk-

155 Ibid.

156 Michael McFaul, *From Cold War to Hot Peace: The Inside Story of Russia and America,* 344.

157 Hillary Clinton Rodham, *Hard choices,* 389.

158 Michael McFaul, *From Cold War to Hot Peace: The Inside Story of Russia and America,* 344.

159 Michael McFaul, *From Cold War to Hot Peace: The Inside Story of Russia and America,* 357-358.

160 E. Fuat Keyman, "Turkish Foreign Policy in the Post-Arab Spring Era: From Proactive to Buffer State," *Third World Quarterly* 37, no. 12 (2016): 2275-2276.

ish government put a huge pressure on Syria to force the then Syrian President Hafez Al-Assad to expel Abdullah Öcalan from Syria and to sign the so-called Adana Agreement on October 1998.[161] Due to Turkey's national security concerns, her existing appeasement foreign policy towards Hafez Al-Assad's Syria suddenly changed into a very aggressive one.[162] In the course of the Syrian Civil War, the issue of terrorism, especially the Kurdish secessionist groups in Syria became the main issue for Turkish foreign policy. Mainly, the Kurdish secessionist terrorist groups such as the YPG-PYD were seen as a major threat, and to stop their advance was one of the primary goals of the Turkish government. Later, ISIS, a radical Islamic fundamentalist terrorist group which rose in Syria and Iraq, would also create great concern for Turkey. The existence of these two terrorist groups, especially the YPG, posed a huge threat to Turkey during the process of Syrian Civil War, and Turkey tried to eliminate them before they got more power. In addition to this, there were also some concerns about Syrian refugees in Turkey. Turkey was expecting that these Syrian refugees would return to Syria when the Bashar Al-Assad's Baathist regime would be replaced with a new regime.

At the beginning of the war, the Turkish government expected that the Assad regime would make a compromise and make some necessary reforms to restore the order, and Turkey could follow a mediator role between dissidents and the Syrian president Bashar Al-Assad.[163] The Turkish government tried to follow a back-door diplomacy for a peaceful transformation, but the Assad regime kept following an authoritarian approach towards the protests.[164] The Syrian President Bashar Al-Assad made some small reforms to weaken the protests, such as releasing the 15 arrested young Syrians that

161 Ö. Zeynep Oktav Alantar, "The October 1998 Crisis: The Change of Heart of Turkish Foreign Policy towards Syria?" *CEMOTI, Cahiers d'Études sur la Méditerranée Orientale et le monde Turco-Iranien* 31, no. 31 (2001): 145.

162 Ö. Zeynep Oktav Alantar, "The October 1998 Crisis: The Change of Heart of Turkish Foreign Policy towards Syria?", 141.

163 Ömer Taşpınar, "Turkey's Strategic Vision and Syria," *The Washington Quarterly* 35. no. 3 (Summer 2012): 137.

164 Mehmet Bardakçı, "Evolving Turkish Policy in the Face of the Changing Syrian Crisis," *Akademik Ortadoğu* 11, no. 2 (2017): 100.

started the revolts from Daraa, sacking the governor of Daraa, declaring some public reforms about combatting corruption and creating new liberties, raising the income of public workers, opening new fields for employment, removing the state of emergency which had been active since 1963, reducing the mandatory military service term from 21 months to 18 months, pardoning political prisoners, demanding resignation of the presidential cabinet, allowing female teachers to wear niqab in schools, closing down the only casino of Syria and granting citizenship to the Kurdish people living in Syria who had no citizenship due to the discrimination of the Syrian Baathist regime.[165] However, these reforms of Bashar Al-Assad did not stop all the protests, and President Assad did not want to step down. The Arab Spring in Syria turned into a huge civil war just like in Libya and Yemen.

When the Turkish government of AKP understood that Assad would not take a step back, Turkey stopped following the old "Zero Problems with Neighbors" policy and started to pursue an aggressive foreign policy by supporting the regime change in Syria.[166] In 2011, the Turkish government expressed its position in the Syrian Civil War, when the Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan openly stated that what was happening in Syria was the internal matter of Turkey and that he had run out of patience.[167] On April 26, 2012, the Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ahmet Davutoğlu demonstrated this new active foreign policy of Turkey more explicitly in his speech in the Turkish Grand National Assembly.[168] In this speech, Davutoğlu said:

165 Paulo Gabriel Hilu Pinto, "Suriye," 283-284.

166 Cihan Tuğal, "Democratic Janissaries?", 13.

167 Faruk Sönmezoğlu, *Son Onyıllarda Türk Dış Politikası 1991-2015*, 582

168 "Türkiye olarak bundan sonra da Ortadoğu'da değişim dalgasını yöneteceğiz… Çünkü zihnimizde nasıl yeni bir Türkiye iddiası varsa yeni bir Ortadoğu iddiası da var." Nebi Miş, "Türkiye'nin Suriye ve Lübnan Politikası 2012: Bölgesel Sahiplenme," in *Türk Dış Politikası Yıllığı 2012,* eds. Burhanettin Duran, Kemal İnat and Ufuk Ulutaş (İstanbul, SETA Yayınları, 2013), 235.

> From now on, as Turkey, we will lead the wave of change in the Middle East… Just like how we have a plan for a new Turkey in our minds, we also have a plan for the Middle East.[169]

Throughout the Syrian Civil War, Turkey demanded to create a buffer zone in Northern Syria due to security concerns.[170] However, the United States did not support this demand of Turkey because neither Turkey, nor the United States would want to provide the necessary number of troops for the protection of that buffer zone.[171]

The aggressive foreign policy of Turkey in Syria continued for a while and even the Russian involvement into the Syrian Civil War did not stop this stance of Turkey. Clashes between the two countries destroyed Turkish-Russian relations for a while. However, in the post-coup atmosphere when the Turkish government became suspicious about the intentions of the Western camp on Turkey, especially of those of the United States, the Turkish government decided to change its position. Due to this unexpected unsuccessful coup attempt and the feeling of betrayal by the Western camp, the Turkish authorities softened their anti-Assad stance while dealing with the terrorist groups in the region through military operations, especially against the Kurdish secessionist terrorist groups such as the PYD-YPG, with the consent of Russia. After realizing that the Assad regime in Syria was not going to collapse, a change in the Turkish foreign policy was necessary to stop the threat of the Kurdish secessionist groups while leaning to a great power such as Russia to balance the power against the other great power, the United States.

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169 Ibid.

170 "Turkey and US 'planning buffer zone' in northern Syria," *BBC News,* July 27, 2015, https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-33681215.

171 Henri J. Barkey, "Syria's Dark Shadow Over US-Turkey Relations," *Turkish Policy Quarterly* 14, no. 4 (Winter 2016): 28.

Turkey became involved in the Syrian Civil War with the goal of regime change in Syria since the failure of back-door diplomacy in August 2011.[172] Accordingly, the Syrian opposition groups were openly aided by the Turkish government.[173] Turkey also helped the establishment of the Syrian National Council in Istanbul in 2011 as a coalition of Syrian anti-Assad opposition and allowed it to hold its meetings in Istanbul and Antalya, two cities of Turkey.[174] Furthermore, Turkey even allowed its armed wing, the Free Syrian Army, to establish headquarters in the South Eastern region of Turkey.[175] The Turkish government was working with full effort to end Assad's regime in Syria by reaching every anti-Assad ally, except PYD, the Kurdish separatists, and has been asking the Syrian President Bashar Al-Assad to step down since late 2011.[176] The Assad regime never approved this new active foreign policy of the Turkish government on Syria. Syria condemned Turkey for organizing events with the Muslim Brotherhood within its borders.[177] Also, the Syrian President Bashar Al-Assad claimed that Turkey was allowing terrorists to pass through her borders to destabilize Syria.[178] On April 10, 2012, during his visit to Moscow, the Syrian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Al-Muallem claimed that Turkey was giving weapons to illegal terrorist organizations in Syria and blamed Turkey for the Syrian Civil War.[179]

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172 Meliha Altunışık, "The AKP's Middle East Policy: Amidst Domestic and Regional Challenges," 72.

173 Ibid.

174 Fehim Taştekin, *Suriye: Yıkıl Git, Diren Kal!* (İstanbul, İletişim Yayınları, 2016), 83-86.

175 Özden Zeynep Oktav, "The Syrian civil war and Turkey-Syria-Iran relations," 6.

176 Meliha Benli Altunışık, "Explaining the Transformation of Turkish-Syrian Relations: A Regionalist Approach," in *Turkey-Syria Relations: Between Enmity and Amity,* eds. Raymond Hinnebusch and Özlem Tür (London, Ashgate, 2013), 189.

177 Özge Yavuz, "Temel Parametreler ve Farklılaşan Dinamikler Çerçevesinde Suriye-Türkiye İlişkileri," in *Bağımsızlıktan Arap Baharı'na Suriye: İç ve Dış Politika,* eds. Mehmet Akif Okur and Nuri Salık (İstanbul, Nobel Yayıncılık, 2016), 335.

178 Sami Moubayed, "'Milking the Male Goat' and Syrian-Turkish Relations," in *Turkey-Syria Relations: Between Enmity and Amity,* eds. Raymond Hinnebusch and Özlem Tür (London, Ashgate, 2013), 75-76.

179 Nebi Miş, "Türkiye'nin Suriye ve Lübnan Politikası 2012: Bölgesel Sahiplenme," 236.

Nevertheless, dreams about toppling the Assad regime and securing the border from Kurdish insurgency were never accomplished. Although Turkey always expected a military intervention to Syria from the Western powers since the beginning of the war, particularly from the US administration, that intervention never came especially due to the rise of the radical Islamic fundamentalist terrorist group called ISIS.[180] Besides, the US kept supporting this Kurdish separatist group, the YPG, by supplying arms, even though it made the Turkish government angry.[181] The YPG was the actual proxy actor for the United States in the Syrian Civil War and the United States did not stop her aid to the YPG despite the opposition of the Turkish government.[182]

The radical Islamic groups in the Syrian opposition concerned the United States. Although the United States approved the establishment of the Syrian National Council in Turkey, the Obama administration did not like the presence of Salafist/Radical Islamist groups in it.[183] On April 1, 2012, the US Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton demanded the disbandment of the Syrian National Council.[184] Later, on October 31, 2012, Secretary Clinton tried to change the leadership of the opposition.[185] As a result of these demands from the United States, the Syrian National Council evolved into a more pluralist opposition called the National Coalition for the Syrian Opposition and the Revolutionary Forces after the meeting in Doha, Qatar on November 11, 2012.[186] However, this change in the Syrian opposition did not end US concerns about radical Islamism in Syria. After the attack on the US embassy in Benghazi on September 11-12, 2012, the Al-Nusra Front was blamed for hav-

180 Henri J. Barkey, "Syria's Dark Shadow Over US-Turkey Relations," 28.

181 David Jackson, "Obama administration is arming Kurds," *USA Today,* August 11, 2014, https://www.usatoday.com/story/theoval/2014/08/11/obama-iraq-kurds-militants-air-strikes/13885525/.

182 Şener Aktürk, "Turkey's Role in the Arab Spring and the Syrian Conflict," 88.

183 Ali Bilgin Varlık, "Geçmişten Geleceğe Türkiye-Suriye İlişkileri," in *Türk Dış Politikasında Yeni Yönelimler,* eds. Hasret Çomak and Caner Sancaktar (İstanbul, Beta Yayınları, 2013), 573.

184 Ibid.

185 Ibid.

186 Ali Bilgin Varlık, "Geçmişten Geleceğe Türkiye-Suriye İlişkileri," 573-574.

ing links with the perpetrators.[187] The US support for the Al-Nusra Front ended and the Obama administration put this group on the terrorist list, while the Turkish government continued to support the Al-Nusra Front.[188] The Obama administration put pressure on the Turkish government to cut its aid to the Al-Nusra Front and declare it a terrorist organization.[189] In the end, Turkey added the Al-Nusra Front on her terrorist list.[190]

By the year 2012, Turkey's position against the Assad regime got even harsher than the previous year. On April 11, 2012, the Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan said that Turkey could invoke NATO's Article 5 due to the border fires of the Assad regime to the refugees who were killed while passing the border.[191][192] The Article 5 of NATO is about collective security that assumes an attack to a member state as an attack to all members.[193] NATO invoked the Article 5 so far only once after the 9/11 attacks by Al-Qaeda against the United States that started the Global War on Terrorism.[194] The border fire crisis of the Assad regime with Turkey created the possibility of a NATO intervention to Syria and even a war between NATO countries and Syria. However, the Article 5 of NATO was not invoked on this issue, thus neither Turkey nor any member state of NATO became directly involved in the Syrian Civil War.

On June 22, 2012, the Syrian government shot down an unarmed Turkish F-4 Phantom plane which created a huge tension between Turkey and Syr-

187 Gencer Özcan, "Rusya'nın Suriye Bunalımına Müdahalesi ve Türkiye," 270-271.

188 Ibid.

189 Henri J. Barkey, "Syria's Dark Shadow Over US-Turkey Relations," 28.

190 "Bakanlar Kurulu Kararı," *Resmi Gazete,* June 3, 2014, Accessed May 1, 2019, http://www.resmigazete.gov.tr/eskiler/2014/06/20140603-16.htm.

191 "Erdogan: Turkey may invoke NATO's Article 5 over Syrian Border Fire," *The Atlantic Council,* April 11, 2012, https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/natosource/erdogan-turkey-may-invoke-nato-s-article-5-over-syrian-border-fire.

192 The refugees died on the Turkish side of the border.

193 "Collective defence – Article 5," *North Atlantic Treaty Organization*, June 12, 2018, Accessed December 30, 2018, https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_110496.htm.

194 Ibid.

ia.[195] The plane was shot in Samandağ, Hatay which is located inside Turkish borders.[196] Syria insisted that the plane was shot down due to its violation of the Syrian airspace, but later, the Syrian government took a step back by saying that the shooting was an accident.[197] Nevertheless, shooting down an unarmed plane was regarded as a hostile act by the Turkish government.[198] On July 5, 2012, the wreckage of the Turkish jet was found in the Mediterranean Sea with the corpses of the two pilots in the cockpit.[199] Turkey made a request in NATO to invoke its Article 4 and demanded a consultation among members about this crisis.[200] Nevertheless, unlike Article 5, Article 4 was only about consultation, thus no decision for intervention came out.[201] NATO declared its support for Turkey on the issue of the Shooting of the Turkish Jet, but as expected, did not invoke the Article 5.[202]

On August 31, 2012, in the United Nations Security Council, the Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ahmet Davutoğlu repeated Turkey's demand for a buffer zone in Northern Syria.[203] Great Britain and France supported Tur-

195 David Blair and Barney Henderson, "Syria 'shoots down Turkish fighter jet'," *The Telegraph,* June 22, 2012, https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/middleeast/syria/9349777/Syria-shoots-down-Turkish-fighter-jet.html.

196 Ramazan Erdağ, "Normalleşmeden Gerilim ve Çatışmaya: Türkiye-Suriye İlişkileri," in *AK Parti'nin 15 Yılı: Dış Politika,* eds. Kemal İnat, Ali Aslan and Burhanettin Duran (İstanbul, SETA Yayınları, 2017), 328.

197 Nebi Miş, "Türkiye'nin Suriye ve Lübnan Politikası 2012: Bölgesel Sahiplenme," 237.

198 Ibid.

199 Aydın Hasan and Meriç Tafolar, "UÇAK BULUNDU PİLOTLAR ŞEHİT," *Milliyet,* July 5, 2012, http://www.milliyet.com.tr/ucak-bulundu-pilotlar-sehit-gundem-1562878/.

200 "North Atlantic Council to meet following Turkey's request for Article 4 consultations," *North Atlantic Treaty Organization*, June 26, 2012, Accessed December 30, 2018, https://www.nato.int/cps/em/natohq/news_88599.htm.

201 "The consultation process and Article 4," *North Atlantic Treaty Organization*, March 17, 2016, Accessed December 30, 2018, https://www.nato.int/cps/su/natohq/topics_49187.htm.

202 "NATO 'Stands' With Turkey But Does Not Invoke Article 5," *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty,* June 26, 2012, https://www.rferl.org/a/turkey-syria-nato/24625900.html.

203 "UN: Syria Buffer Zone Plan Raises Questions," *The Jerusalem Post,* August 31, 2012, https://www.jpost.com/Middle-East/UN-Syria-buffer-zone-plan-raises-questions.

key's demand.[204] However, it was rejected in the United Nations Security Council on August 31, 2012.[205]

When the Jet issue had not yet been solved, on October 3, 2012, the Turkish border town in Akçakale, Şanlıurfa, Turkey was hit by a Syrian bomb shell and 5 civilians were killed.[206] As a response to this attack, Turkey made a counter attack to Syria.[207] The Prime Minister of Turkey, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan said, "This atrocious attack was immediately responded to adequately by our armed forces in the border region, in accordance with rules of engagement."[208] The tension between Syria and Turkey increased again. Nevertheless, the Obama administration kept its cautious foreign policy towards Syria and did not make an intervention to stop the ongoing war although a NATO member country, Turkey, was under attack by the Assad regime of Syria.

Due to these attacks of Syria, the Turkish government felt unsafe and demanded air defense augment from NATO on November 26, 2012.[209] The NATO foreign ministers agreed to accept the request of the Turkish Government to increase the air defense capabilities of Turkey on December 4, 2012.[210] Germany, the Netherlands and the United States agreed to send patriot batteries to Turkey and they were deployed in the Turkish cities of Kahramanmaraş, Adana and Gaziantep.[211] On January 26, 2013, the first Patriot battery was placed in Turkey and other two were placed on January 28

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204 Ibid.

205 Can Acun, "Türkiye'nin Suriye Politikası 2014," in *Türk Dış Politikası Yıllığı 2014,* eds. Burhanettin Duran, Kemal İnat and Ali Balcı (İstanbul, SETA Yayınları, 2015), 198-199.

206 Tim Arango and Anne Barnard, "Turkey Strikes Back After Syrian Shelling Kills 5 Civilians," *The New York Times,* October 3, 2012, https://www.nytimes.com/2012/10/04/world/middleeast/syria.html.

207 Ibid.

208 Ibid.

209 "NATO support to Turkey: Background and timeline," *North Atlantic Treaty Organization*, February 19, 2013, Accessed December 30, 2018, https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_92555.htm.

210 Ibid.

211 Ibid.

and February 5.[212] By February 15, 2015, the last six Patriot batteries were deployed in Turkey.[213]

The deployment of the patriot batteries created a certain tension between Russia and Turkey. In November 2012, the Speaker of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Aleksandr Lukashevich said that Turkey was increasing her military presence on the Syrian border and Russia had concerns about Turkey's intentions.[214] The Former Russian Chief of Air Staff, Anatoly Kornikov claimed that the deployment of patriot batteries was made against Russia rather than Syria.[215] This was the first conflict of interests between Russia and Turkey in the case of the Syrian Civil War.

On May 11, 2013, twin bomb attacks were made in the Turkish border town Reyhanlı, Hatay.[216] 52 people were killed and 146 people were wounded during this unexpected terrorist attack.[217] Both the Turkish Deputy Prime Minister Bülent Arınç and the Interior Minister Muammer Güler accused the Assad regime of Syria and the Syrian intelligence Al-Mukhabarat as the perpetrators of the attack.[218] But there were also some speculations about Al-Qaeda related radical Islamist terrorist organizations such as the Al-Nusra Front or ISIS.[219] Although ISIS claimed responsibility for the attack, Turkish authorities clearly denied this.[220] The Foreign Minister of Turkey, Ahmet Davutoğlu spoke from Germany by saying that the attack in Reyhanlı was

212 Ibid.

213 Ibid.

214 Fatih Özbay, "Türkiye'nin Rusya Politikası," in *Türk Dış Politikası Yıllığı 2013,* eds. Burhanettin Duran, Kemal İnat and Ali Balcı (İstanbul, SETA Yayınları, 2015), 463.

215 Ibid.

216 Mehveş Evin, "9 soruda Reyhanlı katliamı," *Diken,* May 11, 2014, http://www.diken.com.tr/9-soruda-reyhanli-katliami/.

217 Ibid.

218 "Reyhanlı saldırıları: 7 soruda olup bitenler," *BBC News Türkçe,* May 13, 2013, https://www.bbc.com/turkce/haberler/2013/05/130513_reyhanlida_ne_oldu.

219 "'redhack' Tarafından İnternet Sitelerine Gönderilen Belgeye Göre El Nusra Ve El Kaide Cephesinin Reyhanlı'ya Yaptığı Saldırıyla İlgili Olarak Hükûmetin Ne Söyleyeceğini Bilmek İstediğine İlişkin," *TBMM,* May 23, 2013, Accessed May 1, 2019, https://www.tbmm.gov.tr/develop/owa/genel_kurul.cl_getir?pEid=23071.

220 Mehveş Evin, "9 soruda Reyhanlı katliamı."

made by an extreme-left Marxist-Leninist terrorist organization which had a connection with the Syrian Assad regime.[221] On May 25, when the Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan visited Hatay, he openly accused Assad and the Syrian government for this bloody attack while demonstrating his government's anti-Assad position by saying "I believe that the opposition powers in Syria will overthrow this dictator as soon as possible."[222] Nevertheless, the Syrian government denied any kind of involvement in the incident. The Syrian Information Minister, Omran Al-Zoubi said that Syria "did not commit and would never commit such an act because our values would not allow that".[223] On June 11, 2013, the primary suspect of the Reyhanlı bombings, Nasır Eskiocak, who was accused for being a member of the pro-Assad extreme-left terrorist organization THKP-C Acilciler, was arrested when he was trying to escape to Syria.[224] Eskiocak confessed that he was responsible for the attack and gave some important details.[225] Five years later, on September 28, 2018, the planner of the Reyhanlı attack, Yusuf Nazik, who was also a member of THKP-C Acilciler, was arrested.[226] Nazik also confessed

221 "Reyhanlı saldırıları: 7 soruda olup bitenler," *BBC News Türkçe.*

222 "İnşallah en kısa zamanda inanıyorum ki Suriye'deki muhalif güçler bu diktatörü indirecekler." "Başbakan Erdoğan Reyhanlı'da," *Sabah,* May 25, 2013, https://www.sabah.com.tr/gundem/2013/05/25/basbakan-erdogan-hatayda.

223 "Syria denies Turkey Reyhanli car bombs," *BBC News,* May 12, 2013, https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-22499326.

224 Emek Çakılı, Mehmet Kaymak and Ramazan Çelik, "Nasır Eskiocak sınırda yakalandı," *Hürriyet*, June 11, 2013, http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/gundem/nasir-eskiocak-sinirda-yakalandi-23478247.

225 "Reyhanlı saldırısının bir numarası Nasır Eskiocak konuştu," *Hürriyet,* June 15, 2013, http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/gundem/reyhanli-saldirisinin-bir-numarasi-nasir-eskiocak-konustu-23513347.

226 "8 suspects being sought in 2013 Rehyanlı bombing," *Hürriyet Daily News,* September 29, 2018, http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/8-suspects-being-sought-in-2013-reyanli-bombing-137365.

that the Syrian government was involved in the attack and that they had taken orders from the Syrian intelligence.[227]

From the year 2013 to the first day of 2017, Turkey was one of the main targets of terrorist organizations involved in the Syrian Civil War, mostly by ISIS and TAK[228], as well as domestic terrorist organizations such as the PKK. Therefore, concerns about Turkey's national security was always at high level during the Syrian Civil War, even more than the Western countries that were also victims of the terrorist attacks of ISIS. Hence, Turkey was fiercely in favor of a military action to secure the border by neutralizing terrorist organizations.

§ 6.5 The Ghouta Chemical Attack

The first chemical attack in the Syrian Civil War happened on the morning of August 21, 2013 in Ein Tarma and Zamalka which were two agricultural sites located on the east side of the Syrian capital city, Damascus.[229] In this chemical attack, more than 14,000 Syrian people were killed.[230] The Assad regime was accused of using chemical weapons, though the Syrian President Bashar Al-Assad denied all accusations.[231] Yet, the attacks continued in the

227 "Reyhanlı saldırısını planlayan Yusuf Nazik'in ifadesi ortaya çıktı," *NTV,* September 29, 2018, https://www.ntv.com.tr/turkiye/reyhanli-saldirisini-planlayan-yusuf-nazikin-ifadesi-ortaya-cikti,-I7ZjDG91EiWkHP0i5YW1A.

228 Kurdistan Freedom Hawks. A Kurdish separatist terrorist organization that is an offshoot of PKK.

229 "Syria chemical attack: What we know," *BBC News,* September 24, 2013, https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-23927399.

230 Joby Warrick, "More than 1,400 killed in Syrian chemical attack, U.S. says," *The Washington Post,* August 30, 2013, https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/nearly-1500-killed-in-syrian-chemical-weapons-attack-us-says/2013/08/30/b2864662-1196-11e3-85b6-d27422650fd5_story.html?utm_term=.0016e7dcc680.

231 John Whitesides and Arshad Mohammed, "Syria's Assad denies chemical weapons use; U.S. presses case for strike," *Reuters,* September 9, 2013, https://www.reuters.com/article/us-syria-crisis/syrias-assad-denies-chemical-weapons-use-u-s-presses-case-for-strike-idUSBRE9870E520130909.

sites that were targeted by the airstrikes of the regime.[232] This chemical attack showed that the Syrian Civil War entered a new phase in its third year and the Syrian President Bashar Al-Assad did not hesitate to use every means, including illegal weapons of mass destruction, to stay in power. Three days later, Russia called the United Nations for inquiry on the chemical weapons of the Assad regime.[233] Nonetheless, this diplomatic solution also created another global political crisis as the UN inspectors were shot dead.[234]

The chemical attack was quickly raised by Turkey as a reason for a military intervention in Syria.[235] The Turkish government called on the UN Security Council for an urgent meeting and demanded an investigation.[236] The Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ahmet Davutoğlu declared that a military intervention could be made without the resolution of the United Nations Security Council if there was evidence for the use of chemical weapons, by giving the example of Srebrenica.[237] On August 30, 2013, the US President Barack Obama condemned the chemical attack of the Assad regime by calling it "a challenge to the world" and said:

> We cannot accept a world where women and children and innocent civilians are gassed on a terrible scale. This kind of attack threatens our national security interests by violating well-established international norms against the use of chemical weapons by further threatening friends and allies of ours in the region, like Israel and Turkey

232 "Syria forces keep bombing area of chemical weapons attack," *CBS News,* August 22, 2013, https://www.cbsnews.com/news/syria-forces-keep-bombing-area-of-alleged-chemical-weapons-attack/.

233 Dan Roberts and Julian Borger, "Syria crisis: Russia calls for UN inquiry into chemical weapons claim," *The Guardian,* August 23, 2013, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/aug/23/syria-crisis-un-pressure-gas-attack.

234 Julian Borger and Nicholas Watt, "Syria: UN inspectors' vehicle hit by sniper rifle," *The Guardian,* August 26, 2013, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/aug/26/syria-un-no-impunity-chemical-attack.

235 Ibid.

236 Ibid.

237 Mehmet Bardakçı, "Evolving Turkish Policy in the Face of the Changing Syrian Crisis," 109.

> and Jordan. And it increases the risk that chemical weapons will be used in the future and fall into the hands of terrorists who might use them against us.[238]

However, in the same speech, President Obama said that the US government was not considering "any kind of military action that would involve boots on the ground that would involve a long-term campaign", nonetheless Obama signaled a limited and narrow act.[239] This speech of Obama shows the cautious perspective of the United States in the Syrian Civil War very well. The United States was against the Assad regime of Syria, but did not take any step towards ending the civil war and the Assad regime unilaterally, once for all.

On the very same day, the Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan stepped in with a stronger tone and demanded an international military intervention into Syria to overthrow Bashar Al-Assad completely by giving the example of NATO intervention into Kosovo.[240] The Turkish Prime Minister Erdoğan said "It can't be 24 hours hit-and-run. What matters is stopping the bloodshed in Syria and weakening the regime to the point where it gives up."[241] A day later, the US President Obama moved a step further than Erdoğan and declared that the American military placed the assets for the intervention in the region.[242] The Russian government, however, sided with

238 "Remarks by President Obama and the Presidents of Estonia, Lithuania and Latvia," *The White House*, August 30, 2013, Accessed December 30, 2018, https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2013/08/30/remarks-president-obama-and-presidents-estonia-lithuania-and-latvia.

239 Ibid.

240 Gülsen Solaker and Nick Tattersall, "Turkish PM says Syria intervention should aim to end Assad rule," *Reuters,* August 30, 2013, https://www.reuters.com/article/us-syria-crisis-turkey-erdogan/turkish-pm-says-syria-intervention-should-aim-to-end-assad-rule-idUSBRE97T0VZ20130830.

241 Ibid.

242 "Statement by the President on Syria," *The White House*, August 31, 2013, Accessed December 30, 2018, https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2013/08/31/statement-president-syria.

the Syrian President Assad and dismissed the claims of the use of a chemical attack in Syria.[243] However, Russia's pro-Syrian response did not do anything but fuel the crisis.

Later, in the first week of September 2013, the US President Obama gained the right to make airstrikes to Syria as a response to the chemical attacks of the Assad regime.[244] The United Kingdom also tried to do the same thing, but the British Prime Minister David Cameron failed to push through the decision for military action into Syria in the British parliament.[245] Turkey repeated her demand for a military intervention into Syria in the G-20 Summit in St. Petersburg, Russia on September 5-6, 2013.[246] In an op-ed that was published in *The Huffington Post* on September 6, 2013, the US Secretary of State John Kerry harshly warned Syria and expressed that he is in favor of using a limited military attack to remove the risk of chemical weapons and protect US allies such as Turkey, Lebanon, Israel, Jordan and Iraq.[247] At the end of the very same week, the US Secretary of State John Kerry declared that the United States was giving the Assad regime of Syria one week to hand over the chemical weapons to the United Nations or the United States would use military power against Syria.[248] The US ultimatum against Syria was clear.

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243 Saptarshi Ray, "Syria: Putin rubbishes chemical attack claims," *The Guardian,* August 31, 2013, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/aug/31/syria-un-weapons-inspectors-leave.

244 Anne Gearen, Ed O'Keefe and William Branigin, "Senate committee approves authorizing U.S. strike on Syria," *The Washington Post,* September 4, 2013, https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/officials-press-lawmakers-to-approve-syria-strike-obama-invokes-congresss-credibility/2013/09/04/4c93a858-155c-11e3-804b-d3a1a3a18f2c_story.html?utm_term=.59a221b43ada.

245 "Syria crisis: Cameron loses Commons vote on Syria action," *BBC News,* August 30, 2013, https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-politics-23892783.

246 Faruk Sönmezoğlu, *Son Onyıllarda Türk Dış Politikası 1991-2015,* 584.

247 John Kerry, "A Yes Vote of Conscience for the World's Red Line," *The Huffington Post,* September 6, 2013, https://www.huffingtonpost.com/johnkerry/syria-red-line-vote-conscience_b_3879304.html.

248 Patrick Wintour, "John Kerry givers Syria week to hand over chemical weapons or face attack," *The Guardian,* September 9, 2013, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/sep/09/us-syria-chemical-weapons-attack-john-kerry.

In a Google+ Hangout interview after this harsh ultimatum, Kerry said that the Assad regime committed war crimes against civilians in Syria and the US allies Jordan, Israel and Turkey were also affected by the attack.[249] In the same interview, John Kerry also claimed that the Russian government was cooperating with the United States in the Geneva 2 conference, which was the conference that focused to end the Syrian Civil War and create a transitional government.[250] According to John Kerry, the Syrian President Bashar Al-Assad was the problem because Assad was thinking that he would win the Syrian Civil War.[251]

According to Michael McFaul, the former American ambassador to the Russian Federation, majority of the top national security team of the Obama administration supported the idea of a military strike into Syria.[252] However, President Obama had doubts about the military strike and the possibility of its deterrence on the Assad regime.[253] He did not want to make a unilateral military strike without the consent of the Russian Federation, hence the Obama administration waited for Russia's support for a multilateral military strike, just like the US President Bill Clinton did on Serbia in 1999.[254] Nonetheless, the support that the US President Obama expected from the Russian President Vladimir Putin never came, and the British parliament's rejection of a military strike put an end to the chance of a multilateral military strike against the Assad regime.[255]

While the United States was hesitating about a military strike, the Russian government proposed an offer to find a middle way between the United States and Syria to save the Assad regime. The Russian President Vladimir Putin met with the US President Barack Obama and promised to convince

249 "Syria: Weighing the U.S. Response," *U.S. Secretary of State*, September 10, 2013, Accessed December 30, 2018, https://2009-2017.state.gov/secretary/remarks/2013/09/214049.htm.

250 Ibid.

251 Ibid.

252 Michael McFaul, *From Cold War to Hot Peace: The Inside Story of Russia and America,* 351-352.

253 Ibid.

254 Michael McFaul, *From Cold War to Hot Peace: The Inside Story of Russia and America,* 352.

255 Ibid.

Bashar al-Assad to cooperate in the issue of chemical weapons.[256] On September 9, 2013, the Russian government demanded from Bashar Al-Assad's government to put all of the chemical weapons under international control.[257] The Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Sergei Lavrov did not just propose the removal of the Syrian chemical weapons, but demanded from Syrian President Assad to destroy all of the remaining chemical weapons and fully join the treaty on prohibition of chemical weapons.[258] The Obama Administration welcomed the cooperation of the Russian government for a solution in Syria as President Obama supported the proposal of Russia for the removal of the chemical weapons in Syria.[259] In this case, Syria did not break Russia's plan and welcomed her proposal.[260] Syria accepted Russia's proposal and made compromises to settle down the issue of chemical weapons. The Syrian government pledged to sign the treaty of chemical weapons and reveal the stockpile of chemical weapons that the Syrian government possessed.[261] This decision of the Assad regime shows that the US pressure on Syria and Russia was influential in 2013.

256 Michael McFaul, *From Cold War to Hot Peace: The Inside Story of Russia and America,* 352.

257 Julian Borger and Patrick Wintour, "Russia calls on Syria to hand over chemical weapons," *The Guardian,* September 9, 2013, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/sep/09/russia-syria-hand-over-chemical-weapons.

258 Ibid.

259 Dan Roberts and Julian Borger, "Syria crisis: Obama welcomes Russia's chemical weapons proposal," *The Guardian,* September 10, 2013, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/sep/09/us-russian-proposal-syria-chemical-weapons.

260 Julian Borger and Patrick Wintour, "Russia calls on Syria to hand over chemical weapons," *The Guardian,* September 9, 2013, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/sep/09/russia-syria-hand-over-chemical-weapons.

261 Julian Borger, Dan Roberts, Spencer Ackerman and Nicholas Watt, "Syria pledges to sign chemical weapons treaty and reveal the stockpile of chemical weapons," *The Guardian,* September 10, 2013, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/sep/10/russia-un-syrian-chemical-weapons.

On December 13, 2013, the United Nations published a report that proves that the Syrian government used sarin gas against the opposition.[262] The United Nations Secretary General, Ban Ki Moon said that the chemical attack of the Assad regime was the most vicious one in world history since the chemical attack Saddam Hussein's Iraqi government carried out in Halabja during the Iran-Iraq War on March 16, 1988.[263] After the report of the United Nations that explicitly accused the Assad regime for the use of chemical weapons, the crisis got much more serious. As John Kerry said in his speech on September 19, 2013, the Russian government had insisted on waiting for the report of the United Nations.[264] However, the United Nations report confirmed the use of chemical weapons against civilians by the Assad regime, hence there was no excuse left for either Russia or Syria. On September 14, 2013 in Geneva, Switzerland, the Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Sergei Lavrov met with the US Secretary of State John Kerry and both of the two great powers made a deal to remove the chemical weapons of the Assad regime.[265] On October 6, 2013, the Syrian disarmament of chemical weapons started and continued for more than a year.[266]

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262 "Identical letters dated 13 December 2013 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the General Assembly and the President of the Security Council," *United Nations General Assembly Security Council*, December 13, 2013, Accessed December 30, 2018, http://undocs.org/A/68/663, 21.

263 "Secretary-General's remarks to the Security Council on the report of the United Nations Missions to Investigate Allegations of the Use of Chemical Weapons on the incident that occurred on 21 August 2013 in the Ghouta area of Damascus," *United Nations Secretary-General*, September 16, 2013, Accessed December 30, 2018, https://www.un.org/sg/en/content/sg/statement/2013-09-16/secretary-generals-remarks-security-council-report-united-nations.

264 "Remarks to the Press on Syria," *U.S. Department of State*, September 19, 2013, Accessed December 30, 2018, https://2009-2017.state.gov/secretary/remarks/2013/09/214441.htm.

265 Michael R. Gordon, "U.S. and Russia Reached Deal to Destroy Syria's Chemical Arms," *The New York Times,* September 14, 2013, https://www.nytimes.com/2013/09/15/world/middleeast/syria-talks.html.

266 Kevin Rawlinson, "Syria chemical weapons disarmament begins," *The Guardian,* October 6, 2013, https//www.theguardian.com/world/2013/oct/06/syria-chemical-weapons-destroyed.

Since September 2013, the United Nations as well as the United States has kept the pressure on Syria to reveal all of the chemical weapon facilities and destroy the remaining chemical weapons. On June 23, 2014, the last chemical weapons in Syria were handed over to be destroyed by a US vessel in the sea.[267] Nonetheless, by early October 2014, new chemical weapon facilities were declared by the Assad regime of Syria, which did not just scared the Western world but also raised suspicions about the seriousness of Syria and Russia to stop the use of the chemical weapons in Syria.[268] Unfortunately, the later developments showed that the Syrian regime would not give up using chemical weapons. Michael McFaul claims that the Russian President Vladimir Putin must be aware that the Assad regime was cheated and he should know that Bashar Al-Assad was still keeping some chemical weapons.[269]

After 2016, when the support from Russian and Iranian support changed the course of the Syrian Civil War, the Assad regime would not hesitate to use these illegal weapons over and over again. Moreover, unlike the Eastern Ghouta case, Russia would protect Syria from an UN intervention by using her veto in the United Nations Security Council.

§ 6.6 The Involvement of Russia into the Syrian Civil War and the Plane Shooting Crisis

The Russian government initially interpreted the Arab Spring as a kind of US-backed conspiracy just to increase the American influence in the region at the expense of Russia and Iran.[270] According to Alexei Malashenko, many publications in Russia created different conspiracy theories about the Arab Spring and compared it with the Color Revolutions which were also seen as

267 Anthony Deutsch, "Syria hands over remaining chemical weapons for destruction," *Reuters,* June 23, 2014, https://www.reuters.com/article/us-syria-crisis-chemicalweapons/syria-hands-over-remaining-chemical-weapons-for-destruction-idUSKBN0EY18T20140623.

268 "Syria declares new chemical weapons facilities," *BBC News,* October 8, 2014, https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-29534926.

269 Michael McFaul, *From Cold War to Hot Peace: The Inside Story of Russia and America,* 357.

270 Aleksey Vsevolodovich Malashenko, "Russia and the Arab Spring," 8-9.

the plots of the United States to destroy the influence of Russia in the post-Soviet countries.[271] Nevertheless, since early 2013, the Russian government started to describe the events of the Arab Spring as popular movements in search of democracy.[272] Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation in 2013 even described the revolts as a "desire to return to their civilizational roots" by underlining that the "political and social-economic renewal of society is often taking place under the slogan of affirming Islamic values".[273]

The Russian involvement into the Syrian Civil War was a kind of revenge of this country against the United States and her allies.[274] By stopping the Arab Spring, Russia wanted to prove that she was still a great power in the global affairs.[275] Also, Russia had concerns about the rise of radical Islamic groups during the Arab Spring.[276] These groups were threats for the Muslim communities living in Russia.[277] The intervention of Russia into Syria also had a national security dimension.

Since the beginning of the Syrian Civil War, the US administration of Barack Obama was favoring a military intervention against the Assad regime in Syria during the meetings of the UN Security Council. However, in contrast to the case of Libya, Russia vetoed all of the UN draft resolutions against the Assad regime.[278] Syria's Baathist Assad regime had a long history with Russia. The previous leader of Syria, Hafez Al-Assad who came to power in 1970, was seeing Israel as the major enemy state that was controlled by the United States.[279] Therefore, in order to strengthen Syria's military power

271 Ibid.

272 Aleksey Vsevolodovich Malashenko, "Russia and the Arab Spring," 9.

273 Ibid.

274 Emre Erşen, "Rusya'nın Suriye Politikası: Fırsatlar, Riskler ve Tehditler," in *Küresel ve Bölgesel Aktörlerin Suriye Stratejileri,* eds. Hasan Basri Yalçın and Burhanettin Duran (İstanbul, SETA Yayınları, 2016), 149.

275 Ibid.

276 Emre Erşen, "Rusya'nın Suriye Politikası: Fırsatlar, Riskler ve Tehditler," 160.

277 Ibid.

278 Hillary Clinton Rodham, *Hard choices,* 389.

279 William L. Cleveland, *Modern Ortadoğu Tarihi,* trans. Mehmet Harmancı (İstanbul, Agora Kitaplığı, 2008), 447-448.

against Israel, Syria had established closer relations with the Soviet Union and increased arm purchase from this country[280] Hafez Al-Assad's Syria also allowed the Soviet Union to establish naval bases in Tartus in 1971, which gave the USSR and Russia a great geopolitical advantage to challenge the US influence in the region.[281][282] Syria was one of the major allies of Russia in the region and both of these countries supported each other in every major conflict. The Syrian government of Bashar Al-Assad supported Russia during the Russo-Georgian War in 2008 when the major Western countries were against Russia.[283]

In September 2015, the Syrian government demanded aid from Russia against Jihadist forces and other rebel groups, as Ali Ahmadi, an advisor of the Syrian Information Minister, told the Russian TV channel Rossiya-24.[284] By the end of September 2015, the Russian government's active military intervention in the Syrian Civil War started.[285] The Russian involvement changed the course of the Syrian Civil War and turned the Syrian question into a global issue. The Russian involvement would also shape the fate of the Assad regime by saving it when it was on the verge of collapse. Russia, as a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council, vetoed almost all of the UN resolutions that were against the Assad regime. Thus, Bashar Assad had a strong ally in the international area that would protect its regime

280 Ibid.

281 Frank Gardner, "How vital is Syria's Tartus port to Russia?" *BBC News,* June 27, 2012, https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-18616191.

282 In June 2012, the Commander-in-chief of the Russian navy, Viktor Chirkov expressed how important this naval base in Syria for the Russian interests on the Russian state channel *RIA-Novosti.*

283 "Dmitry Medvedev met with President Bashar al-Assad," *President of Russia*, August 21, 2008, Accessed December 21, 2018, http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/1166.

284 "Syria Confirms Requesting Military Aid From Russia," *Sputnik,* September 30, 2015, https://sputniknews.com/world/201509301027771076-syria-confirms-request-help-from-russia/.

285 "Russia carries out first air strike in Syria," *Al-Jazeera,* September 30, 2015, https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2015/09/russian-carries-air-strikes-syria-150930133155190.html.

against internal and external threats. The Russian support was the greatest advantage of the Assad regime to ensure its survival in the Arab Spring.

By the last day of September 2015, the Russian involvement in Syria had started with airstrikes to defend the Assad regime.[286] Russia claimed that the main target was ISIS; however, other rebel groups such as Free Syrian Army was also among the targets of the Russian airstrikes.[287] The US Secretary of State, John Kerry stated that the United States was not against the airstrikes targeting ISIS; however, he warned Russia not to hit other rebel groups.[288] On October 1, 2015, the Russian parliament approved the use of military force in Syria.[289] Since then, the Russian planes kept bombing rebel groups in Syria. The military involvement of Russia into the Syrian Civil War was not welcomed by the Western world as well as by Turkey. The US President Barack Obama openly condemned the Russian air strikes by saying that they were driving the moderate opposition to the underground and strengthening ISIS.[290] President Obama also dismissed the Russian claim which said that all armed anti-Assad rebel groups were terrorists.[291] A month later, the actual crisis came out between Russia and Turkey when the Russian fighter jet was shot down by Turkish authorities on the Turkish-Syrian border on November 24, 2015.[292] One of the Russian pilots and a marine sent for rescue by helicopter were killed in the incident.[293] This unexpected response of the Turkish military created a global diplomatic crisis. The Turkish government

286 Patrick J. McDonell, W. J. Hennigan and Nabih Bulos, "Russia launches airstrikes amid U.S. concerns about targets," *Los Angeles Times,* September 30, 2015, https://www.latimes.com/world/europe/la-fg-kremlin-oks-troops-20150930-story.html.

287 Ibid.

288 Ibid.

289 "Russian parliament unanimously approves use of military in Syria to fight ISIS," *Russia Today,* September 30, 2015, https://www.rt.com/news/317013-parliament-authorization-troops-abroad/.

290 "Syrian crisis: Russia air strikes 'strengthen IS'," *BBC News,* October 2, 2015, https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-34431027.

291 Ibid.

292 "Turkey's downing of Russian warplane – what we know," *BBC News,* December 1, 2015, https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-34912581.

293 Ibid.

accused Russia for violating Turkish airspace.[294] Turkey's permanent representative in the UN wrote a letter to the UN by stating that two planes of unknown nationality violated Turkish airspace and both of them were warned ten times.[295] As a response, the second plane which did not leave Turkish airspace was shot down by a Turkish F-16 fighter jet and it crashed on the Syrian side of the Turkish-Syrian border.[296] However, the other pilot who survived the attack, Captain Konstantin Murakhtin, told the Russian television that he did not receive any warning.[297] Nonetheless, both of the Russian Defense Ministry and the Russian President Vladimir Putin insisted that the plane was shot in Syria, not in the Turkish airspace.[298] President Putin also accused the US military for giving the location of the planes to Turkey.[299] However, the US State Department dismissed this claim of the Russian President by stating that Russia did not give any kind of information about the flight to the United States before the shooting.[300] The tension got even higher when the Prime Minister of Turkey, Ahmet Davutoğlu defended the attack by saying that he gave the order.[301] President Erdoğan accused the Russian government for bombing Bayırbucak Turkomans in Syria and said that Turkey had right to protect its own borders which should be respected by everyone while explicitly declaring that Turkey was supporting the oppositional group in Syria.[302]

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294 "Turkey says Russia violated its airspace near Syria border," *BBC News,* January 30, 2016, https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-35449152.

295 "Turkey's downing of Russian warplane – what we know," *BBC News.*

296 Ibid.

297 Ibid.

298 "Putin: Russian jet was shot down over Syria – not Turkey," *BBC News,* November 24, 2015, https://www.bbc.com/news/av/world-europe-34915198/putin-russian-jet-was-shot-down-over-syria-not-turkey.

299 "Turkey's downing of Russian warplane – what we know," *BBC News.*

300 Ibid.

301 "Turkish Prime Minister: I Gave the Order to Shoot Down Russia's Plane Myself," *Sputnik,* November 25, 2015, https://sputniknews.com/military/201511251030762042-turkey-davutoglu-aircraft-orders/.

302 "Türkiye-Rusya uçak krizi: 10 günde neler yaşandı?" *BBC News Türkçe,* December 4, 2015, https://www.bbc.com/turkce/haberler/2015/12/151204_rusya_krizin_10_gunu.

The plane shooting crisis created a very sensitive situation and increased the tension between Russia and Turkey more than ever. The Russian President Vladimir Putin accused Turkey for funding radical Islamist terrorist groups and even claimed that the Turkish government shot down the Russian jet just to protect the road where Turkey buys oil from ISIS.[303] He described this act of Turkey as an act of backstabbing.[304] On December 3, 2015, the Russian President Vladimir Putin made a very harsh speech against Turkey after the federal meeting.[305] He repeated his accusation of oil purchase from the terrorist groups in Syria, referring to ISIS, and claimed that Turkey was financially aiding these terrorist groups and providing them a safe haven.[306] The Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan responded by describing this claim as a "slander" and wowed to resign if Putin could prove this claim of ISIS oil purchase.[307][308] On December 4, 2015, Russia revealed some satellite photos from Syria that showed a group of lorries entering Turkey from Reyhanlı checkpoints without any control as an evidence for Putin's claim.[309] However, Russian claims were far from convincing the global public opinion.

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303 Samuel Osborne, "Russia accuses Turkey of shooting down jet to 'defend Isis oil supplies'," *The Independent,* November 30, 2015, https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/russia-accuses-turkey-of-shooting-down-jet-to-defend-isis-oil-supplies-a6755176.html.

304 Max Fisher, "Turkey shot down a Russian warplane. Why it would happen and why it matters, explained," *Vox,* November 24, 2015, https://www.vox.com/2015/11/24/9790990/turkey-russia-plane-shootdown.

305 "Послание Президента Российской Федерации от 03.12.2015 г. б/н". *Президент России,* December 3, 2015, Accessed May 22, 2019, http://kremlin.ru/acts/bank/40542.

306 Ibid.

307 Samuel Osborne, "Russia accuses Turkey of shooting down jet to 'defend Isis oil supplies',"

308 Lissie Dearden, "Turkish President vows to resign if Vladimir Putin can prove Isis oil smuggling accusations," *The Independent,* December 1, 2015, https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/turkish-president-erdogan-vows-to-resign-if-vladimir-putin-can-prove-isis-oil-smuggling-accusations-a6755666.html.

309 Tom Brooks-Pollock, "Russia unveils 'proof' Turkey's Erdogan is smuggling Isis oil across its border," *The Independent,* December 4, 2015, https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/russia-releases-proof-turkey-is-smuggling-isis-oil-over-its-border-a6757651.html.

During this Russian-Turkish crisis, Turkey got closer to the United States as she felt explicit threat from the Russian Federation. Turkey's appeal to the United States and NATO was criticized by the Russian President Vladimir Putin as he said "not all the interests of Turkey in the region will be supported by NATO."[310] The United States defended Turkey during the crisis as a NATO ally.[311] On December 1, 2015, President Obama declared that the United States supports Turkey by saying that it was "Turkey's right to defend itself and its airspace."[312]

After the plane shooting crisis, the Turkish-Russian relations were in the most severe situation since the establishment of the Russian Federation. As a response to the incident, the Russian President Putin quickly signed decrees that imposed sanctions on Turkey through some bans on Turkish imports.[313] Due to these sanctions, Turkish-Russian trade relations were damaged. Also, the Akkuyu Nuclear Power Plant Project in Turkey, which would be constructed by Russia's ROSATOM, was suddenly halted as well as the pipeline project of TurkStream.[314] The Russian President Vladimir Putin also signed another decree against Turkey that suspended the Visa-free deal between the two countries.[315] By the beginning of the year of 2016, the Russian government had started to impose travel visa to Turkish citizens as a response to the plane shooting crisis.[316] With the same decree, Russia also banned charter

310 Vefa Kurban, *Russian-Turkish Relations from the First World War to the Present,* 261.

311 "Remarks by President Obama and President Erdogan of the Republic of Turkey After Bilateral Meeting," *The White House,* December 1, 2015, Accessed May 1, 2019, https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2015/12/01/remarks-president-obama-and-president-erdogan-republic-turkey-after.

312 Ibid.

313 Nadia Beard, "Vladimir Putin decrees sanctions on Turkey after downing Russian jet," *The Independent,* November 28, 2015, https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/vladimir-putin-decrees-sanctions-on-turkey-after-downing-russian-jet-a6753151.html.

314 Orhan Coskun, "UPDATE 1-Russia halts Turkey nuclear work, Ankara looks elsewhere."

315 Natasha Bertrand, "Russia just dealt a huge blow to Turkey over its downing of a Russian warplane," *Business Insider,* November 27, 2015, https://www.businessinsider.com/russia-turkey-jet-visa-travel-agreement-2015-11.

316 Vefa Kurban, *Russian-Turkish Relations from the First World War to the Present,* 258.

flights between the two countries and increased controls on the activities of Turkish trucking companies.[317] Moreover, by January 2016, Turkish citizens had been prohibited to be employed in Russia.[318] The Turkish economy was severely damaged in the first half of 2016, until the re-normalization of the relations between the two countries after a failed coup d'état attempt in Turkey on July 15, 2016. This shocking event that created a vital national security crisis destroyed Turkey's trust on Western states, especially to the United States, and Turkey got closer to Russia to create a balance of power against the West.

317 Ibid.

318 Vefa Kurban, *Russian-Turkish Relations from the First World War to the Present*, 257.

7

The Rapprochement between Turkey and Russia after the Coup Attempt of 15th July

§ 7.1 The Failed Coup D'état Attempt in Turkey and Rapprochement with Russia

On July 15, 2016, Turkey experienced an unexpected coup d'état attempt made by a group of military members called "Yurtta Sulh Konseyi (the Council of Peace at Home)" who were close to the Gülenist movement.[1] The coup was unsuccessful, but on that night, around 240 people were killed during the clashes.[2] 173 of them were civilians, while 5 of them were anti-coup generals and 62 were police officers.[3] Also, more than 2,000 people were reported to be wounded.[4] The Turkish Grand National Assembly was

1 "Yurtta Sulh Konseyi kimlerden oluşuyor?" *Habertürk,* December 8, 2016, https://www.haberturk.com/gundem/haber/1333896-yurtta-sulh-konseyi-kimlerden-olusuyor.

2 Berk Esen and Sebnem Gumuscu, "Turkey: how the coup failed," *Journal of Democracy* 28, no. 1 (2017): 62.

3 Ibid.

4 Ibid.

bombed through airstrikes.[56] After this failed coup, for the rest of July, many public rallies were led by the government to condemn the failed coup attempt and this process called "Demokrasi Nöbeti (Democracy Watch)". Even the re-introduction of death penalty was discussed by the president Recep Tayyip Erdoğan in some of these rallies, which raised lots of concerns for EU members such as Germany, Austria and France.[7] However, the idea of re-introduction of death penalty remained only in theory. The process of Democracy Watch was ended in the last rally called "Demokrasi ve Şehitler Mitingi (Rally for Democracy and Martyrs)", which was a huge multi-party anti-coup rally that was made on August 7, 2016 in Yenikapı, İstanbul and included all of the three major Turkish political parties, AKP, CHP and MHP.[8] During the process of the Democracy Watch, even CHP, the main opposition party and the arch-enemy of AKP, conducted its own meeting called "Cumhuriyet ve Demokrasi Mitingi (Republic and Democracy Rally)" at Taksim Square on July 24, 2016, as a response to the government's demand for national union after the coup experience which was dubbed as "Yenikapı Spirit", after the name of the Yenikapı Square where the huge common meeting against the coup was held.[9]

Nonetheless, the Yenikapı Spirit slowly came to an end when state of emergency was declared on July 19, 2016 for three months which was later

5 "Fighter Jets Attacked Turkish Parliament During Failed Coup," *TRT World,* July 16, 2016, https://www.trtworld.com/turkey/turkish-parliament-attacked-by-f16-jets-during-coup-attempt-144619.

6 As a response to this coup attempt, high numbers of arrests were made in military. 151 generals, 1,656 colonels and about 3,500 junior officers were put in jail. See more in Berk Esen and Sebnem Gumuscu, 32.

7 Selin Girit, "Will Turkey's Failed Coup Mean a Return to the Death Penalty?" *BBC News,* July 19, 2016, https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-36829284.

8 "Yenikapı'da üç partinin katılımıyla 'Demokrasi ve Şehitler Mitingi'," *BBC News Türkçe,* August 7, 2016, https://www.bbc.com/turkce/haberler-turkiye-37002177.

9 "Darbe girişimini protesto mitingi: On binler Taksim meydanında," *BBC News Türkçe,* July 24, 2016, https://www.bbc.com/turkce/36877818.

extended 8 times until it ended on July 19, 2018.[10] 30 decrees were passed in this period.[11] With the first decree that was signed by Turkish President Erdoğan, 1,043 private schools, 1,229 charities and foundations, 19 trade unions, 15 universities and 35 medical institutions were closed due to their links to the Gülenist movement.[12] Also, 7,500 soldiers were detained, 8,000 police officers were removed from office, 3,000 judiciary members were suspended and 1,000 of them were arrested.[13] By the end of 2016, 151,967 public servants and academics were purged by decrees, 63,974 people were arrested and 131,995 people were detained.[14] With the first decree, many media organizations including 3 news agencies, 23 radio stations, 16 TV stations, 29 publishers, 45 newspapers and 15 magazines were closed.[15] The government also decided to close down all of the military high schools that were training soldiers for the Turkish army.[16] Instead of these military high schools, the Turkish government decided to establish a military university called "Milli Savunma Üniversitesi (National Defense University)", which was also founded by a decree.[17] In addition, 965 companies were also seized by the govern-

10 Kareem Shaheen, "Turkey coup attempt: Erdoğan declares three-month state of emergency," *The Guardian,* July 21, 2016, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/jul/20/erdogan-bans-academics-from-travel-holds-first-post-coup-security-meeting-ankara-turkey.

11 Amanda Sloat, "The West's Turkey Conundrum," *The Brookings Institute,* 2018, 9, https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/fp_20180212_west_turkey_conundrum.pdf.

12 Jones, Gareth and Ercan Gurses. "Turkey's Erdogan shuts schools, charities in first state of emergency decree". *Reuters,* July 23, 2016. https://www.reuters.com/article/us-turkey-security-emergency-idUSKCN1030BC.

13 Amanda Sloat, "The West's Turkey Conundrum," 4.

14 Ibid.

15 "Turkey shuts scores of media outlets, sacks generals," *Al-Jazeera,* July 28, 2016, https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2016/07/turkey-close-army-high-schools-failed-coup-160727165730365.html.

16 Ibid.

17 "Milli Savunma Bakanlığı bünyesinde Milli Savunma Üniversitesi kuruldu," *Anadolu Haber Ajansı,* July 31, 2016, https://www.aa.com.tr/tr/15-temmuz-darbe-girisimi/milli-savunma-bakanligi-bunyesinde-milli-savunma-universitesi-kuruldu/618791.

ment.[18] Later purges also affected the members of a pro-Kurdish Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP) and its sister party Democratic Regions Party (DBP), as many members were arrested including elected representatives and mayors with the accusation of links to Kurdish separatist terrorism.[19] Both of the co-leaders of HDP, Selahattin Demirtaş and Figen Yüksekdağ were arrested, as 34 municipalities controlled by HDP and DBP were taken over by the government through appointed mayors.[20] Moreover, some academics who had signed the so-called Initiative of Academics for Peace (Barış İçin Akademisyenler İnsiyatifi), which demanded to stop the military operations in Kurdish regions, were also sacked by decrees during these two-year state of emergency.[21] When the state of emergency was ended in July, 2018, 6,081 academics at total, including petitioners, were sacked by 11 different decrees.[22] Many journalists were also arrested and many protests within this time period were banned. Before the end of the state of emergency, the Turkish political system was changed from a semi-presidential system to a presidential system by the referendum of 2017 that was passed with 51% votes with "Yes".[23] And Recep Tayyip Erdoğan was re-elected as the first president of this new presidential system with 53% on June 24, 2018.[24] Both of these elec-

18 "Turkey takes control of nearly 1,000 companies since failed coup - deputy PM," *Reuters,* July 7, 2017, https://in.reuters.com/article/turkey-security-companies/turkey-takes-control-of-nearly-1000-companies-since-failed-coup-deputy-pm-idINKBN19S1BT.

19 Ceylan Yeginsu and Safak Timur, "Turkey's Post-Coup Crackdown Targets Kurdish Politicians," *The New York Times,* November 4, 2016, https://www.nytimes.com/2016/11/05/world/europe/turkey-coup-crackdown-kurdish-politicians.html.

20 Berk Esen and Sebnem Gumuscu, "Turkey: how the coup failed," 70.

21 Beyza Kural and Hikmet Adal, "Akademide İhraçlar 6 Bin 81'e Yükseldi," *Bianet.* July 9, 2018, http://bianet.org/bianet/ifade-ozgurlugu/198990-akademide-ihraclar-6-bin-81-e-yukseldi.

22 Ibid.

23 Alexandra Topping, "Turkey referendum: Erdoğan wins vote amid dispute over ballots – as it happened," *The Guardian,* April 16, 2017, https://www.theguardian.com/world/live/2017/apr/16/turkey-referendum-recep-tayyip-erdogan-votes-presidential-powers.

24 "Turkey election: Erdogan wins re-election as president," *BBC News,* June 25, 2018, https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-44596072.

tions were held under the conditions of a state of emergency, which had never been done before in Turkish history. Hence, both of these elections became controversial in Turkish politics.[25] The anti-American and anti-Western rhetoric of the government as the victim of the failed coup raised the popularity of Erdoğan and allowed him to win the elections easily.[26] Finally, after exactly two years, the state of emergency was terminated on July 19, 2018, and a new anti-terror bill replaced it.[27]

Although the coup attempt was condemned by the Western powers and well-known international organizations, which expressed their support for the democratically elected government of Turkey, post-coup purges were harshly criticized, especially by the United States, Germany and France. The French Foreign Minister, Jean-Marc Ayrault warned Erdoğan about becoming even more authoritarian by saying "We must be vigilant that Turkish authorities don't put in place a political system which turns against democracy".[28] The US Secretary of State John Kerry also warned about Turkey's membership status by saying that "NATO also has a requirement with respect to democracy".[29] The European Union's Foreign Policy Chief, Frederica Mogherini also said that "No country can become an EU member state if it introduces the death penalty" as a response to ongoing fears about the possible reintroduction of the death penalty in Turkey, which was already abolished in

25 Alexandra Topping, "Turkey referendum: Erdoğan wins vote amid dispute over ballots – as it happened."

26 Aaron Stein, "Turkey: Managing Tensions and Options to Engage," *Atlantic Council*, 2017, 5, https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/images/Turkey-Managing_Tensions_and_Options_to_Engage_web_1101.pdf.

27 "Turkey ends state of emergency, but eyes tough terror bill," *Deutsche Welle*, July 19, 2018, https://www.dw.com/en/turkey-ends-state-of-emergency-but-eyes-tough-terror-bill/a-44739765.

28 Carol Morello, "Kerry urges Turkey to maintain democratic principles after coup attempt," *The Washington Post,* July 18, 2016, https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/kerry-warns-turkey-nato-membership-potentially-at-stake-in-crackdown/2016/07/18/f427ba8a-4850-11e6-8dac-0c6e4accc5b1_story.html?utm_term=.288f9362d73b.

29 "Joint Press Availability With EU High Representative Federica Mogherini," *U.S. Department of State*, July 18, 2018, Accessed December 18, 2018, https://2009-2017.state.gov/secretary/remarks/2016/07/260174.htm.

order to become a candidate state to the EU.[30] Although all of the Western countries condemned the authoritarianism that was going on in Turkey after the failed coup attempt, none of the Western powers took any action against Turkey because of her importance as a NATO ally with a vital geopolitical position in the Middle East region.[31] Also, Turkey was seen as the keeper of the refugees, which made the Western leaders avoid a new refugee crisis.[32] Completely losing this kind of an important ally to Russia by allowing it to leave the EU process or NATO would only strengthen the power of Russia against the West. Hence, the West's approach to Turkey's shift to authoritarianism in the post-coup atmosphere was actually soft and tolerating.

The US administration was quickly blamed for the coup d'état attempt by the Turkish government and Fethullah Gülen, who is a controversial cleric that was seen as a spy of the United States and living in self-exile in Pennsylvania since 1999, was blamed for orchestrating the failed coup.[33] After the failed coup, the Turkish Labor Minister, Süleyman Soylu explicitly accused the US administration for being behind it.[34] Also, in his rallies, the Turkish President Erdoğan talked about "upper mind" that tries to divide the country. In one of his rallies, President Erdoğan said, "The one in Pennsylvania (Fethullah Gülen) is not the upper mind. He is not that clever. The upper mind is different."[35] These "upper mind" claims might sound like nothing but a conspiracy theory, but President Erdoğan's message was clear. What he referred to as "upper mind" was the United States itself. The Turkish government was implicitly accusing the United States for the failed coup d'état attempt and Fethullah Gülen was considered just as a tool that the United

30 Ibid.

31 Amanda Sloat, "The West's Turkey Conundrum," 22-23.

32 Amanda Sloat, "The West's Turkey Conundrum," 23.

33 Aaron Stein, "Turkey: Managing Tensions and Options to Engage," 4-5.

34 "Bakan Soylu: Darbe girişiminin arkasında ABD var," *Evrensel,* July 16, 2016, https://www.evrensel.net/haber/285292/bakan-soylu-darbe-girisiminin-arkasinda-abd-var.

35 "O Pensilvanya'daki üst akıl değil, kafası o kadar çalışmaz. Üst akıl başka." "Cumhurbaşkanı Erdoğan'dan 14 Ağustos açıklaması," *NTV,* August 4, 2016, https://www.ntv.com.tr/turkiye/cumhurbaskani-erdogandan-14-agustos-aciklamasi,xPbdtoKumky3T5wgcH3BgA.

States used. The İncirlik airbase was used during the day of the coup and there were already suspicions about US involvement in the past coup d'états of Turkey in the Turkish public opinion.[36]

Fethullah Gülen has been demanded for extraction by the Turkish government from the United States over and over again since July 15, 2016. The Obama administration rejected all of the Turkish government's demands of extraction for Fethullah Gülen. On CNN's "State of the Union" broadcast, the Secretary of State, John Kerry said, "Give us the evidence, show us the evidence. We need a solid, legal foundation that meets the standards of extradition in order for our courts approve such a request" while mentioning that the US Justice Department did not receive any kind of formal request for extradition, on July 17.[37] Two days later, in his press conference with Frederica Mogherini in Brussels, Belgium, John Kerry repeated the legal process for extradition and declared that the United States had not received any request of extradition while demanding evidences, not allegations.[38] The US also denied any responsibility of the coup d'état as Biden gave a speech in Ankara by saying that the United States had no prior knowledge about the coup.[39] In that speech, Vice President Joseph Biden said:

> The United States of America, the people of the United States of America abhor what happened, and under no circumstances would

36 Burhanettin Duran, "15 Temmuz Darbe Girişiminin Türkiye'nin İç ve Dış Politikasına Etkisi," in *Türk Dış Politikası Yıllığı 2017,* eds. Burhanettin Duran, Kemal İnat and Mustafa Caner (İstanbul, SETA Yayınları, 2018), 25.

37 Michelle Jamrisko, "Kerry Says U.S. Awaits 'Formal Request' for Gulen Extradition." *Bloomberg,* July 17, 2016, https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2016-07-17/kerry-says-u-s-awaits-formal-request-for-gulen-extradition.

38 "Joint Press Availability With EU High Representative Federica Mogherini," *U.S. Department of State*, July 18, 2018, Accessed December 18, 2018, https://2009-2017.state.gov/secretary/remarks/2016/07/260174.htm.

39 "Remarks by Vice President Joe Biden and Turkish Prime Minister Binali Yildirim at a Press Availability," *The White House*, August 25, 2016, Accessed December 18, 2018, https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2016/08/25/remarks-vice-president-joe-biden-and-turkish-prime-minister-binali.

> support anything remotely approaching the cowardly act of the treasonous members of your military who engaged in this behavior. We did not have prior knowledge. We did not support. We immediately condemned. And we continue, as we did before the coup, to stand shoulder to shoulder with not only the government of Turkey, but with the people of Turkey.[40]

With this speech, Vice President Joe Biden stated that the US administration stood with the Turkish government and harshly condemned the coup attempt.[41] However, the extradition of Fethullah Gülen was never made by the Obama administration, despite all the messages about support for the democratically elected Turkish government. And this demand of Turkey will not be fulfilled in the future by the newly elected Republican administration of Donald Trump. Even though the Turkish government sent more than 85 boxes of documents to the US, the US Department of Justice is still reviewing the decision of extradition and did not reply the Turkish government about the situation in the year of 2018.[42] On May 2018, Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu published an op-ed article at *Foreign Policy,* that underlines the casualties and terrorism activities of FETÖ to convince the Trump administration for extraction, but it was not successful, either.[43] Other parts of the Western world, such as Germany, also acted as hypocritically as the United States about the extradition of the Gülenist people living abroad.

The failed coup d'état attempt and the repeated rejections of Gülen's extradition by the Obama administration worsened the diplomatic ties be-

40 Ibid

41 Ibid.

42 Michael Werz and Max Hofmann, "The Process Behind Turkey's Proposed Extraction of Fethullah Gülen," *Center for American Progress,* September 7, 2016, 7, https://tr.scribd.com/document/323188493/The-Process-Behind-Turkey-s-Proposed-Extradition-of-Fethullah-Gulen.

43 Mevlut Cavusoglu, "The United States Should Extradite Fetullah Gülen," *Foreign Policy,* May 15, 2017, https://foreignpolicy.com/2017/05/15/the-united-states-should-extradite-fetullah-gulen/.

tween the Turkish government and the United States. However, the Turkish government did not give up the demand of extradition from both the Obama administration and the upcoming Trump administration. On September 28, 2016, a warrant for a Protestant Evangelical Presbyterian pastor of İzmir Diriliş Kilisesi (İzmir Resurrection Church) came out and Pastor Andrew Craig Brunson was accused of espionage and of having links with the Fethullahist Terrorist Organization (FETÖ).[44] He was detained on October 7 and was kept for two years in Turkey until his release on October 12, 2018.[45] Nonetheless, the pastor exchange tactic of the Turkish government did not work, either. This incident of Pastor Brunson would be the cause of one of the biggest diplomatic crises in the history of American-Turkish relations during the summer of 2018, which led to the dramatic fall of the Turkish Lira due to the threats of the US President Trump, and Turkey had to give up and release Pastor Brunson in the end.[46]

The shock of 15th July created a great opportunity for the Russian administration of Vladimir Putin to gain Turkey as an ally against the West. The Russian government did not hesitate to use this chance to get closer to Turkey, which has an enormous geostrategic advantage in the Middle East, especially as a bordering country to Syria and Iran, the major Russian allies in the region. The Turkish government accused the US administration for the coup with the claims of anti-American "upper mind" and got angry due to their unwillingness to extradite the coup attempt's mastermind, Fethullah Gülen. Therefore, getting closer to Russia against a threat from the United States would be the best and most rational choice for Turkey, too. The Russian President Vladimir Putin was the one of the first world leaders that condemned the coup d'état attempt in Turkey and hosted Erdoğan's first trip abroad on August 9, 2016.[47] As a result of these common interests between

44 İsmail Saymaz, "Papaz FETÖ'den tutuklandı," *Hürriyet,* December 9, 2016, http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/gundem/papaz-fetoden-tutuklandi-40302354.

45 "Andrew Brunson: Turkey releases US pastor after two years," *BBC News,* October 12, 2018, https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-45841276.

46 Ibid.

47 Amanda Sloat, "The West's Turkey Conundrum," 5.

Turkey and Russia, the Turkish government of the Justice and Development Party welcomed this friendly approach of Vladimir Putin as a kind of a policy to create a balance of power against the United States in the post-coup political atmosphere.

The quick rapprochement with Russia was going well for the Turkish government. It was already started few days before the failed coup attempt, when the Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan apologized to the Russian President Vladimir Putin on June 27, 2016 for the plane shooting crisis in 2015, which was the main reason for the political tension between Russia and Turkey.[48] However, the failed coup attempt made Russia and Turkey even closer than before, due to the problems with the United States about the extradition of Fethullah Gülen.[49] Russia used this opportunity and did not allow anything to recreate the tension between these two countries. Without wasting too much time, on October 10, 2016, the halted TurkStream project, which was an undersea pipeline project for gas transportation made by Russian firm Gasprom, was decided to be continued and the Russian President Vladimir Putin declared that the bans on some of the Turkish food products would be also lifted, while the Turkish President Erdoğan mentioned that the construction of the first nuclear plant in Turkey by a Russian firm, the Akkuyu Nuclear Power Plant, would be accelerated.[50] On June 30, 2016, the Russian President Vladimir Putin signed a decree that lifted the ban on Russian charter flights to Turkey, which was started during the Plane Shooting Crisis in the late 2015.[51] Even the shocking assassination of the Russian am-

48 Alec Luhn and Ian Black, "Erdoğan has apologised for downing of Russian jet, Kremlin says," *The Guardian,* June 27, 2016, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/jun/27/kremlin-says-erdogan-apologises-russian-jet-turkish.

49 Şener Aktürk, "Turkey's Role in the Arab Spring and the Syrian Conflict," 93.

50 Olesya Astakhova and Nick Tattersall, "Russia and Turkey finalize plans for gas pipeline that will allow Moscow to bypass Ukraine," *Business Insider,* October 10, 2016, https://www.businessinsider.com/russia-and-turkey-finalize-plans-for-turkstream-gas-pipeline-2016-10.

51 "Russia's Putin lifts ban on charter holidays to Turkey," *BBC News,* June 30, 2016, https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-36676516.

bassador, Andrey Karlov by a Turkish police officer in a gallery on December 19, 2016 did not disrupt this normalization process between Turkey and Russia.[52] On December 23, 2016, in the Annual News Conference, the Russian President Putin did not accuse Turkey of the Russian ambassador's assassination and described it as a provocation.[53] In that speech, Putin said:

> I was sceptical about the idea that our aircraft was downed without the order of the Turkey's top leadership but by people who wanted to harm Russian-Turkish relations. But now after the gun attack on the ambassador, which was committed by a riot police officer, I am beginning to change my mind. Now it seems to me that anything is possible. And the infiltration into Turkey's government agencies, including law-enforcement and the army, by destructive elements is certainly deep. Right now, I am not at liberty to point fingers elsewhere and accuse someone of something, but we see that this is a fact, this is taking place.[54]

In this answer towards the question of Sputnik News Agency's journalist, the Russian President Vladimir Putin carefully conducted the crisis, unlike what he did in the plane shooting incident. He carefully picked words in order not to hurt the Turkish government or put it under political pressure. President Putin even accused the Gülenist Terrorist Oranization (FETÖ) by referring to it as "the infiltration" for the murder of the Russian ambassador, rather than putting any kind of blame on the Turkish government.[55] Also, in the

52 Shaun Walker, Kareem Shaheen, Martin Chulov and Patrick Wintour, "Russian ambassador to Turkey shot dead by police officer in Ankara gallery," *The Guardian,* December 20, 2016, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/dec/19/russian-ambassador-to-turkey-wounded-in-ankara-shooting-attack.

53 Özgür Tüfekçi, "İşbirliği ve Kriz İkileminde Türkiye-Rusya İlişkileri," in *AK Parti'nin 15 Yılı: Dış Politika,* eds. Kemal İnat, Ali Aslan and Burhanettin Duran (İstanbul, SETA Yayınları, 2017), 149.

54 "Vladimir Putin's annual news conference," *President of Russia*, December 23, 2016, Accessed December 10, 2018, http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/53573.

55 Ibid.

same speech, Putin mentioned the cooperation with the Turkish and Iranian leaders as a trilateral pact to find a final solution on the question of Aleppo in Syria which he described as "the biggest international humanitarian action in the modern world".[56] Finally, almost a year later, the Russian-Turkish relations were almost normalized on May 31, 2017, when Russia decided to lift all of the trade sanctions on Turkey that were put in practice after the plane shooting crisis.[57]

The failed coup d'état of 15 July was the day of the collapse of the US-Turkish relations, and it was also definitely a turning point in the rapprochement between Turkey and Russia. Bülent Aras tried to explain this change in Turkish foreign policy with four crises, systemic, political, security and identity crises, which forced Turkey to turn to the Eurasianist side.[58] Although Aras made some important points such as the concerns about the security of Turkey, it is still hard to say that identity, institutions or domestic politics have an important effect on Turkish foreign policy. The Neorealist Theory underlines that the international system is anarchic, hence the only important thing is power. It is impossible to understand Turkish foreign policy without looking at the Turkish relations with great powers, the United States and Russia. Thus, from a Neorealist perspective, the change in the Turkish foreign policy can be understood in the light of the fact that Turkey's rapprochement with Russia after July 15th was made as an attempt to create a balance of power against the threat that came from the United States. Since the Russo-Georgian War in 2008, the Russian-Turkish relations were tense and Turkey leaned on the United States to create a balance of power against the Russian aggression, until the day of 15th July 2016. After July 15, 2016, Turkey felt threatened by the United States and strengthened her relations with Russia to create a balance of power with Russia against the US aggression.

56 Ibid.

57 "Russia lifts sanctions on Turkish food in diplomatic thaw," *BBC News,* June 2, 2016, https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-40134701.

58 Bülent Aras, "Turkish foreign policy after July 15," *IPM,* 2017, 4-11, http://ipc.sabanciuniv.edu/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/Turkish-Foreign-Policy-After-July-15_Bulent-Aras.pdf.

Also, it is still hard to say that Turkey shifted to a Eurasianist side which is the claim of Aras as a change in identity.[59] The Neorealist Theory does not take identities of the states into consideration but only their interests, as power seeking rational actors due to the insecurity of the internationally anarchic system. In the cases of Syria, Turkey might consult Russia as an ally, but as a rational actor, Turkey still follows her own main goals which are about survival. Hence, Turkey will make two major military operations in Syria with the Russian approval to remove major threats to her national security: the YPG and ISIS. However, in the case of Ukraine and Crimea, Turkey is still against the Russian annexation of Crimea because the increasing existence of a great power like Russia in the Black Sea is another security threat to Turkey. Therefore, Turkey expresses its concerns in Crimea against the Russian interests even after 15 July, but with a softer tone. Thus, Turkey might be looking as it shifted to the Eurasianist side in the Syrian Civil War after July 15, but it is still supporting an Atlanticist view in Crimea, due to Turkish interests that clash with Russian ones in Crimea and the insecurity that increased Russian existence creates in the Black Sea.

Katerina Dalacoura described the sudden change in the Turkish foreign policy as moving away from the promotion of Turkey as a "great power" and shifting to a more defensive foreign policy for survival.[60] Her analysis about the rapprochement with Russia is accurate as Turkey put principles aside to get closer to Russia, accepting her efforts to remove Assad proved to be a failure.[61] However, Turkey expected an intervention from the United States in the next two years, but that intervention would never come from the Trump administration.[62] As of the summer of 2018, when Assad destroyed the last strongholds of the opposition with the help of Russia and Iran, Turk-

59 Bülent Aras, "Turkish foreign policy after July 15," 11.

60 Katerina Dalacoura, "A new phase in Turkish foreign policy: expediency and AKP survival," Future notes, 4, *Istituto Affari Internazionali*, 2017, 2, https://www.iai.it/sites/default/files/menara_fn_4.pdf.

61 Ibid.

62 "Erdoğan'dan Trump'a 'Suriye'ye müdahale desteği: Lafta kalmasın," *BBC News,* April 6, 2017, https://www.bbc.com/turkce/haberler-turkiye-39521704.

ish foreign policy, which was already softened in the issue of the Syrian Civil War, would reduce its anti-Assad tone due to the victory of the Assad regime. Dalacoura put emphasis on the resignation of Davutoğlu and the failed coup attempt as the reasons of change in the Turkish foreign policy.[63] Nonetheless, it is still hard to say that before 2016, Turkey was following a Neo-Ottomanist foreign policy under the influence of Ahmet Davutoğlu and his civilizational discourse.[64] Even before the year 2016, Turkey was still following a pragmatist foreign policy. Just like in the example of the intervention of Libya, Turkey was not insisting on the idealistic view of "Neo-Ottomanism" as the Turkish government changed its position in the Libyan Civil War, just like in Syria. Turkey showed its support for the Gaddafi regime due to Turkish investments in Libya, but it had to be ended when the Gaddafi regime's end was clear. As a result of this, Turkey had no chance but to approve the UN resolution about the military intervention against Gaddafi's regime in Libya. Thus, in a broader perspective, the Turkish foreign policy was not a static approach. Turkey was always re-positioning herself according to the new political developments in the bordering regions.

As previously discussed, Turkey was placing her stance between the two great powers, Russia and the United States, to create a balance of power against the other which threatened the Turkish interests. The failed coup d'état attempt on July 15 was not just a simple terrorist attack from the inside, but it was perceived as an act of aggression by the United States against the Turkish government. Hence, in the end, Turkey re-positioned herself once more between these two great powers and strengthened her relations with Russia after 15th July 2016, even if it meant suddenly forgetting all of the bad events and hateful rhetoric of the past.

63 Katerina Dalacoura, "A new phase in Turkish foreign policy: expediency and AKP survival," 2-4.

64 Katerina Dalacoura, "A new phase in Turkish foreign policy: expediency and AKP survival," 3-4.

§ 7.2 The S-400 Deal and Turkey-NATO Relations

In September 2017, Turkey signed an arms deal with Russia.[65] The purchase of four battalions of a Russian defense system called S-400, cost 2.5 billion USD.[66] Buying missiles from Russia instead of NATO created a huge reaction from NATO.[67] According to an unnamed official who spoke to AFP, none of the NATO member countries had S-400 missile system and NATO was not informed about this deal between Russia and Turkey.[68] Nevertheless, Turkey did not take a step back and the Turkish President Erdoğan described this decision of purchasing arms from Russia as "for the defense of our country", while complaining about the high cost of Western drones.[69] On October 26, 2017, Petr Pavel, the Chairman of NATO military committee, openly threatened the Turkish government for the S-400 arms deal with Russia by saying that Turkey might face consequences despite its national sovereignty.[70] Pavel made this harsh comment although NATO General Secretary Jens Stoltenberg previously described Turkey's S-400 purchase as a "national decision".[71] Stoltenberg repeated the same comment almost a year later, on September 14, 2018, in his speech at the Heritage Foundation in Washington, DC.[72] Despite this compromising behavior of Stoltenberg, Pavel kept his attitude and expressed his concerns over and over again. On March 8, 2018, in his speech to

65 "Turkey signs deal to get Russian S-400 air defence missiles," *BBC News,* September 12, 2017, https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-41237812.

66 Mustafa Kibaroğlu, "On Turkey's Missile Defense Strategy: The Four Faces of the S-400 Deal Between Turkey and Russia," *SAM Papers.* No. 16, (April 2019): 3, http://sam.gov.tr/tr/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/SAM-Papers-No.-16-4.pdf.

67 Ibid.

68 "Turkey signs deal to get Russian S-400 air defence missiles," *BBC News,* September 12, 2017, https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-41237812.

69 Ibid.

70 "Türkiye'ye NATO'dan S-400 Uyarısı," *Hürriyet,* October 26, 2017, http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/dunya/turkiyeye-natodan-s-400-uyarisi-40624034.

71 Ibid.

72 "Remarks by NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg at the Heritage Foundation in Washington, DC," *North Atlantic Treaty Organization*, September 14, 2018, Accessed December 24, 2018, https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/opinions_158078.htm.

Breaking Defense, he said "Buying S-400 is not like buying a Kalashnikov rifle."[73] Nonetheless, the Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan harshly reacted to all of these criticisms from NATO about the S-400 purchase and accused NATO for being hypocritical.[74] On April 3, 2018, the Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan declared that the agreements about S-400 were already made.[75] The planned delivery date of S-400 was 2020, according to Yuri Ushakov, Advisor of the Russian President Vladimir Putin.[76] However, Turkey insisted on an early delivery.[77] Therefore, the expected date for the delivery of the S-400 defense system is currently July 2019.[78]

The biggest reason why Turkey decided to buy S-400 from the Russian Federation was not just the tension with the United States since the failed coup attempt, but also the problems that Turkey experienced about buying Patriot missiles from NATO.[79] With the purchase of S-400 missiles from Russia, Turkey is planning to diversify her security system.[80] This purchase will decrease the dependence of Turkey on the United States and NATO.[81]

Interestingly, Gönül Tol and Nilsu Gören from the Middle East Institute say that NATO allows its allies to increase their own military power on the condition of its interoperability.[82] A similar expression came out from Depu-

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73 "S-400 almak, kalaşnikof almaya benzemez." "NATO yetkilisi, Türkiye'nin S-400 alımının İttifak için doğuracağı riskleri açıkladı," *Sputnik Türkiye,* March 8, 2018, https://tr.sputniknews.com/analiz/201803081032557871-nato-yetkili-turkiye-s400-ittifak-risk-acikladi/.

74 Ibid.

75 Bilgehan Öztürk, "Türkiye'nin Rusya ve Kafkasya Politikası 2018," 245-246.

76 Bilgehan Öztürk, "Türkiye'nin Rusya ve Kafkasya Politikası 2018," 246.

77 Ibid.

78 Ibid.

79 Nurşin Ateşoğlu Güney, "Türk-Rus İlişkilerinde İkinci Bahar Kalıcı mı?" in *Türk Dış Politikası Yıllığı 2017*, eds. Burhanettin Duran, Kemal İnat and Mustafa Caner (İstanbul, SETA Yayınları, 2018), 59-60.

80 Nurşin Ateşoğlu Güney, "Türk-Rus İlişkilerinde İkinci Bahar Kalıcı mı?" 60.

81 Ibid.

82 Gönül Tol and Nilsu Gören, "Turkey's Quest for Air Defense: Is the S–400 Deal a Pivot to Russia?" *Middle East Institute Policy Focus* 5 (2017), 4, https://www.mei.edu/sites/default/files/publications/PF5_TolGoren_Turkey_0.pdf.

ty Secretary General of NATO, Rose Gottemoeller, on March 2, 2018, in which she raised NATO's concerns by saying that the S-400 missile defense systems are not integrated with NATO's defense systems.[83] Tol and Gören also say that the Russian government is intentionally cautious about declaring the final date of the deal arms and their delivery.[84] If the Russian government is intentionally slowing the process of the S-400 deal, then it can be concluded that the Russian government still does not trust the Turkish government.

Turkey's future in NATO is not clear. After the failed coup d'état attempt of July 15, 2016, Turkey got closer to Russia. Since the day of the coup attempt, there were speculations about expelling Turkey from NATO. The S-400 Arms Deal with Russia further increased the tension between NATO and Turkey which was caused by the authoritarian political climate in Turkey after the declaration of state of emergency. Just a few days after the failed coup attempt, the US Secretary of State, John Kerry underlined that democratic values were essential for NATO and said that Turkey could jeopardize its membership if the post-coup purges continue.[85]

Nevertheless, just like all of the reactions from the Western states including the United States, NATO's warnings were only in rhetoric. NATO never practically tried to expel, nor sanction Turkey for its rapprochement with Russia. The S-400 deal of Turkey became an issue for NATO; however, the warnings that were issued by NATO to Turkey seemed like they did not really have any effect on Turkey. In addition, John Kerry's argument of democratic values as a requirement for being a NATO member is not convincing, either.

İhsan Sefa, a retired Turkish Staff Colonel, wrote an op-ed with the title *How to exit from NATO? (NATO'dan Nasıl Çıkılır?)* in *Aydınlık*, a Eurasianist

83 "NATO'dan S-400 açıklaması: NATO sistemlerine entegre edilemiyor," *Sputnik Türkiye,* March 2, 2018, https://tr.sputniknews.com/savunma/201803021032477246-nato-s400-entegre-edilemiyor/.

84 Gönül Tol and Nilsu Gören, "Turkey's Quest for Air Defense: Is the S–400 Deal a Pivot to Russia?" 5.

85 Carol Morello, "Kerry urges Turkey to maintain democratic principles after coup attempt."

anti-NATO and pro-Russia Turkish newspaper on November 20, 2017.[86] In this op-ed, Sefa accused NATO for being a tool of the United States for its own imperialist agenda and claimed that the United States creates an artificial enemy to keep Turkey in NATO and sell weapons.[87] Furthermore, what he listed as important steps to be taken for a possible scenario to exit NATO were to hold a popular referendum, to establish a national military industry, to have ammunition stocks in case of an embargo from the West and most importantly, to shift to the axis of Russia and Iran.[88] It might sound like a good plan to leave NATO, but it is hard to say that Turkey will leave NATO because Turkey's whole military system was built on the basis of the NATO model. From a Neorealist perspective, it is also hard to say that the current Turkey-Russian relations will last forever. In case of any new threat from Russia, Turkey will again lean on NATO and the United States, as it did the exact opposite when the threat came from the West after the failed coup d'état attempt of 15 July. Therefore, having NATO on its side is still an advantage for Turkey against the possibility of a future political disagreement with Russia.

It is also hard to say that the United States has any interest to kick Turkey out of NATO. Even after all the negative developments between the United States and Turkey, the US still wants Turkey due to its geopolitical importance in the Middle East, which is a vital advantage for the US. Also, losing this kind of an important ally to the enemies of the US, such as Russia and Iran, would be a huge failure for the United States. In Mike Pompeo's interview with Tony Katz on November 1, 2018, the US Secretary of State was asked about the possibility of Turkey leaving NATO and Pompeo said, "I hope not. It would be unfortunate for NATO; it'd be unfortunate for the United States, and I think even more unfortunate for the people of Turkey"

86 İhsan Sefa, "NATO'dan Nasıl Çıkılır?" *Aydınlık*, November 20, 2017, https://www.aydinlik.com.tr/nato-dan-nasil-cikilir-ihsan-sefa-kose-yazilari-kasim-2017.

87 Ibid.

88 Ibid.

which demonstrates that the United States still wants Turkey in NATO.[89] However, instead of kicking Turkey out of NATO, the Trump administration of the United States might enact some sanctions against Turkey to deter the Turkish government from buying the S-400 missiles. According to the Turkish Foreign Minister, Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu, the purchase of S-400 from Russia was an urgent necessity, not a choice which was made under the pressure of the Trump administration of the United States.[90] In late November 2018, some voices were heard in the United States about planning to cancel the role of Turkey in the project of F-35 warplanes if Turkey buys S-400 missiles from Russia.[91] The United States did not just give an ultimatum to Turkey with the threat of canceling the F-35 warplanes project, but also warned Turkey by stating that the sale of patriot missiles to Turkey would be stopped if Turkey does not terminate the purchase of the S-400 missiles.[92] Nevertheless, Turkey had no plan to give up the S-400 deal, according to a Turkish security officer who gave a speech to BBC Turkish.[93]

Turkey might be buying S-400 missiles from Russia, which is something that NATO clearly disapproves. Nonetheless it should be noted that the Turkish government does not want to end the relations with NATO, either. Turkey might be getting closer to Russia after the failed coup d'état attempt of 15th July, but being a member of NATO is a great advantage for Turkey especially as a country that is geographically close to a great power, such as Rus-

89 "Interview with Tony Kayz of Tony Katz Today," *U.S. Depatment of State,* November 1, 2018, Accessed December 20, 2018, https://www.state.gov/secretary/remarks/2018/11/287057.htm.

90 "Çavuşoğlu'ndan S-400 açıklaması: 'Acil' ihtiyacımız vardı," *Cumhuriye,* August 31, 2018, *t*http://www.cumhuriyet.com.tr/haber/turkiye/1069411/Cavusoglu_ndan_S-400_aciklamasi___Acil__ihtiyacimiz_vardi.html.

91 "Pentagon: Türkiye Rusya'dan S-400 alırsa, F-35 projesinden çıkarılma riskiyle yüzyüze kalır," *BBC News Türkçe,* November 29, 2018, https://www.bbc.com/turkce/haberler-dunya-46385727.

92 Hüseyin Hayatsever, "ABD'den Türkiye'ye S-400 tehdidi," *Cumhuriyet,* February 7, 2019, http://www.cumhuriyet.com.tr/haber/turkiye/1236203/ABD_den_Turkiye_ye_S-400_tehdidi.html.

93 Ece Göksedef, "Türkiye, Patriot füzeleri için S-400'lerden vazgeçecek mi?" *BBC News Türkçe,* December 21, 2018, https://www.bbc.com/turkce/46634495.

sia, that could threaten its national security. Hence, leaving NATO for Russia would not be a rational choice for Turkey. Moreover, in November 2018, the Turkish Presidential Spokesperson, İbrahim Kalın stated that Turkey still seeks for the purchase of Patriot missiles from the United States, even though an agreement with Russia had already been signed regarding S-400 missiles.[94] Of course this might be seen as a signal to Russia to hasten the implementation of S-400 missiles, but it shows that Turkey is still ready to act with the United States and the West. Just as the United States or NATO does not want Turkey to leave, Turkey is also not in favor of leaving NATO. Especially, as long as there is an aggressive Russia, Turkey needs NATO more than ever. Since the expansion of Russia into Crimea, the Turkish government supports the national sovereignty and integration of Ukraine by stating that the annexation of Crimea was unlawful. After 15th July, the voice of criticism from Turkey might be a bit softened, but Turkey is still not taking a step back from supporting Ukraine's right to control Crimea in order not to allow a great power like Russia in the Black Sea region.

To sum up, it can be concluded that Turkey's relations with NATO will not be as good as it used to be for a while, due to the rapprochement of Turkey with Russia. However, things can change easily if Turkey perceives a threat from Russia. Therefore, being on the Euroasian side with Russia and Iran or being on the Atlanticist side with the United States and European countries is just a matter of interest. Hence, it is not about being Atlanticist or Euroasianist, it is all about Turkey's self-interests, as Neorealist Theory says. Turkey might be moving away from the West and getting closer to Russia, but being a NATO member is still an advantage for Turkey which provides security against Russia.

94 "Turkey looks forward to getting Russia's S-400, ready to consider buying US patriot," *TASS Russian News Agency,* November 22, 2018, http://tass.com/defense/1032012.

§ 7.3 Operation Euphrates Shield

Since the beginning of the Syrian Civil War, Turkey might be supporting the removal of the Assad regime from Syria, but the Turkish government's primary concern was the Kurdish insurgency group the YPG that was rising in Syria against the Assad regime, which has ties with the PKK. Therefore, since the beginning of the Syrian Civil War, Turkey was always in conflict with the Western allies as they supported the YPG while the Turkish government was insisting on them either choosing Turkey or the YPG as an ally. The Western powers, especially both of the administrations of Obama and Trump in the United States, kept arming the YPG as a secular Kurdish minority group that was fighting against the Assad regime and most importantly, used the YPG as combatting forces against the threat of ISIS.[9596] The rise of ISIS in the region, scared the Western world, as they committed radical Islamist terrorist attacks in many Western cities. It also made the United States give up implementing its plan for an intervention to Syria and forced the American government to support secular guerilla groups like the YPG to create an anti-ISIS resistance in the region of Northern Syria. Nonetheless, for Turkey, this was unacceptable. For the Turkish government, the YPG was not less dangerous than ISIS, even much more dangerous for the Turkish national interests due to their ties with the PKK, hence Turkey always demanded from the Western powers, especially from the United States, to stop arming the YPG. Nonetheless, this demand of Turkey was never fulfilled, either.

The years 2015 and 2016 passed with terrorist attacks in the Turkish soils carried out by both ISIS and the PKK/TAK. The concerns about these two terrorist organizations and their activities on the Turkish-Syrian borders

95 Julian Borger and Fazel Hawramy, "US providing light arms to Kurdish-led coalition in Syria, officials confirm," *The Guardian,* September 29, 2016, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/sep/29/syria-us-arms-supply-kurds-turkey.

96 Michael R. Gordon and Eric Schmitt, "Trump to Arm Syrian Kurds, Even as Turkey Strongly Objects," *The New York Times,* May 9, 2017, https://www.nytimes.com/2017/05/09/us/politics/trump-kurds-syria-army.html.

dramatically increased in this period. Only in these two years, 33 suicide bombing attacks were carried out in which 461 people lost their lives.[97] The Obama administration was still uncertain about the future of Syria as there was the fear of involving in a civil war as well as creating a new huge-scale war due to the existence of Russia in Syria. Thus, by the summer of 2016, Turkey decided to conduct some military operations alone to clean borders from these two groups, both the YPG and ISIS, which were threatening Turkish national security. Due to her developing relationship with Russia since late 2016, Turkey could easily dive into the borders of Syria without having a reaction from Russia like in 2015, during her military operations on Syrian soil.

An important military offensive in the Northern Syria triggered Turkey to take action. It was the Manbij Offensive in which the Syrian Democratic Forces that contained YPG militias started an attack, which was supported by the United States, to the city of Manbij to capture it from ISIS on May 31, 2016, and by August 6, 2016 90% of Manbij was under the control of SDF.[98] After the fall of Manbij, they were set to head towards Al-Bab, another Kurdish town that was held by ISIS.[99] Nonetheless, the Turkish government wanted to prevent this advance of the YPG in Northern Syria. Hence, the Turkish Foreign Minister, Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu demanded the Kurdish militias in Syria to withdraw to the east of the Euphrates River on August 15, 2016.[100] Accord-

97 "Bir buçuk yılda 33 bombalı saldırıda 461 kişi hayatını kaybetti; 363'ü sivil," *Diken,* December 12, 2016, http://www.diken.com.tr/bir-bucuk-yilda-33-bombali-saldirida-461-kisi-hayatini-kaybetti-363u-sivil/.

98 Damien Gayle, "US-backed fighters take town of Manbij from Isis," *The Guardian*, August 6, 2016, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/aug/06/us-backed-syrian-fighters-take-town-of-manbij-from-isis.

99 Jiyar Gol, "IS conflict: Syria's Kurds set sights on al-Bab after fall of Manbij," *BBC News*, August 16, 2016, https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-37093856.

100 "Turkey expects Syrian Kurdish forces to withdraw after Manbij operation: Minister," *Reuters*, August 15, 2016, https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-turkey-manbij/turkey-expects-syrian-kurdish-forces-to-withdraw-after-manbij-operation-minister-idUSKCN10Q11R.

ing to Çavuşoğlu, this was what the United States promised to Turkey.[101] On August 15, 2016, the US Secretary of Defense, Ash Carter described the liberation of Manbij as "another significant milestone in the campaign to deal ISIL a lasting defeat" and thanked for the Turkish government's support.[102] However, Carter did not mention anything about the withdrawal of Kurdish militias from Manbij which was located on the west of the Euphrates River.[103] Three months later, the YPG declared that they would leave Manbij as they had finished the training of local security units on November 16, 2016.[104]

After this advance of the YPG in Manbij, Operation Euphrates Shield was commenced on August 24, 2016 by an offensive with the help of the Free Syrian Army, the paramilitary group that was supported by Turkey, into ISIS-controlled Jarabulus which was a Syrian city, close to the Syrian-Turkish border.[105] This was the first cross-border Turkish military operation into Syria, and it had two main objectives: removing the threat of ISIS from Jarabulus and preventing the Kurdish cantons in Afrin and Manbij, which were held by the YPG, from being merged.[106] Hence, as a justification for the operation, the Turkish government declared that Operation Euphrates Shield was started according to the United Nations Article 51, which is about the right of self-defense.[107]

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101 Ibid.

102 "Statement by Secretary of Defense Ash Carter on the Liberation of Manbij," U.S. *Secretary of Defense*, August 15, 2016, Accessed December 25, 2018, https://dod.defense.gov/News/News-Releases/News-Release-View/Article/914947/statement-by-secretary-of-defense-ash-carter-on-the-liberation-of-manbij/.

103 Ibid.

104 "Syria conflict: Kurdish YPG militia to leave Manbij," *BBC News,* November 16, 2016, https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-37998746.

105 Kareem Shaheen, "Turkey sends tanks into Syria in operation aimed at Isis and Kurds," *The Guardian,* August 24, 2016, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/aug/24/turkey-launches-major-operation-against-isis-in-key-border-town.

106 Ibid.

107 Murat Yeşiltaş, Merve Seren and Necdet Özçelik, "Fırat Kalkanı Harekatı: Harekatın İcrası, İstikrarın Tesisi ve Alınan Dersler," *SETA*. SETA Yayınları 91, 2017, 9, https://setav.org/assets/uploads/2017/10/R91_FKA.pdf.

The first phase of the operation targeted the area between Jarabulus and the Sajur River, and it lasted four days.[108] The operation was conducted by members of Free Syrian Army on foot, supported by the Turkish Armed Forces' tanks and air strikes.[109] Within only about 14 hours, the city of Jarabulus was captured from ISIS and given to the Free Syrian Army.[110] The remaining ISIS fighters were withdrawn to the South-West, to the city of Al-Bab.[111] The Syrian Foreign Ministry condemned Operation Euphrates Shield of Turkey by describing it as breaching of the Syrian sovereignty and said that any operation for counter-terrorism in the borders of Syria should be conducted in coordination with the Syrian government, while emphasizing Turkey conducted this operation to replace ISIS with another terrorist group in the region, referring to the Free Syrian Army.[112] Tensions rose even higher on the following days when Turkish fighter jets bombed members of the SDF.[113]

By the beginning of September, Operation Euphrates Shield entered the second phase, which lasted more than a month, as Turkish forces moved to capture Al-Rai, the east of Al-Bab, and gave that region to the Free Syrian

108 Murat Yeşiltaş, Merve Seren and Necdet Özçelik, "Fırat Kalkanı Harekatı: Harekatın İcrası, İstikrarın Tesisi ve Alınan Dersler," 23-25.

109 Kareem Shaheen, "Turkey sends tanks into Syria in operation aimed at Isis and Kurds," *The Guardian,* August 24, 2016, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/aug/24/turkey-launches-major-operation-against-isis-in-key-border-town.

110 "'Jarabulus is completely liberated': Syrian rebels backed by Turkey 'seize' Islamic State-held town," *ABC News,* August 25, 2016, https://www.abc.net.au/news/2016-08-25/syria-rebels-backed-by-turkey-tanks-seize-is-held-town/7783204.

111 Ibid.

112 "Turkish military, US-led coalition launch operation to sweep Islamic State from Syrian town," *ABC News,* August 24, 2016, https://www.abc.net.au/news/2016-08-24/turkey-launches-operation-on-syrian-border/7782078.

113 Lizzie Dearden, "Syrian war: Turkish fighter jets bomb rebels backed by the US-led coalition amid battles for territory near Jarablus," *The Independent,* August 27, 2016, https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/middle-east/syrian-war-news-latest-turkish-fighter-jets-bomb-sdf-rebels-backed-us-led-coalition-jarablus-a7213266.html.

Army as they had taken from ISIS, just like in Jarabulus.[114] The second phase started on September 3, 2016 as Turkish tanks moved into Al-Rai.[115] The third phase of Operation Euphrates Shield commenced with the Dabiq Operation which was started on October 15, 2016.[116] Turkey and the Free Syrian Army successfully seized the town of Dabiq, a symbolic stronghold of ISIS, on October 16, 2016.[117] By this time, Operation Euphrates Shield was still going on in Al-Bab. The United States declared that she did not support Turkey in this operation, because it was started independently.[118] The Turkish President Erdoğan once signaled on October 27, 2016 that the Turkish government would capture Raqqa and Manbij, but this plan was dropped, due to disagreements between Turkey and the United States.[119] However, the battle in Al-Bab continued between Turkey and ISIS, and the operation entered its 4th and last phase on December 21, 2016.[120] With the final victory of Turkey in Al-Bab against ISIS on February 23, 2017, the Turkish frontier was cleaned from ISIS.[121] As Turkey reached her goals by removing ISIS from her borders

114 Murat Yeşiltaş, Merve Seren and Necdet Özçelik, "Fırat Kalkanı Harekatı: Harekatın İcrası, İstikrarın Tesisi ve Alınan Dersler," 26-28.

115 Lizzie Dearden, "Syrian war: More Turkish tanks cross border into al-Rai as operation against Isis and Kurds enters 'new phase'," *The Independent,* September 3, 2016, https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/middle-east/syrian-war-more-turkish-tanks-cross-border-into-al-rai-as-operation-against-isis-and-kurds-enters-a7224271.html.

116 "Syria conflict: Rebels advance on IS stronghold of Dabiq," *BBC News,* October 15, 2016, https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-37666240.

117 Kareem Shaheen, "Turkish-backed Syrian rebels recapture town of Dabiq from Isis," *The Guardian,* October 16, 2016, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/oct/16/turkish-opposition-fighters-syria-dabiq-islamic-state.

118 "Koalisyondan Türkiye'nin El Bab operasyonuna 'destek yok'," *BBC News Türkçe,* November 17, 2016, https://www.bbc.com/turkce/haberler-dunya-38011868.

119 "Erdoğan: Menbiç ve Rakka'ya yöneleceğiz," *BBC News Türkçe,* October 27, 2016, https://www.bbc.com/turkce/haberler-turkiye-37787278.

120 Murat Yeşiltaş, Merve Seren and Necdet Özçelik, "Fırat Kalkanı Harekatı: Harekatın İcrası, İstikrarın Tesisi ve Alınan Dersler," 31-32.

121 "Son dakika: El Bab bugün IŞİD'den alındı! Ve sıra o bölgede," *Milliyet,* February 23, 2017, http://www.milliyet.com.tr/son-dakika-bir-tek-rakka-kaldi-gundem-2401773/.

and preventing the merger of Kurdish cantons, Operation Euphrates Shield was finally ended on March 29, 2017.[122]

Although it did not involve the capture of Manbij and Raqqa, Operation Euphrates Shield was conducted well and ended quickly, hence it was quite successful. After Operation Euphrates Shield, the line of Jarablus and Azez was secured and the terrorist activities in El-Bab were taken under control by the Turkish Armed Forces.[123] With this operation, Turkey removed both of the major threats from her borders, ISIS and the YPG, while decreasing the power of the YPG in the region by not allowing the Kurdish cantons to be merged. Turkey did not face a harsh reaction from Russia or Syria during the operation and achieved to keep the United States away from any kind of intervention. One of the advisors of Turkish President Erdoğan, İlknur Çevik, described the role of Russia in both Operation Euphrates Shield and Operation Olive Branch by stressing that they would be impossible without the cooperation of Russia.[124]

§ 7.4 The Khan Shaykun Chemical Attack and the Response of the United States

When the Trump administration came in power, his America First Doctrine was seen as a non-interventionist foreign policy as it was expressed in Trump's inauguration through a populist criticism of American foreign military interventions and expenditures for the security of other countries.[125] Therefore, the America First Doctrine of the Trump Administration was

122 Samuel Osbourne, "Turkey ends 'Euphrates Shield' military operation in Syria, PM says 'Any operation following this one will have a different name'," *The Independent,* March 29, 2017, https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/middle-east/turkey-syria-ends-euphrates-shield-military-operation-binali-yildirim-jarablus-isis-islamic-state-a7657156.html.

123 Ramazan Erdağ, "Normalleşmeden Gerilim ve Çatışmaya: Türkiye-Suriye İlişkileri," 333.

124 "Erdogan Aide: Olive Branch and Euphrates Shield Impossible Without Russia," *Sputnik,* April 1, 2018, https://sputniknews.com/middleeast/201804011063109618-erdogan-aide-operations-impossible-russia/.

125 "The Inaugural Address," *The White House*, January 20, 2017, Accessed December 22, 2018, https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/the-inaugural-address/.

expected to be relatively less interventionist than the previous administrations of the United States. However, this would not be the case.

On April 4, 2017, the Syrian Civil War entered a new phase with the news of a chemical attack that was made on a rebel-held town called Khan Shaykhun in Idlib.[126] More than 80 people were killed by this horrifying chemical attack.[127] On April 7, the Trump administration responded with 59 cruise missiles on the Syrian military airbase on Shayrat, Homs which killed 7 people and injured 9 according to the Syrian officials.[128] The Russian President Vladimir Putin described the US military action as "an act of aggression against a sovereign state delivered in violation of international war".[129] Also, President Putin called for a meeting in the Security Council of the United Nations to talk about these missile strikes against Syria.[130] In this meeting, President Putin once again condemned the US military action as "aggression and violation of international law."[131] The Russian Foreign Minister, Sergei Lavrov even said that this incident reminded him of "the Invasion of Iraq" in 2003, in which the intervention was made due to misinformation by the CIA.[132] In this speech, he claimed that there was no hard evidence, but some

126 "Syria chemical 'attack': What we know," *BBC News,* April 26, 2017, https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-39500947.

127 Ibid.

128 Spencer Ackerman, Ed Pilkington, Ben Jacobs and Julian Borger, "Syria missile strikes: US launches first direct military action against Assad," *The Guardian,* April 7, 2017, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/apr/06/trump-syria-missiles-assad-chemical-weapons.

129 "Comments from the Press Service of the President of Russia," *President of Russia*, April 7, 2017, Accessed December 25, 2018, http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/54241.

130 "Meeting with permanent members of Security Council," *President of Russia*, April 7, 2017, Accessed December 25, 2018, http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/54242.

131 Ibid.

132 "Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov's remarks and answers to media questions during a joint news conference with CIS Executive Secretary Sergey Lebedev and Foreign Minister of Uzbekistan Abdulaziz Kamilov following a meeting of the CIS Council of Foreign Ministers, April 7, 2017," *The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation.* April 7, 2017, Accessed December 25, 2018, http://www.mid.ru/en/press_service/minister_speeches/-/asset_publisher/7OvQR5KJWVmR/content/id/2720804.

photographs from various NGO's like the White Helmets which he described as "crooks… who stage various situations to provoke action against the Syrian Government".[133] Lavrov also questioned how the Western partners perceive the Al-Nusra Front as he accused the Obama administration for sparing the places that were held by the Al-Nusra Front while conducting airstrikes against ISIS.[134] On the same day, President Trump made a speech from Florida in which he described Bashar Al-Assad as "Syrian dictator" and explicitly accused him for launching "a horrible chemical weapons attack on innocent civilians" by using a nerve agent.[135]

Witnesses claimed that the chemical attack in Khan Shaykhun was made by airplanes, but the Russian government claimed that a rebel depot with chemical munitions was hit.[136] President Putin even increased the tension on April 11, by claiming that he expected new fake chemical gas attacks from the US to justify new military strikes on Syria.[137] In an interview of AFP on April 13, 2017, the Syrian President Bashar Al-Assad dismissed the accusations of the use of chemical weapons by the Syrian government as "a hundred percent for us, it's fabrication" while underlining that the rebel-town was held by the Al-Nusra Front, a branch of Al-Qaeda, and all of the information came from them.[138] In the same interview, he also claimed that the West, especially the United States, fabricated the story and the US was "hand in glove with the terrorists."[139] Nevertheless on April 11, 2017, as a response to all of these

133 Ibid.

134 Ibid.

135 "Statement by President Trump," *U.S. Embassy & Consulates in Russia*, April 7, 2017, Accessed December 25, 2018, https://ru.usembassy.gov/statement-president-trump-syria/.

136 "Syria chemical attack 'fabricated' – Assad," *BBC News,* April 13, 2017, https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-39588876.

137 Roland Oliphant, "Vladimir Putin says he expects 'fake' gas attacks in Damascus to justify further US strikes on Syria," *The Telegraph,* April 11, 2017, https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2017/04/11/vladimir-putin-says-expects-fake-gas-attacks-damascus-justify/.

138 "President al-Assad to AFP: Khan Sheikhoun incident totally fabricated.. the US is not serious in achieving any political solution-video," *Syrian Arab News Agency,* April 13, 2017, https://sana.sy/en/?p=104255.

139 Ibid.

denials from Russia and Syria, the Turkish Health Minister Recep Akdağ declared that Turkey had concrete evidence of the use of sarin gas that was detected in Syrian victims' urines and bloods who were getting medical treatment in Hatay, Turkey.[140] On April 13, 2017, the British Prime Minister Theresa May also declared that British scientists, who had analyzed material from the place that was attacked, found sarin or sarin-like substance.[141] Theresa May also accused the Assad regime for the use of chemical weapons by saying, "Apart from anything else, we believe it's only the regime that has the capability to make such an attack."[142] She also added that the United Kingdom was willing to find a political solution for Syria with Russia, but that solution should be found without Assad.[143]

Turkey, in this conflict, sided with the West against the Assad regime and expected interventions from the West. The Turkish President Erdoğan supported Trump's decision for military action and declared that "Turkey is ready to do whatever necessary."[144] Turkey demanded a real action, a military intervention, not just a condemning speech from the West, particularly from the Trump administration.[145]

Despite harsh reactions from the Western world at the beginning of the chemical attack crisis and the American missile strikes on the Syrian military base in Shayrat, Homs on April 7, 2017, further actions against the Assad regime in Syria were not taken. Russia used her veto power in the United Nation Security Council to stop the resolution condemning the Assad regime for the use of chemical weapons which was drafted by the US, the UK and

140 Zehra Melek Cat, "Turkey says evidence of sarin gas in Syria attack found," *Anadolu Agency,* April 11, 2017, https://www.aa.com.tr/en/middle-east/turkey-says-evidence-of-sarin-gas-in-syria-attack-found/794620.

141 "Theresa May: Syria 'highly likely' behind attack," *BBC News*, April 13, 2017, https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-politics-39591476.

142 Ibid.

143 Ibid.

144 "Biz de Türkiye olarak, bize ne düşüyorsa yapmaya hazırız." "Erdoğan'dan Trump'a 'Suriye'ye müdahale' desteği: Lafta kalmasın," *BBC News Türkçe,* April 6, 2017, https://www.bbc.com/turkce/haberler-turkiye-39521704.

145 Ibid.

France.[146] On October 26, 2017, the United Nations Security Council released a report that found the Assad regime responsible for the chemical attack in Khan Shaykhun.[147] But the Syrian regime got away with the chemical attack as no new action was taken by any country or any kind of an international organization such as the UN. The only action taken was a press statement on April 4, 2018 from the US, for the first anniversary of the sarin attack in Khan Shaykhun, which only verbally condemned the Assad regime for using the chemical attack and the Russian government for protecting its ally Syria from every kind of an international action.[148]

§ 7.5 The Douma Chemical Attack and the Response of the United States

On April 7, 2018, a chemical attack was reported in the Syrian city of Douma, the last rebel-held Syrian town, and 70 people were killed.[149] Sarin gas dropped through barrel bombing was claimed to be used by the Syrian government.[150] It was the same chemical gas that was also reported and used twice before, in 2013 and 2017.[151] The Western world, member states of NATO as well as the European Union, accused the Syrian government for this vicious chemical attack. The Syrian government of Bashar Al Assad and the Russian government of Vladimir Putin denied the accusations and Igor Konashenkov, the Spokesman of the Russian Defense Ministry, claimed that

146 "Resolution condemning Syria chemical attack vetoed by Russia," *UN News,* April 12, 2017, https://news.un.org/en/audio/2017/04/626382.

147 "Seventh report of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons-United Nations Joint Investigative Mechanism," *United Nations Security Council.* October 26, 2017, Accessed December 25, 2018, http://undocs.org/S/2017/904.

148 "First Anniversary of the Sarin Attack in Khan Shaykhun, Syria," *U.S. Department of State*, April 4, 2018, Accessed December 25, 2018, https://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2018/04/280208.htm.

149 "Syria war: At least 70 killed in suspected chemical attack in Douma," *BBC News,* April 8, 2018, https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-43686157.

150 Ibid.

151 Ibid.

the chemical attack was staged by the government of the United Kingdom.[152] The Russian Defense Ministry claimed that it had evidence to prove this claim.[153] The Russian government also accused the White Helmets, a very famous volunteer organization in the rebel-controlled areas of Syria, for staging a fake chemical attack in Eastern Gouta.[154] Nevertheless, the Western powers dismissed these claims made by Russia and Syria once again.[155]

On April 14, the French President Emmanuel Macron made a statement about the chemical attack in Douma to condemn the Assad regime by saying "a red line has been crossed."[156] As a response to this chemical attack, airstrikes and ship strikes had been made by the United States, France and the United Kingdom on April 14, 2018, on three sites in Syria that were used for chemical weapons production; one was near Damascus and the other two were near Homs.[157] The government of Bashar Al-Assad condemned this military intervention as an illegal act of aggression.[158] Iran and Russia, the two major allies of the Assad regime in Syria, also denounced the strikes along with Iraq and China, while all of the Western powers as well as Israel

152 Kim Sengupta, "Russia accuses Britain of staging suspected Syria chemical weapons attack," *The Independent,* April 13, 2018, https://www.independent.co.uk/news/russia-syria-chemical-weapons-attack-douma-white-helmets-sergei-lavrov-a8303826.html.

153 Ibid.

154 Ibid.

155 "Syria / Chemical Attacks in Douma (7 April). Joint Statement by France and 16 other member countries of OPCW," *France Diplomatie.* April 28, 2018, Accessed December 25, 2018, https://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/en/country-files/syria/events/article/syria-chemical-attacks-in-douma-7-april-joint-statement-by-france-and-16-other.

156 "Syria air strikes: Emmanuel Macron says Bashar al-Assad crossed 'red line' with attack on citizens," *The Independent,* April 14, 2018, https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/syria-air-strikes-latest-emmanuel-macron-donald-trump-theresa-may-assad-douma-chemical-weapons-a8304371.html.

157 Helene Cooper, Thomas Gibbons-Neff and Ben Hubbard, "U.S., Britain and France Strike Syria Over Suspected Chemical Weapons Attack," *The New York Times*, April 13, 2018, https://www.nytimes.com/2018/04/13/world/middleeast/trump-strikes-syria-attack.html.

158 Phil Stewart and Tom Perry, "U.S. says air strikes cripple Syria chemical weapons program," *Reuters*, April 12, 2018, https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria/trump-says-ordered-precision-strikes-against-syria-chemical-weapons-capabilities-idUSKBN1HJ0ZS.

and Turkey praised them.[159] For the justification of the attack, the British Prime Minister Theresa May said:

> While this action is specifically about deterring the Syrian regime, it will also send a clear signal to anyone else who believes they can use chemical weapons with impunity… We would have preferred an alternative path, but on this occasion, there is none.[160]

Referring to the Russian chemical nerve agent attack to a former Russian spy and his daughter in Salisbury a month ago, which also created a huge diplomatic crisis between the Western world and Russia, May said, "We cannot allow the use of chemical weapons to become normalized either within Syria or on the streets of UK or elsewhere."[161] However, the opposition leader in the UK, Jeremy Corbyn, reacted to the Syrian policy of Theresa May by saying "More bombings, more killing, more war will not save life. It will just take more lives and spawn the war elsewhere" and he described the chemical attacks in Douma as disgraceful, illegal, immoral and wrong.[162] More radical reactions came from the French opposition leaders. The far-left politican Jean Luc Melenchon condemned the strikes and the leader of the centre-right Les Républicains, Laurent Waquiez, said that he did not believe in punitive strikes, while the leader of the pro-Russian far-right Front National, Marine Le Pen, accused Macron for not showing any evidence with regard to

159 Hannah Ellis-Peterson and Paul Beaumont, "World reacts to overnight strikes on Syria by US, UK and French forces," *The Guardian*, April 14, 2018, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/apr/14/airstrikes-syria-world-reacts-bombing-us-uk-french-forces.

160 "Syria air strikes: UK confident strikes were successful, says PM," *BBC News,* April 14, 2018, https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-43763605.

161 Ibid.

162 Joe Watts, "'More war will not save life': Jeremy Corbyn urges May and Trump to stand down over Syria," *The Independent,* April 12, 2018, https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/jeremy-corbyn-syria-uk-military-action-trump-theresa-may-war-russia-a8301256.html.

the use of chemical weapons by the Assad regime.[163] The opposition of the United States, prominent Democratic senators such as Chuck Schumer, Elizabeth Warren and Cory Booker, criticized the lack of congressional approval for the authorization of the airstrikes and demanded a comprehensive strategy and a multilateral approach instead of getting too much involved in the Syrian Civil War.[164]

The Douma Chemical Attack was another crime committed by the Assad regime of Syria. Nevertheless, neither Syria, nor Russia or Iran accepted the responsibility of the Assad regime in this act that violated international law. Once again, Russia, as a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council that has a right to veto, protected Syria from any kind of punishment in the United Nations. And the response of the international community to the Douma Chemical Attack was just some missile strikes as a warning to the Assad regime, as it was in the case with the Khan-Shaykhun Chemical Attack.

§ 7.6 Operation Olive Branch

Operation Olive Branch was the second cross-border military offensive of Turkey into Syria. It was started on January 20, 2018, against the YPG in the city of Afrin.[165] This operation was a kind of a continuation of Operation Euphrates Shield. The Turkish government continued to push against the Kurdish advance in Syria and started a war against the YPG. As it was already mentioned, unlike the Western world, Turkey perceives the YPG as a terrorist organization that has links with the PKK and sees it as a threat to

163 Angelique Chrisafis and Jon Henley, "Macron: I never said US and France would stay in Syria for long term," *The Guardian,* April 16, 2018, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/apr/16/macron-trump-syria-strikes-troops.

164 Ben Jacobs, "Syria strikes: Democrats demand congressional approval for further military action," *The Guardian,* April 14, 2018, https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2018/apr/14/syria-strikes-democrats-demand-congress-approval-for-further-military-action.

165 Ece Goksedef, "The strategy behind Operation Olive Branch," *TRT World,* January 25, 2018, https://www.trtworld.com/turkey/the-strategy-behind-operation-olive-branch-14592.

her national security. Operation Olive Branch lasted about two months, which was relatively shorter than Operation Euphrates Shield. Due to conflicts with the United States, Turkey could not push the Kurdish militias of the YPG as it much as it wanted during Operation Euphrates Shield, but this time, with the consents of both of Russia and the United States, Turkey would clear the border from the YPG. The consent of Russia, made everything easier for Turkey.[166] The Syrian government once more condemned this cross-border operation of Turkey by assuming it as an attack on the Syrian sovereignty, but the Turkish government claimed that it was an act of self-defense that does not violate international law.[167] Nevertheless, Russia kept the operation safe for Turkey while putting emphasis on the protection of the territorial integrity of Syria.[168] This was the red line that Russia put forward as an ally of Syria. Turkey often made clear that she would respect this red line, although there was a clash of interests during the Battle of Afrin with Syria which created tension between the two countries. It can be said the main goal of Operation Olive Branch, which was de-territorializing the PKK's influence from the Northern Syria as an act of self-defense, is in accordance with the UNSC's Article 51.[169] Russia's red line was respected; the operation's aim was solely focused on securing the Turkish borders by removing the YPG and PKK from the region, while respecting the territorial integrity of Syria.[170]

166 "Turkey, Russia Have No Disagreements Over Ankara's Afrin Operation – Erdogan," *Sputnik,* March 4, 2018, https://sputniknews.com/world/201803041062207229-russia-turkey-afrin-operation/.

167 "Erdogan: Turkey to Quickly Conclude Op in Syria as Terrorists Already Fleeing," *Sputnik*, January 21, 2018, https://sputniknews.com/middleeast/201801211060936997-turkey-afrin-syria-terrorists-operation-olive-branch/.

168 "Turkey, Russia Have No Disagreements Over Ankara's Afrin Operation – Erdogan," *Sputnik*.

169 Murat Yeşiltaş, "Turkey's Strategic Reasoning behind Operation Olive Branch," *SETA Perspective,* no. 34 (January, 2018): 1, https://setav.org/en/assets/uploads/2018/01/34_Perspective.pdf.

170 Murat Yeşiltaş, "Turkey's Strategic Reasoning behind Operation Olive Branch," 3.

When Operation Olive Branch was started, the Turkish President Erdoğan declared that it would be ended very quickly.[171] A battle between the YPG and Turkey and the Turkish-backed Syrian rebels, the Free Syrian Army, took place in the city of Afrin. By February, new concerns started to arise. On February 15, 2018, the tone of the Turkish officials got harsher against US officials when the Turkish Defense Minister, Nurettin Canikli said, "We demanded this relationship to be ended, I mean we want them to end all the support given to the Syrian arm of the PKK, the YPG" while demanding the removal of the YPG from the structure of the SDF, US-led anti-ISIS coalition.[172] A much harsher rhetoric came from the Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan in which he said that the Turkish Armed Forces could enter Manbij where the US soldiers were stationed and those US soldiers would receive an "Ottoman Slap" from the Turkish Armed Forces if they stood in Turkey's way.[173] A few days after these rhetorical attacks by the Turkish government to the United States, tension rose again when *SANA*, the Syrian state media, reported that pro-Syrian government militia might enter Afrin within hours.[174] The Turkish Foreign Minister, Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu did not take a step back and said, "If (the Syrian army) comes in to defend the YPG, then nothing and nobody can stop Turkish soldiers" and threatened Syria by saying that the Syrian army would be cleansed just like the YPG.[175] On February 20, 2016, Iranian-backed Shia pro-Assad group, Popular Mobi-

171 "Erdogan: Turkey to Quickly Conclude Op in Syria as Terrorists Already Fleeing," *Sputnik*, January 21, 2018, https://sputniknews.com/middleeast/201801211060936997-turkey-afrin-syria-terrorists-operation-olive-branch/.

172 Bethan McKernan, "Turkish President Erdogan offers US 'Ottoman slap' ahead of Rex Tillerson's visit to Turkey," *The Independent*, February 15, 2018, https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/middle-east/turkey-us-president-erdogan-rex-tillerson-ottoman-slap-visit-secretary-state-a8212731.html.

173 Ibid.

174 Angus McDowall and Tuvan Gumrukcu, "Turkey warns Syrian army against helping Kurdish YPG in Afrin," *Reuters,* February 19, 2018, https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-afrin/syrian-tv-pro-syrian-government-forces-to-enter-syrias-afrin-within-hours-idUSKCN1G30SB.

175 Ibid.

lization Units, entered Afrin and increased the tension of the crisis between Syria and Turkey.[176] Nonetheless, by March 18, 2018, the Turkish Armed Forces captured the city of Afrin with the Free Syrian Army and reached its goal by removing the YPG from there.[177] Until March 18th, 2018, 3,603 terrorists had been killed in which 46 Turkish soldiers lost their lives and 255 Turkish soldiers got injured, according to the Turkish Armed Forces.[178]

§ 7.7 The Fall of Daraa and the Victory of Bashar Al-Assad

By late 2018, the Syrian President Bashar Al-Assad fastened operations against rebels to deal the final blow. There were still two major rebel-controlled parts in Syria that the Assad regime wanted to recapture. One of them was Idlib, in the North Western part of Syria near to Aleppo and Turkish-Syrian borders. The other one was Daraa in Southern Syria that borders with Jordan and the Golan Heights. Reclaiming the city of Daraa had a strategic importance, because it was the city where the first rebellion against the Assad regime started. Therefore, the first target that the Syrian government focused on reconquering was especially the city of Daraa in Southern Syria. Daraa's recapture by the Assad regime would symbolize the end of the revolution in Syria.

The first operation wave by the Syrian government to Southern Syria started in the summer of 2018, which gave Assad a glorious victory. The United States under the presidency of Donald Trump left the rebels in the

176 Bethan McKernan, "Syrian civil war: Regime forces come to Kurds' aid against Turkey in Afrin," *The Independent,* February 20, 2018, https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/middle-east/syria-civil-war-assad-regime-afrin-kurdish-kurds-turkey-ypg-militia-a8219651.html.

177 Samuel Osbourne, "Turkish forces seize control of Syrian town of Afrin and celebrate by tearing down statue of Kurdish hero," *The Independent,* March 18, 2018, https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/middle-east/afrin-turkey-syria-forces-seize-control-tear-down-statue-kawa-a8262111.html.

178 "TSK, Zeytin Dalı Harekatı'nın bilançosunu açıkladı," *TRT Haber*, March 18, 2018, https://www.trthaber.com/haber/gundem/tsk-zeytin-dali-harekatinin-bilancosunu-acikladi-355859.html.

cities of Daraa and As-Suwaida to their fate, while the other great power, Russia was aiding the Syrian army through airstrikes in this offensive.[179][180] Due to unbalanced powers in the conflicts, the rebel groups were easily defeated by the Syrian forces with the help of Russia and Iran.[181] The offensive of the Syrian government into Daraa scared the international community and the United Nations warned the world by stating that the Syrian forces could create a situation of a huge humanitarian crisis, that could be much bigger than the siege of Aleppo and the Eastern Gouta combined.[182] Nonetheless, the siege was ended quickly within a month. On July 12, 2018, the Syrian forces with the Russian military police entered the city of Daraa and raised the Syrian flag in the city that was once the cradle of the revolution.[183] The revolution was ended where it was started. The rebel groups in Daraa were repressed by the brute force of the Assad regime and its two major allies, Russia and Iran. When the month of July ended, the Syrian government declared its victory over the Free Syrian Army in Daraa.[184] After the victory of the government against the rebels in the south, now the Syrian forces were

179 "US tells Syria rebels 'not to expect help against expected army assault' on provinces of Daraa and Sweida," *The Telegraph,* June 24, 2018, https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2018/06/24/us-tells-syria-rebels-not-expect-help-against-expected-army/.

180 "You're on your own, US tells Syrian rebels, as Assad goes on offensive," *The Guardian,* June 24, 2018, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/jun/24/youre-on-your-own-us-tells-syrian-rebels-as-assad-goes-on-offensive.

181 Patrick Wintour, "Syrian forces' push into east Daraa 'could spark humanitarian crisis'," *The Guardian,* June 27, 2018, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/jun/27/syria-assad-forces-eastern-daraa-humanitarian-crisis-un.

182 Ibid.

183 "Assad Raises Syrian Flag Over Daraa, the Birthplace of the Uprising Against Him," *Haaretz,* July 12, 2018, https://www.haaretz.com/middle-east-news/syria/syrian-state-flag-to-be-raised-in-birthplace-of-2011-uprising-1.6269021.

184 Kareem Shaheen, "Syrian government forces seal victory in southern territories." *The Guardian,* July 31, 2018, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/jul/31/syrian-government-forces-seal-victory-in-southern-territories.

heading towards the last rebel-held town in North-Western Syria, Idlib, to ensure the Syrian Civil War was over.[185]

At the end of August, Russia and Syria declared their final decision on Idlib. At a press conference on August 29, 2018, the Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov called members of the Syrian opposition in Idlib as "terrorists" and accused them for using civilians as human shields.[186] In the same conference, he also declared that there was a political understanding among Turkey and Russia to distinguish the terrorists from civilians.[187] Lavrov also warned the West not to interfere with a very harsh rhetoric by saying "I hope our Western partners will not give in to provocations and will not obstruct an anti-terror operation."[188] The United Nations warned on August 30, 2018, by stating that a new offensive in Idlib could cause a new humanitarian crisis, while Steffan de Mistura, the United Nations' Special Envoy to Syria, demanded to establish humanitarian corridors to evacuate the civilians of Idlib.[189] However, neither Russia, nor Syria paid attention to the concerns of the United Nations. On August 30, 2018, the Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said, "What we need to do now is to wipe out those terrorist groups which persist, particularly within the de-escalation area of Idlib", and the Syrian Foreign Minister Walid al-Muallem supported Lavrov's stance by declaring that Syria would "go all the way", but underlined the Syrian army

185 Martin Chulov, "Civilians in Syria's last rebel stronghold brace for final battle," *The Guardian,* September 1, 2018, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/sep/01/civilians-in-syrias-last-rebel-stronghold-brace-for-final-battle.

186 "Russia says militants in Syria's Idlib province need liquidating," *Reuters,* August 29, 2018, https://www.reuters.com/article/us-russia-saudi-lavrov-jubeir-syria/russia-says-militants-in-syrias-idlib-province-need-liquidating-idUSKCN1LE1IG.

187 Ibid.

188 "Lavrov Warns West Not To Interfere In Syria's Idlib," *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty,* August 29, 2018, https://www.rferl.org/a/lavrov-warns-west-not-to-interfere-in-antiterror-actions-in-syria-s-idlib/29460218.html.

189 "Syria Idlib: UN warns of threat to civilians if new offensive begins," *BBC News,* August 30, 2018, https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-45360053.

would try everything to prevent civilian casualties.[190] Al-Muallem also accused the Western powers for preparing "another aggression to save Al-Nusra Front", and Lavrov sent another warning to the Western countries not to intervene once more, but also called the international community to join the reconstruction process of Syria.[191] In his tweet, the US President Trump warned Syria and her allies, Russia and Iran, not to recklessly attack Idlib, which could create a humanitarian crisis.[192] The US Secretary of State, Mike Pompeo also warned that the United States could intervene in Damascus if any chemical weapon was to be used again.[193]

The offensive against Idlib was started and the Syrian and Russian airstrikes hit the city on September 4, 2018.[194] The United States or any other Western country did not make any intervention to the Syrian and Russian attacks, although there were ongoing concerns about the possibility of the use of chemical weapons by the Syrian regime. However, just like in the case of Daraa, Idlib was also left to its fate, which would be decided by Syria, Russia and Iran.

The Turkish government also did not react against the Assad regime either, like the other Western countries. As the Assad regime became the victorious side in the Syrian Civil War and when the Turkish government understood that his regime would survive, Turkey softened her tone about the regime change. Hence, it was pointless for Turkey to support the rebel groups that would ultimately lose against Syria. Also, making a move against the new ally, Russia, would be a mistake in this atmosphere. Turkey played a crucial role in the peace talks for Idlib as a mediator between rebel groups

190 "Russia and Syria vow to 'wipe out terrorists' in Idlib," *Al-Jazeera,* August 30, 2018, https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2018/08/russia-syria-vow-wipe-terrorists-idlib-180830153015385.html.

191 Ibid.

192 David Shepardson, "Trump warns Syria not to 'recklessly attack' Idlib province," *Reuters,* September 4, 2018, https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-trump/trump-warns-syria-not-to-recklessly-attack-idlib-province-idUSKCN1LJ252.

193 Ibid.

194 "Syria war: 'Russian' planes bomb targets in Idlib province," *BBC News,* September 4, 2018, https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-45407401.

and Syria, Iran and Russia. The Teheran Summit was held on April 7, 2018, in Iran where Turkey, Iran and Russia tried to find a trilateral solution to end the battle of Idlib as well as the Syrian Civil War.[195] Turkey, in this summit, played a peaceful mediator role for the rebel groups and called for a ceasefire in Idlib, but the demand of Turkey was rejected by both Iran and Russia.[196] The Teheran Summit ended with a statement that declared support for the sovereignty of Syria, but it was a failure which could not find a middle ground for a ceasefire.[197]

When Turkey's attempt for reconciliation failed in the Teheran Summit, Russian and Syrian forces continued to attack Idlib on September 9, 2018.[198] A new summit was held in Sochi to talk about the future of Syria. Both the Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and the Iranian President Hassan Rouhani, as well as the Syrian President Bashar Al-Assad, were invited to this summit held on September 17, 2018. Unlike the previous failed summits that could not solve the Syrian Civil War, the Sochi Summit ended with the decision of a ceasefire. The Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan reached an agreement with the Russian President Vladimir Putin, and the Turkish government promised to provide a de-militarized zone from which the rebels would be withdrawn by October.[199] The agreement was praised by both Syria and Iran because it stopped a new Syrian offensive into Idlib that could create a new humanitarian crisis.[200] On October 10, 2018, the Turkish Minis-

195 "Tehran summit statement declares support for Syria sovereignty," *Islamic Republic News Agency,* September 7, 2018, http://www.irna.ir/en/News/83025706.

196 "Idlib: Turkey's ceasefire call rejected by Russia, Iran," *Al-Jazeera,* September 7, 2018, https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2018/09/erdogan-calls-idlib-ceasefire-tehran-summit-180907122805420.html.

197 "Tehran summit statement declares support for Syria sovereignty," *Islamic Republic News Agency*.

198 "Syria and Russia resume Idlib air strikes: Residents, rescuers," *Reuters*, September 9, 2018, https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-idlib/syria-and-russia-resume-idlib-air-strikes-residents-rescuers-idUSKCN1LP0AZ.

199 Maria Tsvetkova, "Russia and Turkey agree to create buffer zone in Syria's Idlib," *Reuters,* September 17, 2018, https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-putin-erdogan-hope/russia-and-turkey-agree-to-create-buffer-zone-in-syrias-idlib-idUSKCN1LX1BU.

200 Ibid.

try of Defense declared that the de-militarized zone in Idlib was created by Turkey.[201] After the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding on Stabilization in Idlib's De-escalation Zone between the Russian Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu and the Turkish National Defense Minister Hulusi Akar, a joint press statement was made in Sochi by the Russian President Vladimir Putin and the Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan.[202] In this press statement, the Russian President Putin talked about how Russian-Turkish bilateral cooperation was doing well, from energy to trade and tourism, which was a sign of the normalization process between Turkey and Russia.[203] President Putin also talked about the plan to create a de-militarized area in Idlib of about 15-20 kilometers that would keep the armed oppositional groups away from the Syrian troops.[204] According to the deal, the radical terrorist groups would be removed from this area until October 15th.[205] The Russian President Vladimir Putin also added that the Turkish President Erdoğan himself proposed to withdraw the armed opposition groups with all of their heavy military equipment, tanks, mortars, cannons and rocket launches.[206] President Putin also said that this common approach of Russia and Turkey was also approved by the Syrian government of Bashar Al-Assad.[207]

The US support for the YPG was always a problem for Turkey in her relations with the US. However, the failed coup d'état attempt on July 15, 2016,

201 "Demilitarized zone around Syria's Idlib set up, Turkey says," *Reuters,* October 10, 2018, https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-turkey/demilitarized-zone-around-syrias-idlib-set-up-turkey-says-idUSKCN1MK1UP.

202 "Press statement following Russian-Turkish Talks," *President of Russia*, September 17, 2018, Accessed December 25, 2018, http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/58574.

203 Ibid.

204 Ibid.

205 Enes Deşilmek and Talha İsmail Duman, "Türkiye'nin Suriye ve Lübnan Politikası 2018," in *Türk Dış Politikası Yıllığı 2018,* eds. Burhanettin Duran, Kemal İnat and Mustafa Caner (İstanbul, SETA Yayınları, 2019), 91.

206 "Press statement following Russian-Turkish Talks," *President of Russia,* September 17, 2018, Accessed December 25, 2018, http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/58574.

207 Ibid.

was the turning point in the relations between the two countries. Turkey approached Russia further to create a balance of power against the United States. At the beginning of 2017, Turkey was expecting a Western intervention into Syria, but that intervention never came from the United States. By late 2017, the fate of the Syrian Civil War was clear and by the summer of 2018, Assad literally declared his decisive victory. At the end of September 2018, the Syrian Foreign Minister made a speech in the United Nations, in which he said that Syria was ready for the return of the Syrian refugees.[208] In October of the same year, President Assad declared that his Syrian government would provide amnesty for the military dodgers and deserters, including the ones who joined to the Syrian rebel groups, in order to attract refugees to return.[209] In the fall of 2018, it was clear that Assad was not going anywhere, hence Turkey stopped pushing for a regime change in Syria.

§ 7.8 The Withdrawal Decision of the Trump Administration from Syria

In the case of the support for the YPG in Syria, the Trump administration was no different than the Obama administration. The Trump administration kept arming the YPG against ISIS in Syria, although the Turkish government harshly condemned it.[210] However, on December 19, 2018, President Donald Trump took another sudden decision by declaring on Twitter that the United

208 "Syria 'ready' for refugees to return, says Foreign Minister," *Euronews,* September 30, 2018, https://www.euronews.com/2018/09/29/syria-ready-for-refugees-to-return.

209 Josie Ensor and Joseph Haboush, "Syria's Assad offers amnesty to military deserters and dodgers to encourage refugee returns," *The Telegraph,* October 9, 2018, https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2018/10/09/syrias-assad-offers-amnesty-military-defectors-dodgers-encourage/.

210 Michael R. Gordon and Eric Schmitt, "Trump to Arm Syrian Kurds, Even as Turkey Strongly Objects," *The New York Times*, May 9, 2017, https://www.nytimes.com/2017/05/09/us/politics/trump-kurds-syria-army.html.

States troops would be removed from Syria.[211] The reason for this decision was the defeat of ISIS, which he described as the only reason to stay in Syria during the Trump Presidency.[212] This unexpected quick decision of the Trump administration was praised cautiously by the Russian President Vladimir Putin and condemned by the US-backed Kurdish militia groups the SDF and the YPG, which described this decision of the US as "blatant betrayal".[213] The Kurdish rebel groups in Syria claimed that the fight against ISIS was not over yet, hence the US forces should not be withdrawn.[214] Furthermore, US officials also told that the Trump administration was planning to end the airstrikes in Syria against ISIS as well.[215] Turkey welcomed this decision and declared that the Turkish government would delay its operation plan, although Turkish troops were deployed on the Turkish-Syrian border.[216][217] Thus, *Le Monde* described the US withdrawal from Syria as "a diplomatic victory for Turkish President Erdoğan."[218]

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211 Julian Borger and Martin Chulov, "Trump shocks allies and advisers with plan to pull US troops out of Syria," *The Guardian,* December 20, 2018, https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2018/dec/19/us-troops-syria-withdrawal-trump.

212 Ibid.

213 Martin Chulov, Julian Borger and Andrew Roth, "US Syria pullout draws Kurdish condemnation and Putin's praise," *The Guardian,* December 20, 2018, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/dec/20/syria-kurds-trump-troop-withdrawal-isis-turkey.

214 Ibid.

215 Phil Stewart and Idrees Ali, "US also seen ending air war against Islamic State in Syria: Officials," *Reuters,* December 20, 2018, https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-air/u-s-to-also-end-air-war-against-islamic-state-in-syria-officials-idUSKCN1OJ1TG.

216 "Erdogan delays Syria operation, welcomes US troop withdrawal," *Al-Jazeera,* December 21, 2018, https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2018/12/erdogan-delays-syria-operation-welcomes-troop-withdrawal-181221141412573.html.

217 "Turkey masses troops near Kurdish-held town in northern Syria," *The Guardian*, December 23, 2018, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/dec/23/turkey-masses-troops-near-kurdish-held-town-in-northern-syria.

218 Marie Jégo, "Le retrait américain de Syrie, une victoire diplomatique pour Erdogan," *Le Monde,* December 20, 2018, https://www.lemonde.fr/international/article/2018/12/20/le-retrait-americain-de-syrie-une-victoire-diplomatique-pour-erdogan_5400333_3210.html.

Trump's withdrawal decision from Syria, also created a crackdown in his cabinet as his Secretary of Defense, James Mattis resigned from office on December 20, 2018, by citing that he was not sharing the same views with President Donald Trump.[219] In his resignation letter, James Mattis said:

> China and Russia, for example, want to shape a world consistent with their authoritarian model – gaining veto authority over other nations' economic, diplomatic, and security decisions – to promote their own interests at the expanse of their neighbors', America and our allies.[220]

After the resignation of the Trump's Secretary of Defense, another resignation came from the Special Presidential Envoy for the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS, Brett McGurk on December 22, 2018.[221] It was no surprise to see the resignation of McGurk after the withdrawal decision of President Donald Trump. Just 11 days ago, on December 11, 2018, Brett McGurk made a speech to express his personal disagreement with President Trump at a State Department Briefing, by underlining ISIS was not defeated.[222] Later, on February 5, 2019, the top military commander of President Trump in the Middle East, General Joseph Votel, also complained that President Trump did not consult him.[223]

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219 Julian Borger, "Defense secretary James Mattis resigns and points to differences with Trump," *The Guardian,* December 21, 2018, https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2018/dec/20/jim-mattis-defense-secretary-retires-trump.

220 "READ: James Mattis' resignation letter," *CNN,* December 21, 2018, https://edition.cnn.com/2018/12/20/politics/james-mattis-resignation-letter-doc/index.html.

221 "US Envoy to Anti-IS Coalition Quits Over Trump's Syria Move," *Voice of America*, December 22, 2018, https://www.voanews.com/a/us-state-department-says-special-envoy-mcgurk-resigns/4712187.html.

222 "Department Press Briefing – December 11, 2018," *U.S. Department of State*, December 11, 2018, Accessed December 25, 2018, https://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/dpb/2018/12/288024.htm.

223 Renae Reints, "Trump Did Not Consult His Top Military General Before Announcing Withdrawal From Syria," *Fortune,* February 5, 2019, http://fortune.com/2019/02/05/trump-votel-syria-withdrawal/.

The US Congress did not have a consensus on this withdrawal decision of the Trump administration, either. Four Republican Senators, Lindsey Graham, Joni Ernst, Tom Cotton and Marco Rubio, and Democratic Senator Jeanne Shaheen and Independent Senator Angus King, sent a letter to the US President Donald Trump to reconsider his decision of withdrawal on December 19, 2018.[224] The letter of these six senators was underlying the possibility of ISIS resurgence in Syria, and they were warning about the possibility of empowering the Syrian dictator Bashar Al-Assad with this decision.[225] They also warned that the decision would be a betrayal to Kurdish allies who were fighting against ISIS, and the US withdrawal from Syria would only increase the influence of Iran and Russia in the region.[226] A day later, Republican Senator from South Carolina Lindsey Graham, a formal rival of Donald Trump who turned into one of his closest allies, described this decision as "disastrous to our own national security" and said, "We have been dishonorable. This is a stain on the honor of the United States".[227] Senator Graham called Trump's decision "Obama-like mistake", and many other major Republican politicians also denounced the decision.[228] Nonetheless, more radical Republican senator, Rand Paul, who was supporting an isolationist foreign policy, showed his support for the withdrawal decision.[229] Also, Trump's staunch critic from the Democratic Party, Senator Elizabeth Warren, sup-

224 "Graham, Shaheen, Ernst, King, Cotton, Rubio Urge Trump Administration to Reconsider Withdrawing U.S. Forces From Syria," *U.S. Senator for South Carolina Lindsey Graham*, December 19, 2018, Accessed April 26, 2019, https://www.lgraham.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/2018/12/graham-shaheen-ernst-king-cotton-rubio-urge-trump-administration-to-reconsider-withdrawing-u-s-forces-from-syria.

225 Ibid.

226 Ibid.

227 Kate Sullivan, "Graham: Trump's Syria withdrawal a 'stain on the honor of the United States," *CNN,* December 20, 2018, https://edition.cnn.com/2018/12/19/politics/lindsey-graham-trump-syria-withdrawal-stain-honor/index.html.

228 Jonathan Allen, "'Obama-like mistake': Republicans slam Trump over plan to withdraw troops from Syria," *NBC News,* December 19, 2018, https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/politics-news/obama-mistake-republicans-slam-trump-over-plan-withdraw-troops-syria-n949916.

229 Ibid.

ported the withdrawal decision on MSNBC by saying "It is right to get our troops out of Syria".[230]

By December 28, 2018, the Kurdish militia, the YPG, had declared that they were withdrawing from Manbij and leaving the city to the Syrian government.[231] As the Trump administration decided to leave Syria, the YPG should have seen that Manbij could not be defended against a possible Turkish Armed Forces' offensive, hence the YPG made the choice to leave it to the Syrian government without any resistance. The situation of having no choice was very clear in the statement of the YPG: "We invite the Syrian government forces … to assert control over the areas our forces have withdrawn from, in particularly Manbij, and to protect these areas against a Turkish invasion".[232] The Russian government also praised this move of the YPG, which actually strengthened Russia's major ally in the Middle East, the Assad regime of Syria.[233]

By the end of December 2018, the Trump administration decided to delay the withdrawal from Syria after meeting with Senator from South Carolina, Lindsey Graham.[234] In a tweet, Senator Graham explained that President Trump would withdraw only when ISIS was completely defeated, the security of "Kurdish allies" was ensured and only if Iran was not in a position to fill the vacuum.[235]

At the beginning of the year 2019, concerns of the Trump administration about the upcoming military operation of Turkey were raised. In the first week of 2019, the Advisor of the National Security of the Trump administra-

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230 Kate Sullivan, "Elizabeth Warren: 'It is right to get our troops out of Syria," *CNN,* January 3, 2019, https://edition.cnn.com/2019/01/02/politics/elizabeth-warren-troops-syria/index.html.

231 Bethan McKernan, "Syrian troops mass at edge of Kurdish town threatened by Turkey," *The Guardian,* December 28, 2018, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/dec/28/syrian-kurdish-militia-manbij-turkey.

232 Ibid.

233 "Rusya'dan Münbiç açıklaması," *Cumhuriyet,* December 28, 2018, http://www.cumhuriyet.com.tr/haber/dunya/1184287/Rusya_dan_Munbic_aciklamasi.html.

234 "Syria conflict: Trump 'slowing troop withdrawal' says Lindsey Graham," *BBC News,* December 31, 2018, https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-46718397.

235 Ibid.

tion, John Bolton declared that the United States would withdraw from Syria only when the defeat of ISIS was ensured and Kurds were safe.[236] Bolton also discussed the US administration's distrust towards to the Turkish government by saying, "We don't think the Turks ought to undertake military action that's not fully coordinated with and agreed to by the United States at a minimum so they don't endanger our troops".[237] The Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan quickly denounced the comments of John Bolton as "a very grave mistake", and justified the upcoming Turkish operation by making a distinction between Kurds and the YPG/PYD/PKK, which were described as a terrorist group by President Erdoğan.[238] President Erdoğan also underlined that "Turkey is the only country that has truly fought against terrorist organizations in Syria" by referring to ISIS and YPG, and described the claim that Turkey was targeting Kurds in Syria as "the ugliest kind of slander".[239] In the same speech, Erdoğan also said:

> The PKK/PYD's so called fight against DAESH (ISIS) is nothing but an out-and-out lie. The fight between two groups is just a conflict of interests, not a conflict of principle… Turkey targets both of these organizations at the same time not because of ethnic or religious animosity, but because of its anti-terror policies.[240]

On January 10, 2019, the Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu said that Turkey can launch the military operation immediately if the United States delays the withdrawal from Syria with the excuse of possi-

236 "John Bolton: US to leave Syria once ISIL beaten, Kurds safe," *Al-Jazeera,* January 6, 2019, https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2019/01/john-bolton-israel-turkey-discuss-syria-pullout-190106060645545.html.

237 Ibid.

238 ""The PKK/PYD's so called fight against DAESH is nothing but an out-and-out lie,"" *The Presidency of the Republic of Turkey,* January 8, 2019, Accessed January 16, 2019, https://www.tccb.gov.tr/en/news/542/100469/-the-pkk-pyd-s-so-called-fight-against-daesh-is-nothing-but-an-out-and-out-lie-.

239 Ibid

240 Ibid.

ble Turkish attacks against Kurds.[241] This harsh ultimatum of the Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs was responded harshly by a tweet from the President of the United States himself. President Donald Trump threatened Turkey explicitly with this tweet saying that the US administration "will devastate the Turkish economy if they hit Kurds."[242] After this ultimatum of President Trump, the Turkish government did not go any further in its rhetoric due to the economic dependence of Turkey on the United States, which was already proven by the awful experience of the Pastor Crisis in the summer of 2018. Instead of risking the Turkish economy by starting a quick invasion, Turkey softened her rhetoric and tried to settle the issue through diplomacy, rather than pushing the issue to an extreme point. On January 21, 2019, the Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu made a phone call to the US Secretary of State, Mike Pompeo to discuss the fate of the withdrawal of the US troops from Syria and the Turkish offensive.[243] Turkish President Erdoğan called the US President Donald Trump on the same day to talk about the operation to take over the control of Manbij in Syria.[244] The Russian consent for the Turkish military operation came in the last week of January.[245] Now, Turkey is just waiting for the right time to start the military offensive into Syria against the YPG and the last remnants of ISIS**,** but it is not clear whether this operation can be conducted or not.

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241 "Turkey says it will launch Syria offensive if US delays pullout," *The Guardian,* January 10, 2019, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/jan/10/turkey-says-it-will-launch-syria-offensive-if-us-delays-pullout.

242 Tom Barnes, "Trumps threatens to 'devastate' Turkish economy if it attacks Kurdish militants in Syria," *The Independent,* January 14, 2019, https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/middle-east/trump-turkey-economy-kurdish-militant-syria-erdogan-devastate-threat-twitter-ypg-sanctions-tariffs-a8726506.html.

243 "Secretary Pompeo's call with Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu," *U.S. Department of State,* January 21, 2019, Accessed January 29, 2019, https://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2019/01/288511.htm.

244 "Turkey ready to take over Syria's Manbij, Erdogan tells Trump," *Al-Jazeera,* January 21, 2019, https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2019/01/turkey-ready-syria-manbij-erdogan-tells-trump-190121011835123.html.

245 "Russia sees prospects for Turkey, Syria to agree on operation near border," *TASS Russian News Agency,* January 28, 2019, http://tass.com/politics/1042101.

On February 22, 2019, the United States declared that President Trump's plan for full withdrawal was changed.[246] According to this statement from the White House, a few US troops, about 200, would stay in Syria for a period of time.[247] After this change of plans from the United States, both Russia and Syria called on the United States to remove the US troops immediately.[248] In March 2019, the Trump administration decided to decrease the number of troops in Syria to around 1,000 soldiers, rather than 200.[249] However, this proposal says that the United States will keep supporting the Kurdish forces in Syria.[250] In April 2019, two senators, Republican Rand Paul and Democrat Ro Khanna, with the support of ten lawmakers from both parties, sent a letter that approved the decision of the US withdrawal from Syria and tried to push the Trump administration to complete the full withdrawal.[251] Nevertheless, it does not seem that the Trump administration aims to leave Syria soon.

246 Betsy Klein and Ryan Browne, "About 200 US troops to stay in Syria following Trump's order for 'full' removal," *CNN,* February 22, 2019, https://edition.cnn.com/2019/02/21/politics/200-troops-syria/index.html.

247 Ibid.

248 "Russia, Syria urge US to withdraw its troops," *Al-Jazeera,* February 27, 2019, https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2019/02/russia-syria-forces-leave-syria-190227085626217.html.

249 Dion Nissenbaum and Nancy A. Youssef, "U.S. Military Now Preparing to Leave as Many as 1,000 Troops in Syria," *The Wall Street Journal,* March 17, 2019, https://www.wsj.com/articles/u-s-military-now-preparing-to-leave-as-many-as-1-000-troops-in-syria-11552853378.

250 Ibid.

251 "Bipartisan, Bicameral Letter on Syria," *U.S. Senator for Kentucky Rand Paul*, April 3, 2019, Accessed April 26, 2019, https://www.paul.senate.gov/bipartisan-bicameral-letter-syria.

8

Conclusion

Since the establishment of the Turkish Republic, Turkish governments often pursued their foreign policy interests by benefiting from the balance of power among the existing great powers of the time. Most of the Turkish governments were quite successful in preserving the status quo when Turkey was in danger or minimizing the level of the threats when the risk is unavoidable. To do this, most of the Turkish governments tried to act rationally. Hence, the Turkish governments did not hesitate to improve their relations with a rival great power when the other great power(s) was posing a threat to Turkish interests or national security.

During the War of Independence of Turkey, which is also known as "the National Struggle", Moscow and Ankara were strange bedfellows as two completely opposite revolutionary groups that were allies, but holding exactly contradictive ideological views. Nevertheless, they were on the same side against the common enemy, a great power such as Great Britain. During the National Struggle of Turkey, the Soviet Union armed and financially aided the Turkish nationalist rebels. When the Republic of Turkey was established, Soviet Russia was under the threat of British imperialism. The newly established Turkey, on the other hand, had a conflict of interest with Great Britain on issues such as the Turkish Strait Question and the Mosul Question. In both cases, Soviet Russia supported Turkish interests; nevertheless, some Soviet demands on the Turkish Straits were still scaring the Turkish govern-

ments. Thus, Turkey placed herself in between Soviet Russia and the Western powers. When the League of Nations acted against Turkey on the Mosul Question, Turkey quickly improved her relations with Soviet Russia by signing the Treaty of Non-Aggression and Neutrality in 1925, which made the Eastern and Northern borders of Turkey secured and created a balance of power against the Western powers, particularly Great Britain. When the Western powers accepted to find a middle way in the Mosul Question, Turkey accepted to enter the League of Nations in order not to lose the Western world's support against a possible Soviet aggression from the East. Especially, when it was obvious that a great war was on the way, Turkey wanted to increase the number of her friends.

During the Second World War, Turkey was still struggling with economic problems and war exhaustion. After the death of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, İsmet İnönü came to power, and just like Atatürk, he was in favor of following a cautious foreign policy. The Turkish government under the leadership of İsmet İnönü stayed out of war, but was not neutral at all. Turkey, in the Second World War, kept in contact with other powers to establish a counter-Axis alliance, but the first priority of the country was staying out of war. The Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany were following irredentist foreign policies known as Mare Nostra and Lebensraum and just like most of the countries in the region, Turkey felt threatened by these aggressive behaviors of the Axis countries. Thrace, the Western part of Turkey, was quite defenseless according to the report of the Turkish Minister of Defense, Fevzi Çakmak, thus the worst scenario for Turkey was to be invaded by Italy and/or Nazi Germany from the West of Turkey. When Albania and Greece were invaded by the Axis powers, Turkey got closer to allies in order to create a balance of power, by trying to convince France, Great Britain and the Soviet Union for a defensive pact against Nazi Germany. However, when the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact divided Poland between Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union, Turkey became suspicious about the sincerity of the Soviet Union. The Turkish government believed that the USSR and Nazi Germany could also divide and share the lands of Turkey just like Poland. After the shock of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, the Soviet Union was ruled out from forming a pact with the Turkish government, and this led to the establishment of the pact among

France, Great Britain and Turkey on October 19, 1939. The only possibility of Turkey's entrance to the Second World War was dismissed when France was invaded by Nazi Germany.

The biggest fear of Turkey during the Second World War was a Nazi invasion from the West. Therefore, a non-aggression treaty was signed with Nazi Germany on June 18, 1941. Nonetheless, it did not mean a shift from pro-Allies stance to pro-Axis stance, but a pragmatic rational choice. The start of the conflict between the Soviet Union and Nazi Germany relieved the Turkish government when Nazi Germany's main target became the Soviet lands. In the end, the Allies won the Second World War and in the last days of the war, Turkey symbolically declared war on Nazi Germany and Japan to be a founding member of the United Nations. Turkey successfully survived the war. Nevertheless, now there was a new rising great power in the East, the Soviet Union. The world after the Second World War entered a new era called "the Cold War" which created a bipolar world political context ruled by two great powers, the United States of America and the Soviet Union.

In the last days of the Second World War, Turkey was under the threat of the Soviet Union as a country that shared a border with her. In 1945, Molotov invited the Turkish ambassador Selim Sarper and declared that the Soviet Union would not prolong the Treaty of Non-Aggression and Friendship anymore and made some demands that Turkey could not accept such as re-negotiation of the Montreux Conference to establish a Soviet military base in the Turkish Straits and leaving of two cities in Eastern Anatolia, Ardahan and Kars. Turkey tried to find a middle way to keep the treaty alive; however, the Soviet Union did not want to make a compromise. Besides, the idea of re-negotiation of the situation of the Turkish Straits was also supported by the other great power, the United States. The Soviet threat was very real, but on the other hand, Turkey was experiencing an economic struggle. When the new US President Harry S. Truman declared his "Truman Doctrine" on March 12, 1947, which clearly ended the good relations of the United States with the Soviet Union, Turkey quickly embraced this doctrine to get closer to the United States. Turkey received military and economic aids from the United States, including the Marshall Plan in 1947. In the end, Turkey became a member state of NATO in 1952. When the Stalin era ended in 1953

and the process of de-Stalinization was started by the new Soviet Leader Nikita Khrushchev, the Soviet Union gave up all the old demands that were rejected by Turkey. Nonetheless, the Soviet threat was still very real for Turkey and the Menderes government was a staunch anti-Communist government which supported the Containment policy of the United States.

In the late 1950s, the American President Dwight Eisenhower declared his "Eisenhower Doctrine" which was actually the extension of the Truman Doctrine in the Middle East. Turkey quickly embraced the Eisenhower Doctrine and became its defender in the changing Middle East. The late 1950s witnessed coup d'états happening in neighboring countries of Turkey, Syria and Iraq. Turkey was on the verge of war with Syria, which was a pro-USSR country. Although this incident allowed Turkey to receive more economic aid in a time when the Turkish economy was deeply suffering, the United States did not really take an action to help her NATO ally when Turkey was threatened by the Soviet Union. There were also exchanges of diplomatic notes between Turkey and the Soviet Union due to the U-2 Shooting and the Jupiter Missile Crisis between the United States and the Soviet Union, but none of them led to a military conflict between the two great powers.

In the 1960s, a decade of rapprochement started between the Soviet Union and Turkey. However, there was a short-term crisis which would nearly lead to a nuclear war between the United States and the Soviet Union. In the end, the Cuban Missile Crisis was solved through diplomacy and the nuclear missiles of both sides were removed from both Cuba and Turkey. After the Cuban Crisis, good relations between the USSR and Turkey continued. After the massacre of some Cypriot Turks in 1964, Turkey planned a military intervention into the island; however, in the same year, the Turkish government was stopped by a humiliating letter which is known as "the Johnson Letter". After this incident, the Soviet Union and Turkey's relations reached their peak. Turkey was not shifted to the Communist bloc; she was still part of the Western world and a member state of NATO. Nevertheless, Turkey got closer to the Soviet Union to create a balance of power against the United States of America which reacted against Turkish interests.

The Soviet Union changed her stance on Cyprus by supporting the first military intervention of Turkey and defending the Turkish federation thesis,

while the United States was pushing Turkey away from her through a weapons embargo. Nevertheless, in the end, Turkey got the chance to revoke the embargo by signing a treaty with the Ford administration of the United States in the late 1970s. In this period, the Turkish government was concerned about the rising influence of the extreme left-wing Marxist groups and accused the Soviet Union of supporting them. After the coup d'état of 1980, anti-Communist military junta's government got closer to the United States. When Turkey returned to democracy with the election of Turgut Özal, the relations between the USSR and Turkey was mostly based on mutual economic interests. The major trade agreements with the Soviet Union/Russia were signed in the natural gas sector.

In 1991, the Cold War was ended unexpectedly with the demise of the Soviet Union. In this new world order, Turkey followed an active foreign policy towards to the newly established Turkic states by promoting its "Western Secular Democracy" model and the Turkish identity, combining this foreign policy with a pragmatic trade policy. Nevertheless, the Turkish-Russian relations were at a low level during the 1990s. The first tension rose with the Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict between Azerbaijan and Armenia, in which Turkey and Russia supported opposite parties. Even though both Turkey and Russia denounced the conflict and acted as mediators, the relations kept worsening. Russia was fighting with the guerillas in Chechnya and the Russian government was thinking that they were supported by Turkey. As a response to this, the Russian Federation seemed to be supporting the Kurdish separatist group, the PKK.

The Russian Federation seemed to be quite stable at the beginning of the 2000s. Boris Yeltsin's authority was shaken due to the unexpected defeat to the Chechen guerilla groups led by Dzhokhar Dudayev in the First Chechen War between 1994 and 1996. During the Second Chechen War which started in the summer of 1999, Vladimir Putin rose in Russian politics as the new Prime Minister of Russia. In 2000, Vladimir Putin became President of Russia. Russia's foreign policy was not assertive for the first 8 years of the Putin presidency, mainly due to ongoing conflicts with Chechens. During these years, Turkey got closer to Russia because of the aggressive and unilaterally interventionist foreign policy followed by the Bush administration of the

United States in the post 9/11 world order. Furthermore, the emergence of the Color Revolutions in neighboring countries made Russia feel more insecure due to the replacement of the old regimes with new pro-US ones. Nonetheless, when the conflicts with Chechen groups were ended, Russian reaction would come by a military intervention into Georgia in 2008. This aggressive intervention of Russia made Turkey feel insecure because Russia actually invaded the buffer zone between the two countries.

The Russian invasion of Georgia in 2008 was also considered by some observers as a reaction to the Independence of Kosovo from Serbia, which was something that the Russian government was completely against. After the Saakashvili administration's operations in South Ossetia, Russia aggressively intervened in Georgia to show that the United States was no longer the sole hegemonic power in the world. The popularity of the pro-US Georgian government was destroyed by this short-term conflict. The Turkish government supported Georgia's territorial integrity in order not to lose the buffer zone and tried to act as a mediator between Georgia and Russia to stop the war. This Russian intervention into Transcaucasia made Turkey feel insecure and pushed Turkey more towards the United States. After 2008, the Turkish-Russian relations would deteriorate.

When Barack Hussein Obama came to power as the 44th President of the United States on January 20, 2009, his administration made some attempts called "the Russia Reset" which aimed to start a new page with the Russian government. During this period, Turkey made some trade and energy deals with Russia. However, they did not eventuate because of the different stances of Russia and Turkey concerning the global conflicts of the 2010s, such as the Arab Spring in the Middle East and the Euromaidan Revolution in Eastern Europe.

At the beginning of the Arab Spring, Turkey acted with the Western bloc. In Syria, Turkey supported the opposition groups such as Free Syrian Army and the Al-Nusra Front with the United States against the Assad regime. Nonetheless, the Assad regime was an old ally of the Russian Federation since the years of the USSR, thus Russia never took a step back from defending the status quo in Syria. Unlike some of the countries in the Middle East that experienced the Arab Spring, the Assad regime of Syria survived due to

the intervention of a great power ally like Russia. The Assad regime of Syria, with the military aid of Russia and Iran, crushed the opposition groups with the harshest methods including the use of chemical weapons. Russia, which was a country that was a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council, always voted in favor of the Assad regime by saving it from a Western military intervention or an open investigation. Whenever the Assad regime had no chance but to compromise, the Russian Federation always acted as a mediator between the Assad regime of Syria and the Western world. During this process of the Syrian Civil War, the Turkish-Russian relations sank to the bottom in the late 2015, when the Russian warplane was shot down by Turkey.

In the Euromaidan Revolution, the pro-Russian President of Ukraine, Viktor Yanukovych was overthrown and had fled to Russia after a series of riots in Kiev. However, this led to the Russian invasion of Crimea and a civil war in the Donbass region of Ukraine. Turkey felt threatened by the increasing existence of a great power such as Russia in the Black Sea with the annexation of Crimea. Hence, the Turkish government never recognized this illegal annexation. In the question of independence of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church from the Russian Orthodox Church, Turkey supported the Ukrainian government implicitly and did not prevent the Ukrainian Church from becoming a part of the Fener Greek Orthodox Church in Istanbul. Turkey also declared that she was ready to mediate between Russia and Ukraine.

The Turkish-Russian relations were problematic since 2008. In 2015, they further deteriorated during the Syrian Civil War. However, after the unexpected coup d'état attempt by Gülenist members of the Turkish military on July 15, 2016, a sudden rapprochement between Turkey and Russia was experienced. The Turkish government accused the United States for the coup and repeatedly kept demanding the extradition of Fethullah Gülen. However, this claim was categorically rejected by both the Obama and Trump administrations of the United States. After this shock, Turkey got closer to Russia. After this rapprochement, Turkey softened her anti-Assad stance in Syria. Although Turkey did not completely change her position in the Syrian Civil War, it can be said that the Turkish government postponed the Assad Question for a while due to the post-coup rapprochement between Russia and

Turkey. The Turkish government mostly focused on destroying its main threats in Syria, the YPG and ISIS. Also, during this rapprochement era, Turkey made an S-400 arms deal with Russia which created tensions in her relations with the United States.

The thesis explains the relations between Turkey and Russia with the help of the Neorealist Theory of International Relations. It seems that the fluctuations in the Turkish-Russian relations is in correlation with Turkey's perception of Russia as a threat to her national security. The Turkish-Russian relations improve when Russia is perceived as less of a threat to Turkish national security.[1] Whenever Russia poses a threat to Turkey, Turkey gets closer to the United States, and whenever the United States poses a threat to Turkey, Turkey gets closer to Russia. The reason why Turkey joined pro-Western international organization, NATO, was the existence of the Soviet threat, and the reason why the Turkish-Soviet rapprochement happened in 1960's was the damaged relations with the United States. At the beginning of the 21st Century, Turkey had quod relations with Russia because Russia was not following an assertive foreign policy mainly due to the war in Chechnya, and the United States became a common threat to both of the countries due to her aggressive stance with the military intervention into Iraq. However, when the Russo-Georgian War took place in 2008, Turkey got closer to the United States to create a balance of power against the new rising Russian threat, just like in the post-Second World War period. The problematic relations between Turkey and Russia continued until 2016. Nevertheless, after the coup d'état attempt of the Gülenist group in the military on July 15, 2016, Turkey accused the United States for staging the coup attempt and protecting the leader of the coup. This was followed by the Turkish-Russian rapprochement. By doing this, Turkey tried to create a balance of power against the United States. Turkey softened her critics against the Assad regime, and the Russian invasion of Crimea was softened. However, Turkey, as a NATO member, did not shift from the pro-Western Atlanticist side to the pro-Russian Eurasianist side, and Russia as a powerful neighbor still constitutes a potential threat to

1 Şener Aktürk, "Türkiye'nin Rusya ile İlişkilerinin Yükselişi ve Gerilemesi, 1992-2015: Neorealist Bir Değerlendirme," 130-131.

Turkey. For example, Turkey decisively defends the territorial integrity of Ukraine and demands the return of Crimea to Ukraine because of the increasing presence of Russia in the Black Sea.

To explain the behaviors of Turkey, the thesis tried to avoid explanations reduced to ideologies such as "Neo-Ottomanism", "Euroasiniasm" or "Atlanticism". The thesis also did not focus on an essentialist view of identities such as "Muslim" or "Western" identities of Turkey. According to the Neorealist Theory of International Relations, they can be used for the justification of a foreign policy, but they cannot explain the behavior of the states. The level of analysis was based on system and states. This thesis did not focus on the analysis of the ideas of the decision makers in foreign policy or of the people who were influential in this decision-making process. These factors also played a role in the foreign policies of various Turkish governments. However, the main factor is power and international relations is based on power politics. Due to the geostrategic location of Turkey, the Turkish governments were forced to follow a cautious foreign policy that was based on the balance of power between the two great powers to defend her own national security and interests. It seems that almost all of the Turkish governments since the establishment of the Republic of Turkey conducted a foreign policy which was in line with this strategy.

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