EU PROGRAMS FOR THE PROMOTION OF DEMOCRACY

IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND THE

EFFECT OF TURKEY'S EU MEMBERSHIP ON THOSE PROCESSES

Seda KÂYA

EU PROGRAMS FOR THE PROMOTION OF DEMOCRACY

IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND THE

EFFECT OF TURKEY'S EU MEMBERSHIP ON THOSE PROCESSES

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF

SOCIAL SCIENCES

OF

THE IZMIR UNIVERSITY OF ECONOMICS

BY

Seda KAYA

IN PARTIAL FULFILLEMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE

DEGREE OF MASTER OF ART IN GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL

SCIENCES

JUNE 2005

ABSTRACT

EU PROGRAMS FOR THE PROMOTION OF DEMOCRACY

IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND THE

EFFECT OF TURKEY'S EU MEMBERSHIP ON THOSE PROCESSES

KAYA, Seda

European Studies Master Program, Department of International Relations and the European Union

Supervisor: Ass. Prof. Brian COLBERT

JUNE 2005, 97 pages

This thesis analyses the EU's democracy promotion efforts in the Middle East. It evaluates the changes that have occurred in the EU foreign policy in the post-9/11 period. It also evaluates the efficiency of such EU programs in the region. The second part of the thesis analyses Turkish foreign policy in Middle East and evaluates possible contribution of Turkey's EU membership might bring to the process of building democracy in the region.

Keywords: Democracy Promotion in Middle East, Human Development Index, Arab Human Development Report, EU Foreign Policy, Euro Mediterranean Partnership, European Neighborhood Project, European Security Strategy, Turkey- Middle East Relations, Middle East Hydropolitics, Clash of civilizations, Islam-Democracy.

ÖZET

AVRUPA BİRLİĞİNİN ORTADOĞUNUN DEMOKRATİKLEŞMESİNE YÖNELİK PROGRAMLARI

VE

TÜRKİYE'NİN AB ÜYELİĞİNİN ORTADOĞUNUN DEMOKRATİKLEŞME SÜRECİNE OLASI ETKİSİ

KAYA, Seda

Avrupa Çalışmaları Yüksek Lisans Programı, Uluslararası İlişkiler ve Avrupa Birliği Bölümü

Tez Yöneticisi: Yrd. Doc. Brian COLBERT

Haziran 2005, 97 sayfa

Bu çalışma Avrupa Birliğinin Ortadoğunun demokratikleşmesine yönelik politikasını ve programlarını incelemktedir. Ayrıca 11 Eylül saldırılarının, Avrupa Birliğinin Ortadoğu politikasında yarattığı değişiklikleri değerlendirmektedir. Çalışmanın ikinci bölümü Türkiye'nin Ortadoğu politikasını incelemekte ve Türkiye'nin AB üyeliğinin, AB'nin bölgenin demokratikleşmesine yönelik programlarına olacak etkisini değerlendirmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Ortadoğunun demokratikleşmesi, AB Dış Politikası, Avrupa Güvenlik Stratejisi, Türkiye-Ortadoğu İlişkileri, Ortadoğu Su Politikası, Medeniyetler Çatışması, Islam-Demokrasi.

To my father…

TABLE OF CONTENTS

III) THE EU PROGRAMS REGARDING DEMOCRACY PROMOTION IN THE MIDDLE EAST

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

EMP----Euro Mediterranean Partnership

ENP-----European Neighborhood Project

EIHDR--- European Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights

RMP--------Renovated Mediterranean Policy

 IAEA-------International Atomic Energy Agency

I) INTRODUCTION

The Middle East is one of the regions in the world that is resisting the trend towards democracy around the world. The undemocratic systems in the region also negatively effect the economic and social development of these countries. Because the region is vital for the EU in terms of its rich energy resources and security issues, the democratization of the Middle East is in EU's interest.

In the immediate post-Cold War era, the most important concern of the EU regarding the region was economic. Because of its close trade relations and energy dependence on the region, the EU created programs to promote market economy reforms in the Middle East. However, the events of 9/11 showed that there were new threats to the EU's security. Threats were invisible and target was unknown such as terrorism and weapons of mass destruction. This has showed that Europe had to find alternative ways to protect its security. As a response to the emerging threats, the issue of democracy promotion came to the top of the agenda in the post 9/11 era. According to the western view "political oppression, economic stagnation, population booms and inequality and injustice" in these countries have created an efficient basis for "extremist ideologies that twists and mobilizes religion and uses terrorism to pursue it goals"[1].

In light of this belief, the EU placed democracy promotion as a priority in its Middle East foreign policy agenda. The EU has reinvigorated its policies in the post-9/11 period and introduced democracy promotion programs, which are applied on the basis of conditionality. Under the "conditionality" principle, the EU offers economic

---

[1] Asmus, Ronald D., Diamond, Larry, Leonard, Mark and McFaul, Michael, <u>A Transatlantic Strategy to Promote Democratic Development in the Broader Middle East</u>, The Center for European Reform Bulletin, March 2005.

and financial incentives to Middle Eastern countries and in exchange asks for democratic reforms.

During the same time, Turkish foreign policy has witnessed changes. The attitude of the AKP government has played a significant role in this development. Throughout its history Turkey have always tried to differentiate itself from the Middle East and tried to align itself with the West. However, because of its geopolitical location, Turkish security and interests have been threatened or negatively affected because of these developments. The close relations it has with Israel and USA often led Turkey to be accused as the puppet of the West acting in Middle East. Recently the Turkish foreign policy has become increasingly active and focused on the region, trying to position Turkey as a major regional power among its neighbors. Increasing trade and political relations with Iran and Syria and the refusal of the Turkish parliament to be a part of the US led operation against Iraq have shown that Turkey and the EU have convergent interests and similar foreign policy goals regarding the region. By favoring the EU foreign policy methods and attitudes, the Turkish credibility and prestige has begun to increase among Middle Eastern states.

Turkey's EU membership will enhance EU's ability to influence and promote democracy in the Middle East. Examining the geopolitical dimension, we see that the prospect of Turkey's accession will deepen EU engagement in the Middle East. Turkey is probably the most geo-strategically important piece of real estate in the world and it will be an asset for the EU in terms of influencing the region. The EU will border Iran, Iraq and Syria after Turkish membership and will have to devote more resources and develop more coherent policies towards the region.

Also by accepting a Muslim country the EU will prove that it is not a Christian club and in a way will challenge the theory of "clash of civilizations" by Huntington. This fact will improve the EU's image in the eyes of the Middle Eastern states and raise their willingness to accept the EU's political role. Addition to this, witnessing the Turkish example, these countries will see that the values of democracy, human rights, the rule of law and secularism are not specific to any culture or religion. On the contrary, these are universal values with no geographical, cultural or religious limitations.

In conclusion, it is possible to state that Turkey will enhance the EU's ability to promote democracy in the Middle East.

II) REASONS FOR THE EU TO ENGAGE MIDDLE EASTERN POLITICS

1.The EU's Interest in Making Middle East Democratic

The Middle East is one of the regions in the world that is resisting the trend towards democracy in the world. The region is ruled by autocratic governments and it experiences rare and symbolic elections. The ruling elite benefits from the political and economic benefits of the state because the ordinary citizens don't have a powerful voice in the governments. The authoritarian governments, economic inequalities and low human development index in these countries contribute to the unstable environment in the region. In addition, the authoritarian governments, Islamist challenges to the political legitimacy of the monarchist Arab regimes and clashes between the ethnic minorities create domestic insecurity. Most important of all, the Middle Eastern autocracies "lack the brakes that democracies impose on a regime's belligerence in disputes with other democratic states"[2]. The unstable environment in this region affects neighboring countries in different aspects. The region profoundly affects the European Union with terrorism, migration, human trafficking and arms proliferation. "All these problems in the Middle East and crises they cause so far affected Europe and will affect even more so in the future"[3]. Also, the EU's energy dependence to the region and the fact that the EU is the largest trading partner for every country in the region makes the stability of the region even more vital for the EU. Therefore, the European Union has shaped its policy for the Middle East based on the economic development, gradual reform and democratization of the region.

---

[2] Martin, Leonard G., The Future of Turkish Foreign Policy, The MIT Press, 2002, p.164.
[3] Karlsson, Ingmar, "Turkey's Cultural and Religious Heritage-An Asset to the EU", CEPS, Issue 10, October 2004.

It is in the interest of the European Union to make Middle East democratic. There are certain benefits of the democratization of the region that are in the interest of the EU. The economic development of the region in correlation with its democratization will led the EU to have a large trading partner with a more stable and strong economy. The democratization will also sweep the region from war prone autocrats who are interested in mass destruction weapons. The stabilization and the democratization of the region will make it harder for the terrorist groups to survive in the region that threaten world security as well as EU's.

2. Definition of Democracy

The term democracy has philosophical origins rooted in the ancient Greece. Different from what many assert, the idea of democracy is not based on the perfectibility of men, but rather on the fact that men are imperfect and they are the same. Since pre-Socratic thinkers have agreed on the "imperfection and fallibility of human judgment and knowledge, they have concluded that all men are in the same boat of doubt and uncertainty"[4]. Therefore, if there is no absolute standard of right and wrong, the opinions of the majority are to decide. Although not seen as the best possible option, democracy was seen as the middle ground between anarchy and authoritarianism.

Today, democracy is an inseparable part of western values and norms. Western democratic states perceive the lack of democracy in the Middle East as the main reason of the problems in the region, both domestic and international. In order to understand what we mean by democracy and to evaluate how far these countries are from a democratic system, it is necessary to define democracy; "Democracies are

---

[4] Ebenstein, William, Ebenstein, Alan O., <u>Great Political Thinkers</u>, Harcourt Brace Company, 1990, p.9.

political systems characterized by popular participation, genuine competition for executive offices, and institutional checks on power"[5].

3. Economic Benefits of a Democratic System

In countries where the economic development is low and the wealth distribution is grossly unequal, it's nearly impossible to expect stability and peace in the society. States suffering from conflict and poverty cause turmoil among the region and even challenge international peace in some cases. So, it is in the interest of all states, especially its neighbors that, such state becomes economically developed with less unequal wealth and income distribution.

Because of the region's vast energy resources, the Middle Eastern countries have considerably high GDP's when compared to other undemocratic states in the world, in spite of this, the region lacks genuine economic development. Their economies are limited to few items, such as oil and natural gas. These resources are under the control of few people often related with the government and this equation has led to a deadly cycle of poverty, conflict and oppression. The autocratic government controls the means of production and since the economy is limited to few items, it makes it easier to control. "The controlled economy benefits the privileged minority and masses stay poor, uneducated and inferior"[6].

As a result, it is possible to state that, democracies develop faster economically while compared with autocracies and autocracies tend to lead to cycles of poverty, conflict and oppression. Therefore a democratic Middle East is in the

---

[5] Siegle, Joseph, Weinstein, Michael and Halperin, Morton, <u>Why Democracies Excel</u>, Foreign Affairs, Sep/Oct 2004, p.58.
[6] Siegle, Joseph, Weinstein, Michael and Halperin, Morton, <u>Why Democracies Excel</u>, Foreign Affairs, Sep/Oct 2004, p.64.

interest of the EU since states in conflict, poverty and economic inequality affect the region and the international order negatively.

3.1.) Importance of the fair competition for the economy

The solution to this cycle of poverty, oppression and conflict lies in the improvement of democracy in the Middle Eastern countries. Having governments elected to the office through fair and competitive and fair elections would enable popular will to effect the decision making process. In that case, since the government will reflect majority, the decisions and policies will be more pragmatic and reflect the interests of the majority of the people and the country. This is a natural consequence of the democratic system. The governments have to satisfy the needs of the common citizens. Otherwise, they find themselves out of office with the next election.

3.2.) Importance of the system of checks and balances for the economy

The system of checks and balances, which is an inseparable part of a democratic state, plays a crucial role to create an equal and developing economy. Checks and balances mean that "power is not monopolized by any one individual or branch of the government". On the other hand, in authoritarian regimes, political monopoly often turns to an economic monopoly. In such systems only businesses and individuals closely tied to the ruling party are able to acquire the licenses, permits, credits and other resources needed to succeed. Such preferential treatment reduces competition, innovation and leads to an inefficient economy.

3.3.) Importance of building democratic institutions in the region

Political reform in the Middle East is closely attached to building democratic institutions in the region. Unless the institutions in the region are restructured, it will be very hard for the EU programs, regarding promotion of civil society and

economic development, to succeed. Institutions are "the organizations, arrangements, laws, decrees and regulations that constitute the political rules of the game in any given society"[7]. In authoritarian Arab states the institutions are designed to ensure the authoritarian character of the regimes. Arab political institutions tend to "restrict political participation, limit individual freedom and vest overwhelming power in the executive branch of government"[8]. Although minor modifications have been made to these institutions as a result of the EU pressure, the main structure prevails. In order to achieve success in its democracy promotion programs regarding Middle East, the EU has to focus on the transformation and creation of democratic institutions in the Arab world.

The formation of the democratic institutions is extremely important especially during the transition period to the democracy. Strong democratic institutions are the guarantee of system in a state. Democratic institutions provide adaptability in a country. A clear mechanism for succession established by these institutions enhances political and economic stability of the country. Democracies institutionalize the right to change leaders or policies when things go poorly. Also, democracies establish institutions that promote economic development. The more representative and transparent these institutions are the more likely policies and practices respond to the priorities of the general population.

When a state is transitioning to democracy the importance of strong institutions is even more vital. These institutions reinforce the values of democracy when the society is experiencing the spasms of transition. However, weak institutions tend to promote instability and lead to distrust and conflict in the

---

[7] Cook, Steven A., The Right Way to Promote Arab Reform, Foreign Affairs, March/April 2005, p.91.
[8] Cook, Steven A., The Right Way to Promote Arab Reform, Foreign Affairs, March/April 2005, p.96.

society. "Countries transitioning to democracy with weak political institutions are more likely than other states to get into international and civil wars" [9].

4. The Importance of Democratization of the Middle East in terms of International Security

4.1.) Do Autocracies tend to fight more when compared with Democracies?

This question has been a part of the ongoing issue of "search of peace", which is a highly popular and central dilemma in the international relations environment. Throughout the ages one of the goals of the international relations enquiry has been to find a way to achieve peace. Historically the most common proposal for ending war has been to create a world government and an international legal regime. Dante, Hobbes and Rousseau have all discussed these ideas. They all have supported that, similar to a domestic government ending state of anarchy in a country, an international government can end the anarchy in the international environment. Although the proposal can be viable if applied, it is definitely not feasible.

When we look at the feasible alternatives we see that the balance of power has been the oldest mechanism to prevent war. As long ago as the time of Thucydides, the system was seen as the only alternative for an international system. Balance of power, although seen as a feasible and realistic alternative through out the ages, doesn't provide a permanent solution to the problem. As European history clearly shows the theory has limited historical success. The system is associated with great wars such as the Peloponnesian war, the Thirty Years Wars, the Napoleonic

---

[9] Snyder, Jack, One World Rival Theories, Foreign Policy, Nov/Dec 2004, p.58.

Wars and WWI and WWII. The balance of power may prevent latter wars in the short run, but often produces conditions that lead to total wars between rivals.

The concept of "democratic security community" proposes that democratic states are at peace and they don't anticipate on going to war with each other. One of the earliest to suggest the idea that democracies might not fight each other was Immanuel Kant. Kant, in his famous work "Perpetual Peace" designed a treaty that outlines the rules and conditions that would shape relations between states and avoid war among them. According to him being republican (Kant viewed democracy as the tyranny of the majority against the few) is an important factor in avoiding wars, but he also constructed the whole system on a treaty where it prohibits the acquisition of another state and also abolishes all armies. Kant states that in a republican state "the consent of the citizens is required to decide whether or not war is to be declared, it is very natural that they will have great hesitation in embarking on so dangerous enterprise"[10]. Since the citizens will be the ones to fight and suffer from war, people will avoid going to war as much as possible. On the other hand in an autocracy "for the head of state is not a fellow citizen, but the owner of the state, and a war will not force him to make slightest sacrifice…he can thus decide on war without any significant reason…"[11].

Kant focused on the fact that monarchs decide freely in autocracies and they do not have to think about the common interests of the people, so they can easily make a decision to go to war. On the other hand in democracies people have a say about the declaration of a war. And since ordinary people are the ones who suffer most from the war, citizens avoid going into war as much as possible.

---

[10] Ebenstein, William, Ebenstein, Alan O., Great Political Thinkers, Harcourt Brace Company, 1990, p.537.
[11] Ebenstein, William, Ebenstein, Alan O., Great Political Thinkers, Harcourt Brace Company, 1990, p.537

Another important contribution to the democratic peace theory has been done by Zeev Maoz and Bruce Russet. Maoz and Russet, have tried to demonstrate statistical accuracy of the relationship between democratic states and peace. In their study "Normative and Structural causes of Democratic Peace, 1946- 1986" Maoz and Russet used structural and normative models to explain the behavior of democratic states in a conflict.

The structural model focuses on the constitutional and legal constraints on executive action. According to this model, "due to the complexity of democratic process and requirement of a broad base public support democratic leaders are reluctant to wage wars"[12]. Also, the time required for a democratic state to prepare for a war is far longer than non-democracies because of the legal and institutional constraints on the executive power. Therefore, "in a conflict between democracies by the time two states are ready for a war diplomats have the opportunity to find a nonmilitary solution to the conflict"[13].

The normative model, which can be traced back to Kant, looks primarily at the effects of norms of domestic political behaviors on international politics. According to the model, there are some norms in a democratic state, which guides its domestic politics. These norms are primarily about the respect for the opposition and the acceptance of the importance of compromise. In democracies, winning does not require the elimination of the opponent and conflicts are solved through compromise rather than war. "This norm allows for an atmosphere of 'live and let live' that results in an fundamental sense of stability at the personal, communal and the

---

[12] Vasquez, John A.,Classics of International Relations, Prentice Hall Inc., 1996, p.386
[13] Vasquez, John A.,Classics of International Relations, Prentice Hall Inc., 1996, p.388

national level"[14]. As a result of these norms, when two democratic countries engage in a conflict, they are able to apply their democratic norms to each other, so they prevent conflicts from escalating to a militarized level.

Since democratic norms can be absorbed by the society over time, an older democratic state benefits more from the democratic tradition. In this case, the democratic norms engage more in the pattern of society and it becomes very rare for these states to get in to militarized conflicts.

In the conclusion of their study, Maoz and Russet made two important discoveries. Democratic states are as conflict and war-prone as non-democracies. However, over the last two centuries democracies rarely have clashed with one another in violent or potentially violent conflict and have virtually never fought one another in full-scale international war. Maoz and Russet evaluated their results and concluded "there is something in the internal makeup of democratic states that prevents them from fighting one another despite the fact that they are not less conflict-prone than non-democracies" [15]. This study is important for the democratic peace theory because it brought a new dimension to the argument and has statistically proved that democracies don't fight each other.

4.2.) Stabilization of the region as a part of the counter act against terrorism

      a) 9/11 and the changes it caused in the EU foreign policy towards the region

During the post-Cold War years, the strategic interests of the EU have changed towards the southern Mediterranean and the Middle East. In particularly the southern members of the EU have started to discuss the importance of the

---

[14]Vasquez, John A., Classics of International Relations, Prentice Hall Inc., 1996, p.386
[15] Vasquez, John A., Classics of International Relations, Prentice Hall Inc., 1996, p.392

neighboring countries across the Mediterranean Sea, and how their low economic performance was causing increasing immigration to these southern EU states. In light of these developments the EU created the Renovated Mediterranean Policy, which envisages a partnership with these countries and structural adjustment support for the ones engaged in liberalization and economic reform.

The political dimension of the relations and the European commitment to political pluralism in the region was very limited in this period. The political dimension has emerged with the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (Barcelona Process), which was created in 1995. With the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership "formal dialogue on political reform commenced, new trade agreements incorporated sanctions-triggering democracy clauses and an EU democracy assistance budget was created for the region"[16]. However, it is fair to say that the EU's commitment to political reform in the region was very low during the 1990s. The philosophy of gradualism supported with low democracy assistance budgets have resulted with limited signs of democratic progress. The major problem is that there was little correlation between aid flows and respective degrees of state political openness. Also, the main destination of the funds was aimed at small business development and cooperation in the cultural sphere, which were indirectly related to democracy.

The European point of view towards the Middle East has changed after the events of 9/11. The September 11 attacks have shown that Middle Eastern events are going to affect Europe, just as they do with the rest of the world. As a response to this, the EU has altered its policy towards the democratization of the region. The link between terrorism and the political system have been given importance. The member states of the EU have agreed that the security in this age could only be attained by

---

[16] Youngs, Richard, Europe's Uncertain Pursuit of Middle East Reform, Carnegie Endowment, June 2004, p.3

spreading western values and democratization rather than military options[17]. Former

European Commissioner Chris Pattern states that, "fostering human rights should

become an integral part of the fight against terrorism"[18]. Following this new

understanding towards political reform in the region, new initiatives have been

developed within the framework of the Euro Mediterranean Project. In 2003, the EU

agreed upon new guidelines for democracy and human rights promotion. These

guidelines commit the EU to elaborating national plans for human rights to be agreed

with EMP states, in consultation with the local civil authorities. The amount of aid

flowing to the region for political programs has also increased. In December 2003,

the EU Commission for the first time allocated 1 million euros to human rights

projects from its mainstream development budget. Besides the developments in the

EMP structure, the bilateral political dialogue established with some countries; such

as Iran and Gulf Countries (GCC). In this dialogue the EU have linked the political

dialogue with the proposed trade and cooperation agreements. Besides modifying the

EMP structure, the European Neighborhood Policy and the European Security

Strategy both launched in 2003, extended the EU's Middle East Policy and placed

the political reform in the Middle East at the top of the EU agenda.

b) The relationship between democracy and security

The security dilemma emerged in the post- 9/11 period, have brought new

arguments to the world agenda concerning the democratization of the Middle Eastern

states. The main problem preventing the Middle East democratization is the Arab

governments themselves. "Arab governments curb political participation, manipulate

elections, and limit freedom of expression because they do not want their power to be

---

[17] Vallelersundi, Ana Palacio, <u>The Barcelona Process</u>, Georgetown Journal, ws04.
[18] Youngs, Richard, <u>Europe's Uncertain Pursuit of Middle East Reform</u>, Carnegie Endowment, June 2004, p.6

challenged"[19]. Presidents or kings remain too powerful because of limited legal and institutional constraints to the executive power. The countervailing institutions are weak and they are not backed by organized citizens demanding political rights. "What is lacking is a supply of broad based political organizations pushing for democracy"[20]. On the other hand there are organizations with a broad base support in the Arab world: Islamist groups. The authoritarian regimes in these countries usually push people to search for radical options, and while the most popular among these were Arab nationalism during the Cold War years, today it's the religious extremism. "The vision of pure and virtuous Islamic state as the alternative to present corruption has a strong hold on the imagination of many"[21]. Therefore, people often support radical Islamist groups because they are not happy with their governments and they do not see a viable alternative.

The modernization process in the Middle East, which has recently accelerated after the increasing pressure from the west to the region, should be thought of separately from the democratization process. Some leaders of the Middle East introduce reforms from the top, aiming to modernize the society and in a way to preserve the status quo and their own powers. There are leaders who introduce reform on their own initiative in order to implement their own vision of a better society rather than making it more democratic. East Asian states have experienced such modernization such as Singapore. Some Middle Eastern states have chosen to follow the East Asian example and view East Asian transformation as a model. As King Abdullah of Jordan states "High performing economies in Asia provide lessons

---

[19] Ottoway, Marina and Carothers, Thomas, <u>Middle East Democracy</u>, Foreign Policy 11-12, p.22.
[20] Ottoway, Marina, <u>Democracy and Constituencies in the Arab World,</u> Carnegie Endowment, July 2004, p.3.
[21] Ottoway, Marina, <u>Democracy and Constituencies in the Arab World,</u> Carnegie Endowment, July 2004, p.13.

in growth…. demonstrating the importance of economic freedom, good governance and social investments in public goods such as education"[22]. King Abdullah visions a Jordan with a liberal economy and a modern society; on the other hand he does not mention a reform in the political field let alone democratization.

5.) General Concern About the Low HDI in the Region

5.1.) The relationship between low Human Development Index and Democracy

The development of a country cannot only be measured by economic indicators, social indicators are as important as the economic ones. Social indicators such as; life expectancy, access to clean drinking water, literacy rate, agricultural yields and the quality of public health services, show education levels and living standards of that society and these indicators effect states' power and stability in the long term.

The Human Development Index is a measurement of human progress introduced by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in its Human Development Report 1990. "By combining indicators of real purchasing power, education, and health, the HDI provides a more comprehensive measure of development than does the GNP alone"[23]. HDI of a country, although closely related, is not only tied to the economic welfare of the country. The social indicators are the main determinants of the HDI. When we compare the Human Development Indexes, we see that democracies, even the low income ones, outdo their autocratic counterparts. In a democracy, the government by representing the majority of its population, has to consider the needs and happiness of its voters, otherwise it won't

---

[22] King Abdullah II, <u>The Road to Reform</u>, Foreign Policy 11-12, p. 73.
[23] World Health Organization Official Web Site, http://www.wpro.who.int/chips/chip02/terms.htm

be elected again. Therefore in democracies public services such as health care, education and social securities are very important factors that political parties must address, because its electoral success is dependent on the well being of the voters. Since autocrats do not share the same concerns with the democratic governments in terms of re-election, it is not possible to expect the same policies from them aiming at the well being of the society. In conclusion, higher HDI rates in democracies is a natural consequence of the democratic system.

5.2.) Arab Development Reports

a) The nature of the reports and the difference between them

In 2002, the UN Development Program sponsored a group of Arab economists, scientists and other scholars to prepare four reports on human development in the Arab world. These reports are very important because, "all of its authors are Arab, the Report claims to provide an insider's look at the problems of development in the region"[24].

The first report, published in 2002, identified three main problems that effect the low HDI; freedom, women's empowerment and acquisition and effective use of knowledge. The report is extremely important for the region for several reasons. First, it is the first UN Development Program report on the region as a whole. Second, the report provides a rich and sophisticated analysis of political conditions in the Arab region and the impact of politics on development and make recommendations on the how to democratize. Third, the report makes a clear distinction between the concepts of economic growth and development. The Alternative Human Development Index (AHDI) does not include per capita GDP as one of its components. Not surprisingly the ranking of the Arab countries deteriorates

---

[24] Baroudi, Sami, The 2002 Arab Human Development Report: Implications for Democracy, Middle East Policy Council, Volume XI, Spring 2004, Number 1

as we move from the traditional HDI to the AHDI. Fourth, the report touches the sensitive issue of women's position in the Arab society. While the report praises the achievements of Arab countries in enhancing women's access to education, it remains critical of the second class status of Arab women.

The second report AHDR 2003, focuses on one of the three deficits that were pointed out in the first report; knowledge. The third report which was supposed to be published in October 2004 is about "governance and misgovernance in the Arab world, and the legal, institutional and religious impediments to political reform"[25] . The report was delayed until April 2005, because of US objections to the prologue of the report which is critical of the US invasion of Iraq and the Israeli occupation. In addition some Arab regimes, notably Egypt, which is criticized in the report, also delayed publication of the report.

a.a.) AHDR 2002

As stated above the AHDR 2002 points out the lack of freedom, knowledge and woman power as the major reasons for the low HDI in the Arab states.

➢ Freedom: Lack of freedom in the Arab world explains a lot of fundamental things that are wrong with the Arab world; the survival of absolute autocracies; the holding of bogus elections; confusion between the executive and the judicial branches, constraints on the media and on civil society. The democracy is often offered by the executive office holders, but it is presented as a concession not as a right. The undemocratic systems have created imbalances in every aspect of the government and society. Even public servants, from ministers down, are seldom appointed solely on the basis of merit. People are given jobs not because of what

---

[25] Friedman, Thomas L., Holding Up Arab Reform, New York Times, 24.12.2004

they know, but because of whom they know. The result, all too often, is an

unmoving, unresponsive central authority and an incompetent public administration.

> Knowledge: The report states that, although the Arabs spend a higher

percentage of GDP on education than any other developing region the quality of

education has deteriorated. "Adult illiteracy rates have declined but are still very

high: 65m adults are illiterate, almost two-thirds of them women. Some 10m children

still have no schooling at all"[26]. Research and development is also very low in the

Arab world, because governments would rather buy the new technology abroad

without having an idea about "know how". When the technology gets old, the Arab

states still become dependent to the outside help because they do not have the ability

to follow new technology by themselves.

> Women's status: The report sees women's status in the Arab societies as an

awful waste: "how can a society prosper when it stifles half its productive

potential?"[27]. Women's literacy rates, although increased in the past 30 years, is still

very low and one in every two Arab women still can neither read nor write. Their

participation in their countries' political and economic life is the lowest in the world.

a.b.) AHDR 2003

The Arab Human Development Report 2003 focuses on the lack of

knowledge in the Arab society. The report states the importance of knowledge in the

modern societies and states that "knowledge more than capital drives economic

progress"[28]. The report sees the lack of freedoms, lack of institutional support and

---

[26]United Nations Development Programme, AHDR 2002
[27] United Nations Development Programme, AHDR 2002
[28] United Nations Development Programme, AHDR 2003

funding as the most important obstacles across scientific research in the Arab society.

Also, the fact that there are no Arab innovations and very limited research and

development activities is emphasized highly in the report.

The problem between governments and intellectuals is also stressed. The

political power plays a key role in directing knowledge and influencing its

development. The executives often allocate scarce resources for state directed work,

which leads to the corruption of research. The report calls for establishment of

independent knowledge sphere that produces and promotes knowledge free from

politics. This is possible only by democratization of the political life by ensuring that

knowledge can be freely acquired and produced.

a.c.) AHDR 2004

The delayed report of AHDR 2004 has been issued in April 2005. The third in

the Arab Human Development Report series, this report focuses on the deficit of

freedom and good governance in the Arab world. The report defines freedom, sets

out obstacles to achieve freedom and give recommendations to Arab countries to

increase the level of freedom and good governance in the Arab world.

i) Evaluation of AHDR 2004

The report identifies the positive and negative developments in the Arab

world during 2004. Although they are minor, the positive developments in some

countries are praised and encouraged in the report. The persuasion of the government

by human rights and political organizations to acknowledge earlier violations in

Morocco is an example of such success. In Syria civil society organizations asked for

the state of emergency to be lifted and freedoms expanded. Also, at the beginning of

2004 Saudi Arabia witnessed a number of civil initiatives, such as demands of

minority groups such as the Shias, for religious freedom, civil rights and equality among citizens[29]. Besides the internal factors the external factors that effect the development of the region are also listed in the report. The Israeli occupation of Palestine is evaluated as a violation of the Palestinians' right to live through "direct assassinations of Palestinian leaders and the killing of civilians during raids and incursions into, and re-occupation of cities and villages in the West Bank and Gaza"[30]. The report also focuses on the social and economic losses Palestinians experience because of Israeli "policy of demolitions, destroying property and land"[31].

The occupation of Iraq is seen as another major event that has enormous impact on human development in Iraq. The report criticizes the US actions harshly stating that;

> "Iraq witnessed an unprecented loss of internal security, with killings and acts of terrorism in most parts of the country. Women suffered the most…in some cases coalition soldiers reportedly also sexually abused female prisoners. Prisoners, mostly civilians, were subjected to inhumane and immoral treatment in Abu Gharib and other occupation prisons"[32].

ii) Implications of AHDR 2004

The report defines freedom as not only civil and political freedoms but also the liberation from all factors that are inconsistent with human dignity. "Freedom requires a system of good governance that rests upon effective popular representation and is accountable to the people, and that upholds the rule of law and ensures that an independent judiciary applies the law impartially"[33].

---

[29] United Nations Development Programme, AHDR 2004
[30] United Nations Development Programme, AHDR 2004
[31] United Nations Development Programme, AHDR 2004
[32] United Nations Development Programme, AHDR 2004
[33] United Nations Development Programme, AHDR 2004

According to the report, the situation of freedom and good governance in Arab world is deficient. Authoritarian governments severely restrict freedoms and the right to political participation. Constitutional rights are also violated as authoritarian regimes take control of the law and manipulate it to reinforce their power and serve their own interests. As a consequence of these findings, the report sees the existence of unrepresentative ruling authorities as the main obstacle to freedom, with their actions curbing freedoms and violating human rights.

The report recommends the Arab countries to sign all declarations and treaties that make up international law and reflect them to their legal system. The report also proposes peaceful, gradual and negotiated transition of power to representative forms of government. The key priorities are set as; "abolishing the state of emergency, amending all forms of discrimination against any minority group and guaranteeing the independence of the judiciary"[34].

The report also states that it is impossible for the Arab countries to ignore external initiatives for reform in the Middle East leaded by the EU and the USA. Therefore, recommends reform minded Arabs to become active and lead the reform process within. In this respect, the reform process can be consistent with Arab goals and aspirations rather than reflecting solely interests of the foreign powers.

6. Attitude Towards the Western Values and Democracy in the Region

The Western policies towards the Middle East in the Cold War and post-Cold War period damaged the credibility of the EU and its policies in the region. The EU countries, along with the USA, have supported Middle Eastern autocracies as long as it served their interests. They paid greater attention to legitimacy and rule of law at

---

[34] United Nations Development Programme, AHDR 2004

home, while ignoring such concerns in the Middle East. For example, "for so many years after supporting the Saddam Hussein regime while it served interests, even when its systemic torturing and gross human rights violations, then invading Iraq with the pretext of Saddam Hussein's regime and punishing Iraq seems rather unfair"[35]. Besides the past actions, even when we look at today's policies we see the discrimination. The EU and USA put pressure to democratize and reform to the countries such as Yemen, conversely when they have burning national interests the situation changes. "Dependence on Saudi oil makes it impossible for the United States or Europe to put pressure for democratic reform on the Saudi regime while also depending on it to stabilize oil prices"[36]. Western interests in the Middle East are too complex for political reform to remain in the heart of the agenda. The unreliable and changing attitude of the West harms the credibility of the EU and makes people suspect its sincerity. Besides the EU's image, these conflicting actions also harm the credibility of the norms such as "democracy". Many Arabs have come to view democracy itself as a code word for western domination on the region. The colonial past of the region and the policies of the west during Cold War make it very hard for the Arabs to believe in Europe's sincerity. Therefore although western support is crucial and critical for democratic reform, the Middle Eastern people's support and willingness is much more vital.

---

[35] Laciner, Sedat, Turkey's EU Membership's Possible Impacts on the Middle East, Turkish Weekly, 24.12.2004.
[36] Ottoway,Marina, Democracy and Constituencies in the Arab World, Carnegie Endowment, July 2004, p.5

III) THE EU PROGRAMS REGARDING DEMOCRACY PROMOTION IN THE MIDDLE EAST

The European Union programs for democracy promotion in Middle East can be evaluated in two parts. Founded in 1995, the Euro Mediterranean Partnership (EMP) is the backbone of the EU's Middle Eastern policy in the pre- 9/11 period. The main objective of the EMP was improving the trade relations with the region. The democracy promotion activities were rare and indirect, targeting only some human rights issues, women empowerment and press freedom projects. Only small percentage of the funding directly targeted democracy promotion.

The events of 9/11 were a turning point for the EU initiatives in the Middle East. The events of the 9/11 and the emerging new security concerns for the Europe changed the structure of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership and pushed the EU to reevaluate its Middle Eastern policy. In this respect efforts have focused on "reinvigorating" the EMP by providing for a more vigorous and coherent democracy building strategy.

A series of European Commission papers published over the past two years in order to promote democracy and strengthen reform in the Middle East. Two of the papers, The European Neighborhood Policy and the European Security Strategy seek to demonstrate the EU's determination about democracy promotion in the region. These policies form the backbone of Europe's future Middle East democracy-promotion strategy.

1) Factors behind the Euro Mediterranean Partnership Program

The end of the Cold War and the fall of the Berlin Wall had important effects over the European integration and the foreign policy of the community. As the bipolar structure of the world changed and as the east European countries became free from communist influence the EU simultaneously shifted its foreign policy and changed its own structure. The European Union has entered a phase of transformation with the end of Cold War both in terms of deepening, with deeper integration regarding monetary union, and also widening, with enlargement to eastern Europe. Because the fall of the Berlin Wall created the possibility of eastern enlargements, the southern members of the community became concerned that the EU's attention would be diverted to the east to counteract this situation. The southern members under the leadership of Spain have started to push for a special program aiming to improve relations with the Mediterranean neighbors of the union.

The huge economic welfare difference between the two sides of the Mediterranean is another driving force of the EU's Mediterranean policy. "On northern shores, average per capita income exceeds $20,000; along southern shores however, it barely reaches $ 2,000"[37]. Without economic development the migration to the EU's southern borders is inevitable. And "the spillover effect of the immigration could create tensions, generate instability, and usher unthinkable consequences into the EU's southern border"[38]. Finally, the positive developments in the Middle East process at the time contributed to the momentum to the Mediterranean Partnership project. The 1991 Madrid Conference and the subsequent

---

[37] Vallelersundi, Ana Palacio, <u>The Barcelona Process</u>, Georgetown Journal, ws04.
[38] Vallelersundi, Ana Palacio, <u>The Barcelona Process</u>, Georgetown Journal, ws04.

Oslo Agreements raised hopes on a Middle East peace and end to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict.

2. Programs prior to Euro Mediterranean Partnership:

In June 1991, the European Union asserted that human rights and democracy promotion in Middle East is an essential element of the EU's foreign policy. Prior to the summit, the European Council stressed the role of human rights and the rule of law. In the November 1991 a resolution was adapted after this summit, in which the EU Council accepted guidelines and procedures for a consistent approach towards democratizing countries. In the following year the EU reassessed its relations with the Mediterranean region in light of the end of the Cold War; Renovated Mediterranean Policy (RMP). The RMP introduced the notion of partnership with the Mediterranean countries and structural adjustment support for the countries engaged in economic reform and liberalization. The RMP also revised its policy so that the financial assistance budget for the Mediterranean countries became conditional to the human rights record of the country. In this respect The European Parliament with held aid to Morocco and Syria for a brief period during 1991.

Another important initiative of the EU throughout the 1990s was the "European Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights (EIHDR)" that was launched by the European Parliament in 1994. The initiative brought human rights monetary aids under a single budget. "In 2001 the European Commission established EuropeAid to implement the Commission's external aid instruments. Now, EIHDR functions as a unit within Europe Aid"[39].

---

[39] Yacoubian, Mona, Promoting Middle East Democracy, United States Institute of Peace, October 2004.

3. Euro-Mediterranean Partnership

3.1.) Euro-Mediterranean Partnership

The Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (EMP), also known as the Barcelona Process was established in November 1995. The partnership was intended to be a solution to growing concerns about instability on Europe's southern flank and the increasing importance of the region in terms of security, energy dependence and trade relations. Within the EMP framework, the EU conducts much of its political, economic, social and cultural relations with Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestinian Territories, Tunisia, Turkey, Syria and previously Cyprus and Malta before their membership to the EU. Apart from the United Nations, the EMP remains the only forum for permanent and institutionalized dialogue where both Israel and most Arab states are present.

The MEDA programme is the principal financial instrument of the EU for the implementation of the EMP. "The programme offers technical and financial support measures to accompany the reform of economic and social structures in the Mediterranean Partners and it is implemented by EuropeAid"[40]. MEDA funding occurs in seven-year cycles, with the current cycle, MEDA II, covering the period 2000-2006. The European Investment Bank provides an additional 2 billion euros in loans to the region.

The EMP provides a framework for cooperation between the EU members and their Mediterranean partners. The EMP is very different from previous initiatives because it is a "global and comprehensive policy among equal partners with ambitious long term objectives including respect for human rights and democracy and other common principles as well as political, security, social, cultural and human

---

[40] EU Official Web Site, MEDA Programme, www.europa.eu.int

cooperation. The central issue is the transition to open market economies through refocused economic and financial cooperation"[41]. Also the EMP introduced regional cooperation and supports bilateral actions and dialogue. Finally, the MEDA apparatus formed to finance the project has a much bigger budget than the previous budgets. MEDA funds all projects of the EMP, which currently is allotted one billion euros annually.

3.2.) Structure of the EMP

The Barcelona Declaration provides two paths for the partnership. First, promoting bilateral ties between the EU and each of the Mediterranean partners through Association Agreements. Second, improving regional cooperation through multilateral mechanism, which provides cooperation in sectors such as agriculture, energy and tourism. The Association Agreements serve as the principal instrument for the EU's promotion of democratic change in the Arab world. When signing an Association Agreement, Mediterranean partners agree to the principles of human rights, fundamental freedoms and the rule of law.

The Barcelona Declaration and the association agreements are divided into three areas in the partnership; political, economic and cultural.

a) Political dimension of the partnership

From the political perspective, the partnership provides a framework to conduct regular political dialogue on international issues of common interest, fostering mutual understanding and promoting the convergence of views. It includes provisions on respect for the democratic principles and fundamental human rights, cooperation to counter the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery, and anti-terrorism. It is possible to state that the majority of this

---

[41] EU Official Web Site, Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, www.europe.eu.int

area is constituted by human rights, women empowerment and press freedom projects. Only small percentage of the MEDA funding directly targets democracy promotion; the vast majority of the funding is more closely oriented toward a traditional development mandate.

b) Economic dimension of the partnership

From the economic perspective, each Association Agreement foresees the creation of a Euro-Mediterranean Free Trade Area by the year of 2010. The agreement covers trade in goods, services, and rules for public procurement, as the protection of intellectual property rights. Each Association Agreement also foresees co-operation in a large number of areas including; customs, transport, tourism or environment, as well as dispute settlement provisions in line with those in the WTO. Besides the Association Agreement, the EU has also offered series of financial tools such as the Mediterranean Aid Program grants and European Investment Bank loans to stimulate economic and legal transformation. The Agadir Agreement concluded in March 2004 and signed by Morocco, Tunisia, Jordan and Egypt marks an important step toward building the Free Trade Zone. The EU welcomes initiatives to build regional free trade zones and sees these arrangements as the first steps of the Euro-Mediterranean Free Trade Area.

c) Cultural dimension of the partnership

The third area of the partnership is intercultural dialogue. The dialogue is based on co-operation in social and cultural matters. Cooperation extends to a wide range of fields, from education and culture to the fight against crime. The main aim of the dialogue is "to create a historic reconciliation of the past and harmonization of

the future prospects"[42]. This area has gained significant importance after the 9/11 events and led to the formation of Euro-Mediterranean Foundation for the Dialogue of Cultures on July 1, 2004, which is based in Alexandria " that aims to promote greater mutual knowledge of the cultures residing along the Mediterranean"[43].

4. Euro-Mediterranean Partnership in the post-9/11 Period

The events following the establishment of the Euro Mediterranean Partnership have showed that the structure of the EMP was inadequate to deal with the emerging security concerns of the continent. The main reason of such need was the events of the 9/11 and the EU's transformation.

The events of the 9/11 and the emerging new security concerns for the Europe have changed the structure of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership. After the events of 9/11, it became clear that there are new threats to the international security. Threats that were invisible and target was unknown such as terrorism, weapons of mass destruction. Since, Europe had to find alternative ways to protect its security.

Another reason that made changes in the EMP inevitable was the EU transformation and the prospect of enlargement. The EU has introduced monetary union and single currency and has also created the second pillar "European Foreign Security and Defense Policy" which have changed the nature of the union. With these changes the EU became more than an economic union, but a political entity with a single currency; the euro, and a common security and defense policy. Also with the eastern enlargement the security concerns of the union have become vital since the new members were more open to threats from outside with their weak border controls, conflicts in the society and lower economic development level.

---

[42] El-Amir, Ayman, Bridging the Mediterranean, Al-Ahram Weekly, 15.11.2004.
[43] Vallelersundi, Ana Palacio, The Barcelona Process, Georgetown Journal, ws04.

Finally, the persistence of traditional threats to stability " a result of growing gap between North and South of the Mediterranean in the political arena (human rights and democratic governance), socio-economic issues (asymmetric demographics, poverty and migratory flows) and cultural elements (especially the social and political roles of religion)"[44].

All the above reasons have showed that the geopolitical and strategic context was very much different than that of 1995. Since many of the circumstances that led to the EMP have changed, the need to redefine the process has emerged. In this respect beginning in 2000, efforts have focused on "reinvigorating" the EMP by providing for a more vigorous and coherent democracy building strategy. A series of European Commission papers published over the past two years "articulate an overarching strategy as well as specific policies designed to facilitate and strengthen reform. Together, these policies form the backbone of Europe's future Middle East democracy-promotion strategy"[45].

5. European Neighborhood Policy

5.1.) Objectives of the ENP

The Wider Europe-Neighborhood policy, launched in March 2003, offers new framework for relations with Europe's new eastern and southern neighbors following the European Union's May 1, 2004 enlargement. The new neighborhood encompasses a vast territory stretching from Morocco to Moldova. The EU does not offer membership to these countries but tries to ensure a stable environment by providing powerful incentives to implement political and economic reforms. "The

---

[44] Vallelersundi, Ana Palacio, The Barcelona Process, Georgetown Journal, ws04.
[45] Yacoubian, Mona, Promoting Middle East Democracy, United States Institute of Peace, October 2004.

objective of the ENP is to share benefits of an enlarged EU with neighboring countries in order to contribute to increased stability, security and prosperity of the EU and its neighbors"[46].

The main objective of the ENP is to create a "ring of friends" around the EU rather than a "fortress Europe". The council states that the ENP will build on mutual commitments to common values, including democracy, the rule of law, good governance and respect for human rights and to the principles of market economy, free trade and sustainable development and poverty reduction. In order to develop a "zone of prosperity" the EU offers its neighbors the prospect of eventual entry to its internal market and the four freedoms (free movement of goods, of persons, of capital and of services) in exchange for the implementation of political, economic and institutional reforms.

The main factor that differentiates the ENP from Euro-Mediterranean Partnership is the fact that it enhances and clarifies conditionality by offering serious incentives to encourage countries to undertake serious reforms. Offering entry to the European market and giving four freedoms is a big step for the EU. By offering such incentive to the Middle Eastern countries in return of political reforms shows how determent the EU is about the issue of reform in the region. It is stated in the ENP Report that "the level of ambition of the relationship with each neighbor will depend on the degree of the partner's commitment to common values as well as its capacity to implement jointly agreed priorities"[47].

---

[46]Euromed Report, <u>Council Conclusions on European Neighborhood Policy</u>, Issue no: 79, 23.06.2004.
[47]Euromed Report, <u>Council Conclusions on European Neighborhood Policy</u>, Issue no: 79, 23.06.2004

5.2.) Action Plans

The ENP is structured around a series of "action plans" that are agreed jointly with each neighboring countries. The plans have a three to five years time frame and subject to renewal by mutual consent. The action plans are based on a core set of principles but are also differentiated, taking into account the specific characteristics of each neighbor, its national reform processes and its relations with the EU. "The first action plans proposed have been developed with partners with which the EU has Association or Partnership and Cooperation Agreements in force: Jordan, Moldova, Morocco, Tunisia, Ukraine, Israel and the Palestinian Authority"[48]. The new action plans that the EU is concluding have the potential to develop into a model for a tougher policy, if the countries involved adhere to the attached conditions. "These conditions have the advantage of being very detailed (containing 200 concrete steps for reform) and of having been negotiated with input from civil society groups as well as the regimes"[49].

The implementations of the action plans were decided to be supported through MEDA, which is EMP's main funding mechanism. It is not clear how much of the MEDA funding will be diverted to the ENP action plans.

5.3.) Human Rights Report in Reference to ENP Action Plans

In May 2003, the Commission issued a communication entitled "Reinvigorating EU Actions on Human Rights and Democratization with Mediterranean Partners". This report has brought a new dimension to the ENP. The document established strategic guidelines for strengthening the implementation of the human rights clause of the association agreements. The "Reinvigorating EU

---

[48] Communication from the Commission to the Council, COMM(2004) 795 FINAL, 9.12.2004.
[49] Asmus, Ronald D. and et al, A Transatlantic Strategy to Promote Democratic Development in the Broader Middle East, The Center for European Reform Bulletin, March 2005.

Actions" report proposes establishing action plans in partnership with Mediterranean counterparts. The "proposal envisions regular dialogue between the EU and the individual partner countries on human rights issues"[50]. The human rights action plans will be anchored to the ENP, serving as a component of the more comprehensive action plans developed as a part of the ENP.

6. European Security Strategy

The European Security Strategy launched in June 2003, under the leadership of Javier Solana, the EU High Representative for Foreign Policy, Security and Defense, forms a strategic umbrella for Europe's new democracy-promotion strategy. The later launched reports "Strengthening the EU's Relations with the Arab World" in December 2003 and "Interim Report on The EU Strategic Partnership with the Mediterranean and the Middle East" in March 2004 complete the European Security Strategy. While the European Neighborhood Policy lays out concrete policy options for reform in the region, the European Security Strategy and accompanying papers situate these options in a broader strategic context.

6.1.) Objectives and Motives of the European Security Strategy

Javier Solana, has offered a framework for Europe's new security strategy in a document titled "A Secure Europe in a Better World". This document was submitted to the European Council in Thesalonniki in June 2003, highlighting the need for Europe to assume a commitment to conflict prevention. The report outlines major threats to security in the new century and stresses the necessity of the EU as a global power. "No single country is able to tackle today's complex problems on its own…As a union of 25 states with over 450 million people producing a quarter of

---

[50] Yacoubian, Mona, <u>Promoting Middle East Democracy</u>, United States Institute of Peace, October 2004.

the world's GNP… the EU is inevitably a global player…Europe should be ready to share the responsibility for the global security"[51]. The report also states "in much of the developing world, poverty and disease cause untold suffering and give rise to pressing security concerns". Also security is seen as a precondition of development.

> "Conflict not only destroys infrastructure, including social infrastructure; it also encourages criminality, deters investment and makes normal economic activity impossible…A number of countries and regions are caught in a cycle of conflict, insecurity and poverty"[52].

The report identifies five key threats to European security; terrorism, proliferation of the WMD, regional conflicts, failed states and organized crime, including trafficking in illegal drugs and weapons and illegal immigration. The report states the difference of these threats from the ones during the Cold War where the threat was visible. In this respect the report states that, the newly defined threats demand a mixture of instruments, including political and economic tools. This proposal "emanates from a systemic, comprehensive, and more human concept of security that emphasizes the importance of political, socio-economic and cultural aspects, as well as dynamic interconnections between all of these elements"[53]. The responses to security concerns must not rely solely on traditional hard power nor completely exclude the military or defensive approach. The paper advocates the use of conditionality and targeted trade measures as a means of promoting democracy. The paper also makes a strong case for "preventive engagement" to avert future crises.

---

[51] European Security Strategy, A Secure Europe in a Better World, Brussels, 12.12. 2003
[52] European Security Strategy, A Secure Europe in a Better World, Brussels, 12.12. 2003.
[53] Vallelersundi, Ana Palacio, The Barcelona Process, Georgetown Journal, ws04.

6.2.) Report on "Strengthening the EU's Partnership with the Arab World"

In December 2003, the European Council published a paper entitled "Strengthening the EU's Partnership with the Arab World" that lays out the principles that should govern the European Union's relations with the Arab world. The paper stresses the importance of promoting economic, political and social reform in these states. Arab states are neighbors of the EU and trade and migratory links are strong, so their development and prosperity have deep implications for the EU. The paper refers to the Arab Development Reports and necessity of reform in these states.

The paper outlines two main lines of action. "On the one hand, the pertinence of the Euro-Mediterranean partnership reconfirmed. On the other, for countries outside the EMP, the paper invites the Council to explore proposals for a possible regional strategy for Gulf States, Yemen, Iran and Iraq"[54]. The paper stresses the importance of relations with Gulf States, Yemen, Iran and Iraq, which have less developed relations with the EU than relations with Barcelona countries.

6.3.) Interim Report on EU Strategic Partnership with the Mediterranean and the Middle East

The report issued in March 2004 provides an update on the development of the European Union's Middle East strategy. The report "emphasizes the need for the European Union to consult with Middle Eastern countries and to inculcate a sense of shared ownership among its regional partners"[55]. The report emphasizes the importance of consultation and the importance of differentiation rather than a standard approach to all partners. The paper concludes by asserting eleven objectives; including development, common zone of peace, prosperity and progress;

---

[54] Council of the European Union, 15935/03 PESC 791 NOTE, Brussels, 9 December 2003
[55] Vallelersundi, Ana Palacio, The Barcelona Process, Georgetown Journal, ws04.

resolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict, long term engagement with the region, need to strengthen political dialogue and promote respect for human rights and the rule of law.

7. Other European Democracy Promotion Initiatives

The EU engages into relations with some other Middle Eastern Countries outside the framework of the Association Agreements. These relations are based on some differentiated topics that change according to each country. Although the relations with these countries are not on the same level as the association partners, the EU tries to promote democracy in these countries. The EU has signed cooperation agreements with these states, except Iran, in order to promote its relations. Iran is a unique case, in which, the EU sets forth conditions on nuclear proliferation to sign the cooperation agreement with Iran.

7.1.) EU-GCC Dialogue

The Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf (GCC) is a regional organization created in May 1981 by Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and United Arab Emirates. Behind the creation was a "general perception by these states of their vulnerability arising from their oil wealth in contrast to their small and dispersed populations (28 million), their vast surface area (2.6 million km^2) and their limited military capabilities in a generally instable region"[56].

The European Union-Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Cooperation Agreement was signed in 1989. The main objective of the agreement is to negotiate a comprehensive Free-Trade Agreement with the GCC as well as to contribute to the stability of the region. The agreement covers trade in goods, trade in services,

---

[56] EU Official Web Site, <u>The EU's Relations with GCC Countries</u>, www.europe.eu.int

government procurement and intellectual property rights along with cooperation in fighting terrorism and nonproliferation. The Free Trade Agreement is expected to conclude at the end of 2005. According to the joint statement made by the EU and GCC at the end of their meeting on April 05, 2005, parties stated their "commitment to do their utmost to conclude the negotiations at the earliest possible stage and preferably before the end of 2005"[57].

The agenda of relations between The EU and GCC, does not address political reforms. The EU has offered to launch contacts on human rights issues but has met with reluctance from its GCC partners.

7.2.) Cooperation Agreement with Yemen

The European Union signed a cooperation agreement with Yemen in 1997. The objective of the agreement is to facilitate cooperation in the areas of trade and development. The agreement provides the basis of long-term contractual commitments between the EU and Yemen and is an important step to strengthening and expanding relations through "trade and commercial co-operation, development cooperation, through which Yemen is assisted for sustainable socio-economic development, economic cooperation and cooperation in environmental, cultural and scientific issues, as well as social and human resources development areas"[58].

In October 2003, the establishment of the political dialogue, covering issues related to political reform, was announced at the Joint Co-operation Committee. In July 2004, a meeting focusing on democracy, human rights, democratization and co-operation in the fight against terrorism. In January 2004 a Regionalized Delegation

---

[57] Middle East Online, <u>EU GCC Target Free Trade Deal by Year End</u>, 05.04.2005.
[58] EU Official Web Site, <u>The EU's Relations with Yemen</u>, www.europe.eu.int

of the European Commission was opened in Sana'a, replacing the EC Technical

Advisory Office, which had been set up in the Yemeni capital in 1995.

7.3.) Comprehensive Dialogue with Iran

The EU does not have contractual relations with Iran. A EU-Iran dialogue

was initiated in 1995. In 1997, following the election of President Khatami, the

dialogue was extended to new areas and became the Comprehensive Dialogue in

1998. The dialogue features semi-annual meetings at the undersecretary level to

discuss political and economic issues. The main goal of the dialogue is to launch a

Trade and Cooperation Agreement. The agreement is aimed at encouraging Iran to

undertake reforms with eventual integration of Iran in to the World Trade

Organization.

In December 2002, the EU linked negotiations on a Trade and Cooperation

Agreement to progress on political issues in four key areas; human rights, Weapons

of Mass Destruction, terrorism and the Middle East Peace Process. The major

obstacle in front of a free trade agreement has been the significant tensions between

Iran and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) over nuclear proliferation.

Also, a Human Rights Dialogue was launched in 2002, consisting of a roundtable

discussion with representatives of Iranian civil society.

The results of the Comprehensive Dialogue are rather few. The possibility of

a Trade and Cooperation Agreement have emerged on 29 November 2004 as Iran

made a commitment to the IAEA to freeze its uranium enrichment activities, which

enable the country to produce raw material for nuclear weapons. However, after a

short period Iran's chief nuclear negotiator, Hassan Rohani stated " his country was

only prepared to freeze its related activities for a few months, as long as negotiations

with the EU are ongoing"[59]. Although the dialogue was re-launched on December

2004, the willingness of Iran to suspend its uranium enrichment programme is still

vague. Iran insists that it only seeks to make low-grade enriched uranium to make

nuclear fuel, but some countries stated it all along, especially USA, that as an oil rich

country Iran does not need nuclear energy. In the summary of the last meeting on

January 17, 2005 in Geneva it was stated "Iran recognizes explicitly that its fuel

cycle program cannot be justified on economic grounds"[60].

Although the dialogue continues, the commitment of the EU to its

conditionality principle is visible. The EU has refused to relax its conditions and

move forward with the trade agreement. "Observers point to the EU's steadfast

position as evidence of its willingness to implement conditionality"[61].

8. Evaluation of the EU's Democracy Promotion Programs

The European Union' s democracy promotion strategy in Middle East can be

characterized as a long term, cautious policy consisting of indirect support to

democratic reform in the region. Rather than directly supporting democracy, the EU

supports democratic values, human rights and cross cultural dialogue. The EU

"generally favors top-down approach conducting most of its democratic reform

activities on a government to government basis"[62]. MEDA funding is mostly diverted

to government programmes and contacts with Arab NGO's are rare.

---

[59] Solana sees new chapter in EU-Iranian nuclear talks, EurActiv.com, March 2005.
[60] Associated Press, EU- Iran Nuclear Talks deadlocked, Jerusalem Post, 25 January 2005.
[61] Associated Press, EU- Iran Nuclear Talks deadlocked, Jerusalem Post, 25 January 2005
[62] Yacoubian, Mona, Promoting Middle East Democracy, United States Institute of Peace, October 2004.

8.1) Negative points of the programs

The most important handicap of the EU programs is the fact that Euro Mediterranean Partnership, the main apparatus of the EU directing its relations with the Middle East, was not designed as a political organization. Since the major motive behind the Partnership was the massive illegal immigration at the time, the main focus of the Partnership is economic. The EU's main intention was to help these countries to improve their economies and become market based economies. Political reform and democratization were not on the agenda in the first place. Although the European Neighborhood Policy and the European Security Policy have reshaped the EMP, still the economic basket has the biggest budget share and major focus.

The nature of the European Union is another important factor that affects the EU's policies negatively. The European Union consists of 25 member states with different national interests. The goals and interests of each member state often differ from each other. In this case, it is hard for the EU to take a firm position about a specific issue involving the Middle East. The southern members have different concerns because of the issue of illegal immigration they are faced with. So, economic development of the region is much more important for them. Northern members such as United Kingdom or Germany can much more easily push for the democracy promotion programs and the human rights reforms.

Another negative factor is the highly bureaucratic structure of the European Union. The multi year budget cycles and volumes of paperwork negatively affect the efficiency of the programs. When there is a need for change or re definition in the programs, the process is very hard to redirect. The inefficient bureaucracy leads to slow decision making mechanism and can usually be blocked by an individual member state which is concerned about its national interest. This handicap makes it

very hard for the EU to take a firm position and direct consistent policies. Also, the bureaucratic structure, affects the ability of the EU to adapt to changes in the international arena and modify its policies. Conflicting loyalties between the European Council, which represents the interest of the nation states, and the European Commission, which represents the interest of the European Union often cause problems and add bureaucratic tensions.

Another weakness of the EU programs is that the EU doesn't engage in close relations with Arab civil groups and NGOs while directing its democracy promotion programs. The EU's main partners in directing these programs are the authoritarian Middle Eastern governments themselves. The programs rarely support civil society groups and NGOs. The critics target the fact that the aids and programs for democracy promotion do not usually reach their intended targets. In order to avoid this, the EU must increase its support for civil society groups working for the promotion of democracy. "The west must help empower the moderate, democratic side by supporting those NGOs working to create the foundations for more just, free and democratic societies"[63]

Another criticism to the EU programs in Middle East is the issue of the allocation of MEDA funds. MEDA was established as the main funding tool of the EMP. Therefore, the main focus of the MEDA was the economic programs led by the EMP. However as the European Neighborhood Project was founded, MEDA also became the main funder of the ENP. The allocation of funds between the two programs; EMP and ENP, is not clear. That creates and will continue to create tension among the member states that have different interests in supporting each of the programs.

[63] Asmus, Ronald D. and et al, <u>A Transatlantic Strategy to Promote Democratic Development in the Broader Middle East</u>, The Center for European Reform Bulletin, March 2005.

Although the idea of conditionality is the most important tool of the EU while coordinating these programs, the incentives offered by the ENP are critical. The ENP offers some non-monetary incentives and the prospect of access to the EU internal market. That clause will definitely cause tensions among some EU members who will react when faced competition from Middle East.

8.2) Positive points of the programs

"The European Union remains as some political scientists call; the most exciting experiment in political engineering never tried by humankind"[64]. The European integration is not only a success for the reason of making war impossible among its members and ending hostilities that are hundreds of years old. The EU has also become one of the most important trade unit and economic entities in the world. In 50 years European economies have closed the gap with the US, and Europe has brought countries out of dictatorship and into democracy. Besides its economic power the union has also developed a composition of civil and civic power that effected peoples lives; not only European citizens but also citizens of neighboring countries. "If you look at map of the world, you can see a zone of peace spreading like a blue oil stick- from the west coast of Ireland to the eastern Mediterranean; from the Arctic Circle to the Straits of Gibraltar-sucking new members in its wave"[65]. Besides the EU citizens, another 1.5 billion people depend on the EU which is their biggest trade partner and biggest source of credit, foreign investment and aid.

When we look at the changes in these countries inside the "eurosphere" we observe a European influence. The "eurosphere" not only consists of the EU members or candidates, but also EU's neighboring countries that the EU engages in

---

[64] Haeverbeke, Guy, <u>EU Law and Institutions</u>, Lecture Notes, Izmir University of Economics, Fall 2003
[65] Leonard, Mark, <u>Europe: The New Superpower</u>, Irish Times, 18 February 2005.

economic and political cooperation. The Middle East is one of these regions. The EU

has the capacity to influence and promote reform in this region by using its

transformative power. That is a new kind of power. As Mark Leonard states, "the

European transformative power works in the long term and is about reshaping the

world rather than winning short term tussles"[66]. The countries accept the influence of

European norms either for the prospect of the EU membership or for the access to the

EU internal market even for the EU aid to their countries. The transformative power

can certainly affect the Middle Eastern states as well as the other states in the

European Neighborhood.

Another power of the EU is its bargaining power. The EU uses conditionality

as its main tool to promote democracy in the region. And it offers benefits of its

market, largest in the world, in return of the democratic reforms. Most Middle

Eastern states feel obliged to apply reforms because they can benefit from the access

to the EU market. The EU is the biggest trade partner and foreign investor in the

region therefore conflicting with the EU may become vital for the regions

economies. Besides their close trade relations with the EU and the prospect of entry

to the EU market, the role of the EU as the foreign investor is very important for the

region.

Another important specialty of the European programs is the importance

given to legal frameworks. The EU "transforms the countries it comes into contact

with, instead of just skimming the surface"[67]. The effect EU makes to its new

members and candidates is very visible. The EU transforms economies and societies

of the countries. Although the change is very small in the Middle Eastern countries

---

[66] Leonard, Mark, <u>Europe: The New Superpower</u>, Irish Times, 18 February 2005.
[67] Leonard, Mark, <u>Europe: The New Superpower</u>, Irish Times, 18 February 2005.

when compared to the reform East Europe or Turkey experiences, we can still mention a "European Transformative Power" in the region. The EU pushes for these countries to sign international conventions and treaties and adapt them to their own constitutions in return of the economic incentives EU provides.

The most important factor in European Policies is the fact that the EU builds partnership with these countries. The dialogue between the EU and the Middle Eastern states is a partnership based on mutual willingness to cooperate. Without the willingness of these states reform is impossible. The EU is aware of the fact and in every contract the EU signs with these countries partnership clause is very well defined. The programs and projects are drawn up in consultation with the governments or civil society in the Middle East. As stated "in a key statement of French policy aims in February 2004, political reform efforts must start from the needs of Middle Eastern states themselves and cautioned that EU needs to associate Middle Eastern states as much as possible in its thinking in a genuine partnership"[68]. Europe doesn't change countries by military threat but rather the biggest threat is to cut off contact with them. This principle on the EU's Middle Eastern Programs provides a sense of mutual willingness. With this, both parties apply the program in order to receive benefits according to their own interests. Therefore, the EU programs are perceived more like mutual partnership programs for reform, rather than tools for western imperialist aims.

8.3.) Conclusion

Although the EU has major deficiencies rooted by it's own structure it is possible to state that the EU has a transformative power on Middle Eastern states on the issue of democratic reform.

---

[68] Youngs, Richard, <u>Europe's Uncertain Pursuit of Middle East Reform</u>, Carnegie Papers, June 2004.

The process is mostly indirect and even sometimes inefficient, but it mainly goals change in the long term. The conditionality clause and the EU's strong bargaining power manages to create changes in Middle Eastern societies. The states' own willingness to cooperate and bargain with the EU causes change within countries own dynamics. I believe that, it is a healthy transformation that will help the democratization process in these countries in the long term.

IV) TURKISH FOREIGN POLICY TOWARDS MIDDLE EAST

The relations between Turkey and Middle Eastern countries have always been complex. Though Turkey is different from the other countries in the region given its secular and non-Arab character; the geopolitical, cultural and religious ties, permanently bind Turkey to the region. These common values, interests and similarities make Turkey an inseparable part of the Middle Eastern political and economic system.

Although Turkey has tried to identify itself with the west, its geopolitical location compels Turkey to remember its Middle Eastern character. Turkey is a Middle Eastern country, as well as a European and Asian country. For this reason Turkey can never isolate itself from the conflicts and crisis of the Middle East.

Additionally, Turkey has historical bonds with the Middle East. Beginning with the 16th century, the Middle East was ruled under the hegemony of the Ottoman Empire. "Except Iran, Afghanistan and Pakistan all the regions' countries were under the Ottoman rule and they had their first nationalist uprisings against the Ottoman Empire"[69]. This long and complicated relationship has created both negative and positive feelings among the parties.

Although Turkey is a secular state, the majority of its population is Muslim. This common denominator has acted as a cultural bond between the parties. Turkish nation has a lot of common values, traditions and beliefs with the Middle Eastern people which are inherited from the common religion; Islam.

In order to understand the role of a EU member Turkey in the Middle East, we have to examine the history of the Turkish Foreign Policy in the Middle East. In

---

[69] Oran, Baskın, Türk Dış Politikası, Cilt I, İletişim Yayınları, 2001, p.196.

this way, we can see the origins of the major problems and conflicts and understand the common values and interests parties share.

1. The History of Turkey's Middle East Policy

1.1.) Turkish Foreign Policy in the Ataturk era

The young Turkish Republic formed in 1923 did not intend to have an active foreign policy in the Middle East. The new "national identity" formed by Kemal Ataturk was focused on Anatolia, and it had rejected the Ottoman Islamic heritage in favor for secularism. As Middle East was identified with despotism and sheria and chaos, the west resembled the values of democratization and national development for Turkey. Therefore relations with the Middle East were kept at minimum and the main focus was diverted to the west. The main reason that distanced Turkey from Middle Eastern affairs was the Turkish-Arab mistrust that originated to early 20th century. From the Turkish perspective, "the Arab Revolt which helped West destroy the Ottoman Empire during the First World War, had represented an unforgivable stab in the back. From the Arab perspective, the Ottoman imperial domination of most of the Middle East had unforgivably hampered Arab national development"[70]. Ataturk's successors continued to pursue his principles of neutrality in foreign affairs through out the Second World War.

1.2.) Post WWII order and the Cold War

In the post World War II, in the face of the emerging Soviet threat, Turkey began to search for security. In order to avoid USSR's expansionist policies Turkey started to collaborate with the West in order to avoid isolation and demonstrated its value and importance during the Korean War. In 1952, following the Turkish

---

[70] Martin, Lenore G., The Future of Turkish Foreign Policy, The MIT Press, Cambridge, 2002, p.159

participation in the Korean War, it became a member of NATO. By joining NATO Turkey had changed its former policy of non-alignment and joined the western block. Between1950-60 Turkey built closer relations with USA and Europe. The possible threat of communist expansion in the Middle East has pushed Turkey to join anti-communist alignments in the region.

Turkey began to take a leadership role in the region with the establishment of the Baghdad Pact in 1955. The members of the pact were Iran, Iraq, Pakistan and the United Kingdom. The pact was seen as the northern barrier against communism and it was aimed at strengthening regional defense and preventing influence of the Soviet Union in the Middle East. However, the pact was soon faced with Arab opposition under the leadership of Egyptian President Gemal Abdel Nasser. Syria joined with Egypt in a political union to form the United Arab Republic. This event caused the creation of a second block against Baghdad Pact, which was supported by the USSR. During this period Turkey has become the first Muslim nation to recognize Israel. The pro-western attitude Turkey had during the period often led to harsh criticisms by Arab nations and damaged Turkey's credibility in the region.

Up to that date, Turkish foreign policy was neutral. Although Turkey had clearly identified its young republic as a nation state ruled with the western norms, the Turkish foreign policy was very much independent from the West. The 1950s witnessed the beginning of the Cold War. The fear of communist threat combined with the changes in the Turkish domestic politics, have pushed Turkey fully to the western camp and that cause a resentment among the Middle Eastern states.

1.3.) The Cyprus Conflict and its effects on the Turkish Foreign Policy

In late 1960s and 1970s the political agenda changed for Turkey because of the Cyprus conflict. As the Cyprus crisis started in mid 1960s and as Turkey lost

western support with its intervention into the Northern Cyprus in 1974, to protect the Turkish Cypriot community, the focus of the Turkish Foreign Policy shifted. Addition to this, the OPEC crisis that led to escalation of oil prices pushed Turkey to search for allies in the Middle East. During this period, Turkey also downgraded its relations with Israel, maintained good relations with the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) and searched for its lost reputation in the Middle East. In this respect "Turkey moved closer and closer to the Arab position in the Middle East conflict"[71]. During the Six Day War, Turkey refused to allow the use of NATO bases in its territory to deliver supplies to Israel. Also the attitude was the same during the Yom Kippur War.

On the other hand, Turkey was disappointed by the lack of support by the Arab states on the issue of Cyprus and was left alone during the period. The Middle Eastern states refused to support the Turkish position not only in UN, but also at the Islamic Conference.

1.4.) 1980's: Iran-Iraq War and the opening of Özal era

The first years of 1980s signify the return of Turkey to "traditional Kemalist Foreign Policy of non-entanglement to the Middle East". During this period the changes in the domestic politics greatly affected the foreign policy. The military coup and the changes made in the constitution demolished the leftist opposition in the country. In the 1980s, Turkey returned to the idea of a closer alliance with the West. During the period USA was seen as an economic role model in Turkey. The period which was marked by Turgut Ozal, prime minister and later the president of Turkey, experienced tremendous economic changes which eventually effected the foreign policy.

---

[71] Liel, Alan, Turkey in the Middle East, Lynne Rienner Pub., 2001, p. 192.

Ozal's foreign policy that took its roots in mid-1980s,"new vision", was aimed at making Turkey an important regional power.

"He wanted Turkey to influence the region from Adriatic to the Great Wall of China. Although the major emphasis of the foreign policy was improving relations with the west and become a EU member, he also gave great importance to improved relations with the Middle East"[72].

The Iran-Iraq war was a major event of the 1980s that left a lasting mark in Middle Eastern history. During the war, Turkey adopted a position of strict neutrality, "becoming involved only in such humanitarian ventures as sponsoring an exchange of prisoners of war (1983) or an exchange of diplomats (1984)"[73]. Also during the Iran-Iraq war "the Turkish economy profited handsomely by supplying both sides between 1980-1988"[74]. As a result of the expanded bilateral trade and blockade on Iranian seaports, a large part of Iran's overall foreign trade (except oil) went through Turkey. During the Iran-Iraq War several Turkish sea ports especially Trabzon and Iskenderun benefited greatly from the added business. However, there were some problems caused by the war for Turkey. The security of land transportation of oil through Turkish territory detoriated as well as the safety of maritime passage in the Gulf. Another important issue of concern for Turkey was the problem of Iranian refugees escaping from the Khomeini regime. They were resettled in camps in eastern Anatolia. "By 1985 the number of Iranian refugees had reached nearly 1 million and they had become a real economic burden"[75].

---

[72] Yilmaz, Suhnaz, Turkish Foreign Policy, Lecture Notes, Koc University, Spring 2001.
[73] Liel, Alan, Turkey in the Middle East, Lynne Rienner Pub., 2001, p. 172
[74] Martin, Lenore G., The Future of Turkish Foreign Policy, The MIT Press, Cambridge, 2002, p.160
[75] Liel, Alan, Turkey in the Middle East, Lynne Rienner Pub., 2001, p. 172

1.5.) Gulf War I, emergence of Central Asian Republics and PKK insurgency in Turkey

In 1990-91, Turkey joined the Western-Arab coalition against Saddam Hussein in the Gulf War. Under the leadership of Ozal, Turkey followed bold policies. Ozal constructed a different foreign policy than the traditional Kemalist foreign policy. As the Cold War ended and the Soviet Union collapsed, Turkish politicians feared that the importance of Turkey as a strategic ally to the west would diminish. To avoid this possible scenario, Ozal tried to re-position Turkey as regional power. The Gulf War was an opportunity for Turkey to show its importance to the world. Turkey provided the allies with the use of Turkey's air base at Incirlik to bomb Iraq and blocked the usage of the Iraq-Turkish oil pipeline. These policies suddenly "thrust Turkey into an active role in the international relations of the Middle East. It continued its active role after the war by participating in the international economic embargo and allowing USA and UK to use İncirlik for Operation Provide Comfort and its successor Operation Northern Watch"[76]. The economic embargo to Iraq and the closure of the pipeline had huge effects over the Turkish economy. "The total amount of economic loss Turkey has experienced because of the economic embargo to Iraq is estimated to be $100 billion"[77].

The active policy pursued during Gulf War demonstrated Turkey's strategic significance for the west. As a show of gratitude, Turkey received "$8 billion in military supplies and the Turkish import quotas to the US was doubled"[78]. Turkey participated heavily to the reconstruction efforts launched by Kuwait. However, economic gains Turkey had received were very minimal when compared to its losses.

---

[76] Martin, Lenore G., The Future of Turkish Foreign Policy, The MIT Press, Cambridge, 2002, p.161
[77] Oran, Baskın, Turk Dış Politikası, İletişim Yayınları, Cilt II, 2001, p. 258.
[78] Liel,Alan, Turkey in the Middle East, Lynne Rienner Pub., 2001, p. 163

Another debate that took place during the Gulf War was the Ozal's project regarding Kirkuk and Mousul. Although not proved, the actions of Ozal at the time created a perception that he had some plans over the northern Iraq. During the war "Ozal had stated that, Saddam would be overthrown at the end of war and the map pf the Middle East would change. If Turkey pursuit an active foreign policy, it could achieve a larger portion from this new system"[79]. Although didn't come to reality, the prospects of such project had marked a tremendous shift in the Turkish Foreign Policy. This plan totally conflicted with the traditional Turkish policy favoring the status quo and symbolized an ambitious and active foreign policy.

Another significant dimension that was added to Turkish Foreign Policy agenda in early 1990s was the issue of Central Asian Republics, following the break-up of the USSR. Turkey entered into a competition with Iran to exert influence over the six new states; Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan and Azerbaijan. Turkey offered guidance in areas of democracy, secularity and modernization. Iran proposed an Islamic alternative to the new states. However, Turkey had advantages in this competition because of its cultural, linguistical affiliations. Major reason for choosing Turkish economic model was the necessities of western capital in these states in order to invest for their huge gas and oil reserves. Republics believed that Turkish model would provide better conditions for attracting foreign investment. In this respect most of the republics had preferred Turkish assistance in their state building process rather than Iran.

During 1990s Turkey's internal dynamics and problems have shaped its foreign policy. The rising Kurdish separatist threat in the east, Islamic fundamentalists, and the Syrian and Iranian support to the terrorist groups have

---

[79]Oran, Baskın, Turk Dış Politikası, İletişim Yayınları, Cilt II, 2001, p. 256.

caused a security concern in the country and Turkey started to take serious strategic measures to deal with its neighbors. In this respect Turkey engaged in "military and economic cooperation with Israel, participated in the multilateral track of the Arab-Israeli peace process, used military threats to compel Syria to renounce support for the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) and sparred with Iran over the issues of Islamic fundamentalism as well as Iran's support for the PKK"[80].

2. Turkey's National Interests in the Middle East

Because of its proximity to the region, the instabilities and conflicts of the Middle East often directly and negatively affect Turkey. Turkey's most significant interest is the need for national security. Besides possible military threats, which is rising given the current issues of WMD's in the region, there are also non-military threats such as; "challenges to political legitimacy of the regime, secularity, risk of disturbances in the community from ethnic and religious strife, possibilities of retardation of economic development and fear of disruption of the availability of essential natural resources such as energy[81].

From Turkey's perspective, the major threats are the growth of Islamic fundamentalism in the region and its effects on the secular, democratic, Kemalist regime in Turkey. The PKK demand for Kurdish separatism also challenges the ethnic integrity of the whole Turkish community. The power vacuum in Iraq and the rising power of Iraqi Kurds is a factor re-triggering the threat of Kurdish separatism in Turkey.

---

[80] Martin, Lenore G., The Future of Turkish Foreign Policy, The MIT Press, Cambridge, 2002, p.161
[81] Martin, Lenore G., The Future of Turkish Foreign Policy, The MIT Press, Cambridge, 2002, p.165

The multidimensional security interests of Turkey in the region are usually tied to conflicts and problems Turkey has with its neighbors. Therefore this complex net of convergent and divergent interests can be seen more clearly when examining the dilemmas Turkey experiences with its neighbors. Turkey has concentrated heavily on bilateral relations while dealing with Middle East, in contrast to the EU's regional approach.

3. Bilateral Foreign Policy Dilemmas

3.1.) Iraq

a.) Transportation and Trade

Turkey's economic relations with Iraq have been simple and smooth during the pre-Gulf War I period. Good relations were important for the both sides, especially Iraq. Because, Syria and Iran had blocked the flow of Iraqi oil to the Mediterranean through Syrian pipeline, and oil transport through the Persian Gulf was risky. Therefore, the Turkish pipeline became the only option for Iraq and Turkey gained energy resources and transit fees from the flow of Iraqi oil, as well as cross border truck trade.

The Gulf War I and the Turkish decision to participate in economic embargo affected Turkey negatively. As the embargo was loosened, "Turkey benefited from the reopening of the pipeline from the Iraq and resumption of trade, including the cross border truck trade"[82]. In the aftermath of US invasion of Iraq in the spring of 2003, it remains unclear exactly how much Turkey will benefit economically by participating the reconstruction of the country. Nevertheless, it is clear that Turkey has strong interest in having close economic relations with Iraq. In addition to the

---

[82] Liel,Alan, Turkey in the Middle East, Lynne Rienner Pub., 2001, p. 197

benefits from a close source of energy, Iraq has been an important and close market for the Turkish products.

b) Territorial integrity of Iraq and the issue of Kurds

The national aspirations of the Kurdish minority in Iraq had always been a source of concern for Baghdad. Turkey was also faced with same aspirations by its own Kurdish minority and was interested in maintaining peace in its southeastern provinces. To achieve this common goal Iraq and Turkey have cooperated all along to curb Kurdish activities in the border area. Another significance of Kurdish minority is the location that they live. "Iraqi Kurds mainly live in the Mosul and Kirkuk area where more than half of the country's oil and gas was produced"[83]. Political unrest in such area could have huge effects over the Iraqi economy. In this respect "when the Iraq-Turkey oil pipeline was built, crossing Kurdish areas, Ankara's political cooperation was needed even more"[84].

The problem of Kurdish separatism became more important for Turkey in the post Gulf War I era. The power vacuum established in the north Iraq led to a de facto Kurdish rule and led to an increase in the terrorist activities of PKK in Turkey. This situation " provided the PKK guerillas with havens and bases of operation to cross into Turkey"[85]. The events led to Turkish operations under the name of "hot pursuit". The "hot pursuit" allowed Turkey to follow and attack terrorists across the Iraqi border. In the framework of "hot pursuit" Turkey sent up to 50,000 troops to northern Iraq in various times. Baghdad, powerless to prevent Turkish incursions into its sovereign soil, signaled its displeasure by supporting the PKK and permitting the PKK to maintain offices in Baghdad.

---

[83] Liel, Alan, Turkey in the Middle East, Lynne Rienner Pub, 2001, p. 156
[84] Liel,Alan, Turkey in the Middle East, Lynne Rienner Pub., 2001, p. 156
[85] Liel,Alan, Turkey in the Middle East, Lynne Rienner Pub., 2001, p. 157

In 2003, after the US invasion of Iraq a power vacuum re-emerged in Iraq. Turkey is unhappy about the US-Kurdish close relations. The territorial integrity of Iraq is indispensable for Turkey. As Prime Minister Erdogan stated "Territorial integrity of Iraq is important for Turkey. We do not want to see any single ethnic group in Iraq to dominate the scene over any other Iraqi ethnic groups"[86]. The possibility of an Iraq controlled by Kurds or a separate Kurdish entity in northern Iraq is against Turkish national interests. Such formation can mobilize Kurdish separatist actions in southeastern Turkey and that would threaten Turkish territorial integrity.

c) The issue of Iraqi Turkomans

The situation of Turkomans in Iraq is another important issue for Turkey. Turkey promotes the interests of Iraqi Turkomans against repression by Kurds and to counterbalance Kurdish influence in the northern oil region.

Turkomans and Kurds have lived in the Kirkuk and Mosul for over a thousand years. The Turkoman minority has their own political parties, but they have troubled relations with the Kurds. "Many Kurds see the Turkomans as a proxy for Turkey and the Turkomans themselves feel like a minority without a place in this big Kurdish fraternity, and they look to the Turkish support"[87]. In coherence with the Turkomans feelings Turkey claims that, the Turkomans, whom seen as the Turkish minority in Iraq, should be treated equally by the US Administration and others. Turkey states that Kurds are not the only minority in Iraq and Turkey will defend the rights of the Turkomans.

---

[86]Anadolu Agency, Erdogan: Developments in Kirkuk are not Positive, 29.01.2005
[87] Moaveni, Azadeh, Iraq Invasion Poses Kurdish Dilemma, Time, 04.10.2003

3.2.) Iran

a) Economic relations with Iran

Turkey and Iran have converging and diverging economic interests that shape their relations. The two neighbors have a potential source of cross-border trade. Trade with Iran is very crucial for the eastern region of Turkey. "Iran-Turkey trade amounted to US$2.761 billion in 2004, the Turkish State Statistic Institute stated; The figure is 15.3 percent higher than 2003 which registered US$2,395 billion"[88]. In addition the recently opened pipeline between the two countries provides access to the flow of Iranian gas through Turkish borders. The new pipeline was constructed as a result of the long-term supply agreement, signed during Erbakan's Islamist government in 1996, which caused US disapproval for violating the Iran-Libya Sanctions Act.

b) Ideological rivalry between Iran and Turkey

The ideological rivalry between the two states is the major dilemma in the Turkish-Iranian relations. Although Iran and Turkey have some common political interests, the ideological rivalry among the two causes profound divergence of their political interests. Even the long term common interest of repressing Kurdish nationalism and separatism has not proven to be a common ground on which the two countries can build a lasting cooperation.

Turkey is a secular democracy; Iran is an Islamist theocracy and each represents an alternative model for reformist Middle Eastern states. Although the ideological rivalry have softened after the election of Islamist AKP in Turkey in 2002, the bad memories of late 1990s is still alive.

---

[88] Mena Report, Iran-Turkey Trade up by 15%, www.albawaba.com, 02.02.2005.

In late 1990s, the diplomatic relations soured because of Iranian support given to the Islamist groups active in Turkey. Turkey accused Iran of "attempting to destabilize the Republic by supporting radical Islamist groups such as Hezbollah, Islamist Great Raiders Front, Islamist Action, and the Jerusalem Army, which have been trained in and/or financed by Iran and which engage in terrorist acts in Turkey"[89]. The relations between the two states hit an all-time low during 1997, when the "Iranian ambassador to Turkey called for the adoption of the Islamist Sharia system in Turkey at Jerusalem Day speech in Sincan a suburb of Ankara"[90]. Turkey's response to the Ambassador's comments was to expel him.

In addition to supporting radical Islamist groups, Iran has also supported PKK in order to weaken Turkey. Turkey often accused Iran for aiding, training and offering medical care to PKK[91]. Although a Kurdish nationalist movement is threatening for Iran as well as Turkey, Iran did not hesitate to give support to PKK in order to weaken Turkey. Even after the capture of Abdullah Ocalan in 1999, Iran did not give up supporting the PKK.

The final source of conflict is Turkey's military cooperation with Iran's long-standing enemy, Israel. Since 1996, Turkey has signed series of military cooperation agreements with Israel. "Israeli pilots fly training missions over Turkey while Turkish pilots receive electronic warfare training in Israel. They exchange strategic information as well as cooperate in intelligence matters concerning regionally based terrorist threats"[92].

---

[89] Martin, Lenore G., The Future of Turkish Foreign Policy, The MIT Press, Cambridge, 2002, p.173
[90] Uzum, Bulent, Call for Sharia in Sincan, Istanbul Sabah, 02.02.1997
[91] Mufti, Malik, Daring and Caution in Turkish Foreign Policy, Middle East Journal, Vol. 52, No:1, Winter 1998.
[92] Erickson, Edward J., Turkey as Regional Hegemon, Turkish Studies, Vol 5, No 3, Autumn 2004, p.36

Nonetheless, all dilemmas and conflicts between the two states have side stepped because of their strong mutual interest in preventing the establishment of an autonomous Kurdish State in northern Iraq. In this respect, "Turkey and Iran engage in a delicate balancing of their disparate interests in Kurdish Northern Iraq"[93]. For this goal, even Iran has avoided supporting PKK in the recent period and has made agreements with Turkey to cooperate in preventing PKK sanctuaries at the border. Furthermore, Iran and Turkey have entered into dialogue to voice their mutual concern over the northern Iraq and the unity of the Iraqi state in the wake of the US invasion.

3.3.) Syria

One of the most important issues between Turkey and Syria is the water dispute. The conflict will be discussed later in another section under the name of Hydropolitics.

a) The issue of Hatay

Since the foundation of the Turkish Republic, Syria and Turkey had very problematic relations. The main problem was the dispute over the province of Hatay (Alexandretta).

Hatay was an Ottoman *sanjak* with a large Arab population. In the post WWI settlement, as the winning powers divided Ottoman territories, Hatay fell under the French mandate along with the other parts of Syria. The partition of Hatay was also approved by Turkish Republic in a 1921 Treaty made with the French[94]. Later, on the eve of WWII, in order to secure Turkish assistance against Germany, France ceded Hatay to Turkey by treaty in 1939. The Syrians, who had been promised their independence at the time, objected the treaty.

---

[93] Martin, Lenore G., The Future of Turkish Foreign Policy, The MIT Press, Cambridge, 2002, p.177
[94] Oran, Baskin, Turk Dış Politikası, Cilt I, İletişim Yayınları, İstanbul, 2001, p. 615.

Until the late 1990s, the issue of Hatay continued to be a problem. Until that date, Syria did not accept Hatay as Turkish territory and rather insisted on its ownership of Hatay. Hatay was pictured as a part of Syria in all Syrian maps and it was also stated in the constitution that Hatay was a Syrian province. This insistence created immense conflict between the two states.

b) The issue of Syrian support to PKK

The most serious dispute between the two states was Syria's support of PKK. Syria started to support PKK to strengthen its bargaining power in its water dispute with Turkey. "Syria allowed PKK to maintain training camps in the Bekaa Valley in Lebanon and allowed the PKK leader, Ocalan to use Damascus as his base"[95]. Although Turkey warned Syria, Damascus consistently denied its involvement with the terrorist group. In reaction to these events, "Turkey massed troops at the border in October 1998 and threatened war with Syria. Syrians become convinced of Turkey's determination and capitulated to the Turkish demands by expelling Ocalan"[96].

Turkish-Syrian problematic relations have seemed to improve at the end of 1998. Both states decided to improve cross border trade. The two states even "signed a military cooperation agreement the following year"[97]. Even though the water dispute among the states is still not settled, the improvement in overall relations and increase in trade has "raised the hope that Turkey and Syria may develop sufficient

---

[95] Martin, Lenore G., The Future of Turkish Foreign Policy, The MIT Press, Cambridge, 2002, p.180
[96] Erickson, Edward J., Turkey as Regional Hegemon, Turkish Studies, Vol 5, No 3, Autumn 2004, p.32
[97] Erickson, Edward J., Turkey as Regional Hegemon, Turkish Studies, Vol 5, No 3, Autumn 2004, p.32

convergence of economic interests to overcome their diverging interests over water"[98].

3.4.) Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf (GCC)

Turkey and the GCC states have converging economic interests. The GCC states are good source of energy for Turkey. During the Gulf War, there was a convergence of military and political interests. After the Gulf War I, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait demonstrated their gratitude and in recognition of Turkey's loss, gave one billion dollars each of oil. The smaller GCC states of "Kuwait, Oman, Qatar and the UAE have been receptive to promoting better economic relations with Turkey by the formation of joint economic commissions"[99].

Although economic relations with these countries close, the ideological barrier between the parties is an obstacle to form closer relations. The secular Turkish Republic is the ideological anti-model for the Gulf autocracies. Therefore it is hard for the Gulf States to have very close relations with Turkey.

4. Hydropolitics

Water is a scarce and poorly distributed resource, especially in Middle East. There is increasing demand for water due to increase in populations, agricultural projects, hydroelectric investments and industrialization. The increasing demand for water causes problems in the trans boundary rivers, because the riparian states cannot agree on the level of water they get. Another dimension to the problem is the inefficient use and the improper utilization which declines the quality and quantity of the water. This is the case for Turkey's trans boundary rivers Euphrates and Tigris.

---

[98]Martin, Lenore G., The Future of Turkish Foreign Policy, The MIT Press, Cambridge, 2002, p.180
[99]Martin, Lenore G., The Future of Turkish Foreign Policy, The MIT Press, Cambridge, 2002, p.186

The water of these two rivers is a problem between Turkey and Iraq and Syria, as their need for the water increases each day.

Water was not an issue between Turkey and Syria until the 1960s. The problems began when Syria and Turkey started new water projects. In 1965, Turkey started the construction of the Keban Dam and unilaterally guaranteed a minimum of 350 cum/sec of water. In 1968, Syria started to build the Tabqa Dam on the Euphrates with the Soviet assistance. At the same time Iraq had begun the Gharraf Dam Project between the lower reaches of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers[100]. The water shortage caused by the construction of all these projects at the same time has brought Syria and Iraq on the merge of war. The imminent water war was averted by the efforts of Saudi Arabia. In 1976 Turkey built its second dam on Euphrates, Karakaya Dam, with the help World Bank finances. This time Turkey unilaterally guaranteed a minimum flow of 500 cum/sec.

The GAP Project of Turkey (The Project of Southern Anatolia) has added a new dimension to the conflict. The previous Turkish dams were hydroelectric in nature, which meant that very little of the water was consumed by Turkey. GAP is a much larger project, which is designed to provide irrigation in addition to generating energy. GAP includes both Euphrates and Tigris. GAP "involves a total of 22 dams, 19 hydroelectric power plants and 17 irrigation schemes of various scales"[101]. The total cost of the project is estimated to be $32 billion. Turkey believes that GAP is very important for its future because it is designed to bring economic prosperity to the people of the southeast region, many of who are impoverished Kurds.

Iraq and Syria have objected to the GAP project and even managed to eliminate the international financing Turkey had secured for the construction of the

---

[100] Kut, Gun, <u>Burning Waters; the Euphrates and Tigris</u>, New Perspectives on Turkey, Fall 1993,9, p.5
[101] Kut, Gun, <u>Burning Waters; the Euphrates and Tigris,</u> New Perspectives on Turkey, Fall 1993,9, p.6

project. They claim that these two rivers are international watercourses and the rights on these waters should be based upon historical usage. In response, Turkey claims that the rivers are not international, they are trans-boundary. "Turkey believes that the upstream riparian is entitled to control its water ways until they leave the state"[102].

In order to solve the conflict Turkey has proposed a three-stage plan "for the optimum, equitable, and reasonable utilization of the trans-boundary watercourses of the Tigris Euphrates Basin"[103]. The first stage would be a basin-wide study of the water flows, evaporation losses, water quality, current uses of water. The second stage would compromise the study of the soils, their quality the extent which they lend themselves to being irrigated. And the final stage would be the discussion of how the waters could be utilized based on the previous studies[104]. Turkey stated in its project that two rivers should be treated as a single river system. Syria and Iraq rejected the Turkish plan saying that the two rivers should be treated as separate entities. Syria is afraid that bringing Tigris to the discussion would provide grounds for Turkey to reduce amount it releases downstream on the Euphrates. Iraq does not face any shortages on the Tigris and wants to focus on Euphrates. Syria and Iraq are afraid that such extensive study of water usage patterns, soil quality might reveal that Syrian and Iraqi claims about the amount of water they require are very likely exaggerated.

Syrian response to these riparian disputes has been to adopt a series of policies that would make Turkey's insistence on exercising full sovereignty over the waters of the Euphrates too costly a policy to implement. The support Syria gave to

---

[102] Turan, İlter, Water and Turkish Foreign Policy, The MIT Press, Cambridge, 2002, p.178
[103] Kut, Gun, Burning Waters; the Euphrates and Tigris, New Perspectives on Turkey, Fall 1993,9, p.8
[104] Kut, Gun, Burning Waters; the Euphrates and Tigris, New Perspectives on Turkey, Fall 1993,9, p.8

PKK has caused increase in the terrorist groups' actions in Turkey. The policy proved itself to be counterproductive as Turkey insisted even more on its plans over the two rivers when faced with Syria's policies that challenged its territorial integrity.

5. Turkey and the Organization of the Islamic Conference

The Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) is an intergovernmental organization established in 1969. The OIC states the following purpose; "Islamic solidarity among member states, cooperation in the political, economic, social, cultural and scientific fields"[105]. Also the charter defines the safeguard of the holy places and to support the struggle of the Palestinian people as issues of "coordinated action".

Although, Turkey is a founding member, its sincerity has always been questioned by the other members, because of Turkey's close relations with the EU, USA and most importantly Israel. During the 1997 Summit of the OIC, when the Turkey-Israel cooperation was at its peak, the OIC even adopted a resolution denouncing Turkey for its growing ties with Israel. Although the resolution did not mention Turkey by name and referred it as "Muslim countries having military cooperation agreements with Israel"[106] the reference was obvious because no other Muslim nation has military ties with Israel. The resolution was deeply frustrating for Turkey, forcing the then President Suleyman Demirel to leave the summit early.

Another dilemma in the OIC-Turkey relationship has been the OIC's lack of support to the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC). Turkey along with

---

[105] OIC Official Web Site, www.oic-oci.org
[106] Jinsa, Amid Opposition from Muslim states, The Jewish Institute for National Security Affairs, 12.12.1997

TRNC claims that Turkish Cypriots never receive support from the OIC although they are Muslim community.

Although the central dilemmas are still present, the Turkish-OIC relations have markedly improved over the last three years. In June 2004 summit of the OIC, the secretary-general was chosen by elections for the first time and the Turkish candidate, Ekmeleddin İhsanoglu, won the elections. Despite reluctance of some member states led by Saudi Arabia, the Turkish candidate won a clear victory with the support of 32 of the organizations 57 members.

6. Current Turkish Foreign Policy and AKP

The AKP government marks an important change in the history of the Turkish foreign policy. The Turkish foreign policy is traditionally neutral and based on good relations with West and minimum relations with the Middle East. As discussed earlier, with the exception of the Ozal era, the Turkish foreign policy in Middle East was guided according to this idea, basing on the Kemalist principle of "Peace at home, peace abroad".

AKP brought a new momentum to the Turkish foreign policy. AKP tries to direct an active foreign policy, not only towards the EU, also in the Middle East. AKP has made its EU membership aspirations the central tenet to its foreign policy, and this prospect has also affected Turkey's regional strategy. As the importance of the Middle East peace and democratization for the world security becomes clearer each day in the post- 9/11 era, Turkey decided to use its geopolitical and cultural connection with the region to its own advantage. As the Turkish membership to the EU, and impacts of EU being a neighbor of the Middle East is discussed these days, by directing an active foreign policy in the region, Turkey wants to prove the

advantages that the EU will have by accepting Turkey as a member. Therefore, it is possible to state that, Turkey's new activism in the Middle East is in some senses connected with the prospect of EU membership, rather than an isolated policy that goals regional leadership.

AKP government emphasizes the importance of embracing Turkey's neighborhood and Turkey filling the gap that it left in the region retreating into itself. As Prime Minister Erdogan stated "Turkey doesn't have the luxury of remaining insensitive to the problems in neighborhood" considering "our geographic location, our history, our civilization and our national interests"[107]. Foreign Minister Gul, reaffirms Turkey's intention to pursue a more active policy in Middle East "Our aim this year is to promote peace, stability and cooperation in our region. We will pursue an active policy in this regard"[108].

Another important change that occurred in the Turkish foreign policy is the "europeanisation". As a natural consequence of the motive to be a member of the EU "Turkey has adjusted its stance on various international issues in line with the EU mainstream"[109]. Turkey has started to adopt the EU's distinct foreign policy style of promoting security through multilateral mechanisms and institutional integration. The Turkish governments insistence on UN development for the solution of the Cyprus problem is a clear example to this fact. Turkey changed its former policy on Cyprus, and showed good will. These steps led to the European Commission's recommendation to begin accession negotiations. Also Turkey aligns with the EU in most of the problems regarding the Middle East, including attitude towards Syria and Iran. The Turkish parliaments refusal to pass the resolution allowing US occupation

---

[107] Robins, Philip, Turkey's Game of Regional Triangulation, The Daily Star, 13.01.2005
[108] Anadolu Agency, Turkey Different Post Dec. 17, 12.01.2005
[109] Everts, Steven, An Asset but not a Model, Center for European Reform, October 2004

of Iraq through Turkey is another event symbolizing the Europenization of the Turkish foreign policy. The vote of the parliament in March 2003, surprised the EU and the Arab world as well as the USA. For many Arabs "the vote showed that Turkey was not an American lackey and would not cooperate with American imperial designs"[110]. The Europenization of the Turkish foreign policy have also gained positive responses from the Arab world as well as the EU itself. This drastic change, increased Turkey's prestige in the eyes of the Middle Eastern nations and the European countries.

---

[110]Robins, Philip, Turkey's Game of Regional Triangulation, The Daily Star, 13.01.2005

V) TURKEY'S EU MEMBERSHIP AND ITS EFFECT ON THE EU'S INFLUENCE IN THE MIDDLE EAST

The issue of Turkish membership to the EU has caused debates among the EU members. An enlarged EU to east would mean bordering the Middle East, which the region is continuous haven for conflicts and instability. Most people viewed such enlargement as a threat to the EU. However, "all the crises in the Middle East so far have directly affected Europe and will affect more so in the future"[111]. The lack of democracy in the region and the low level of economic development and HDI already constitute a problem for the EU. So, isolating itself from the conflicts of the Middle East is not an option for the EU. Opposite to what many think, a Turkish membership to the EU may enhance EU's ability promote democracy in the Middle East and deal with the Middle Eastern affairs.

Turkey and EU have common goals in the Middle East. An undemocratic Middle East, ruled by pro-warfare autocratic governments, with WMD's, low levels of economic development and low HDI is threatening Turkey as well as the EU. Therefore, it is in both EU's and Turkey's interest to promote democracy and economic development in the Middle East. Turkey can enhance EU's ability to run democratic programs in the region. The membership of Turkey will mean EU bordering Middle East. This will force EU to develop more coherent policies towards the region. Also, as a neighbor of the region, the EU would justify its interest in the Middle Eastern affairs much easily and pragmatically.

The shift in the Turkish Foreign Policy experienced at the beginning of the century positioned Turkey as a much more credible and objective state in the eyes of

---

[111] Karlsson, Ingmar, "Turkey's Cultural and Religious Heritage-An Asset to the EU", CEPS, Issue 10, October 2004.

the Arab states. By achieving a leadership role, Turkey can further increase its influence in the region and constitute an added value to the EU. Also, with the EU membership, the democratization and modernization process Turkey has been passing through would be further materialized in the eyes of the Arab states. Such event would prove that a Muslim state could adapt to the universal values such as democracy, human rights and minority rights. And that would be the end of the debate of "can modernity and democracy go along with Islam?" The Arab states that seek for reform can view Turkey as successful model, who managed to adapt itself to the universal values, although it is Muslim. Finally, accepting a Muslim member would show that the EU is not a Christian Club. Such event would "act as a bridge between the West and the Muslim world"[112] and end the debate of clash of civilizations.

1.The Effect of Proximity to the Middle East

The European Union is affected by the crisis in the Middle East and it cannot escape this part of the world. Accepting Turkey would enhance EU's ability to deal with problems it will face much closer. With the Turkish membership, the EU will border Middle East. By bordering Syria, Iraq and Iran, the EU will be more involved with the regions problems. Europe must stabilize its own periphery to ensure that it is not affected by the problems that exist there. "The Turkish membership of the EU would strengthen Europe on its most vulnerable front"[113]. This fact will increase the EU's opportunities for pursuing a proactive policy in the Arab world. Even today, the prospect of Turkey's accession "is already forcing the EU to develop more coherent

---

[112] Beatty, Andrew. Europe's Middle East Adventure, EU Observer, 15.12.2004.
[113] Karlsson, Ingmar, "Turkey's Cultural and Religious Heritage-An Asset to the EU", CEPS, Issue 10, October 2004.

policies towards the Middle East"[114]. The Turkish membership will accelerate the Union's already deepening involvement in the region. EU's relations with the Middle Eastern states will become a more central topic on the Union's foreign policy agenda. Turkey will prove an asset for the EU in pursuing a course of closer relations with the Middle East and the EU will "become the dominant power in the region, by virtue of its demographic, economic and political weight"[115].

Furthermore "Turkey's accession would entail that the EU's Mediterranean population would represent %40 of the enlarged EU"[116]. This dramatic change in the EU's internal structure would also affect the EU Programs. The increased weight of the EU's Mediterranean members in the qualified majority voting probably will increase the likelihood of greater EU attention to the south. Also, Turkey's accession will affect the credibility of the EU as a foreign actor in the Middle East. The EU will achieve its goals and interests in the region much more easily, since it will be the neighbor of the Middle East and will have a Muslim member. The EU influence in the Middle Eastern affairs will certainly increase as a result of the proximity factor. "The Turkish membership offers a structural potential to enhance the credibility of EU policies towards the Middle East"[117].

Another positive effect of Turkey's EU membership will be experienced in terms EU's programs in the Middle East. Turkey has never assumed a major role in EU's Middle Eastern programs. Contribution of Turkey to the Euro Mediterranean Partnership (EMP), founded in 1995, was very minimal. Turkey was never happy to be put together with the southern group in the program. Turkey never showed great

---

[114] Everts, Steven, An Asset but not a Model, Center for European Reform, October 2004.
[115] Rhein, Eberhard, Ramifications for the Middle East and Islam, Bitterlemons International, 04.11.2004.
[116] Emerson, Michael, Tocci, Nathalie, Turkey as a Bridgehead and Spearhead, CEPS, August 2004.
[117] Emerson, Michael, Tocci, Nathalie, Turkey as a Bridgehead and Spearhead, CEPS, August 2004.

interest in the EMP, since in the 1995-1999 period Turkey was denied a candidate status. During the time, the EU tried to formulate alternative solutions to Turkey's claims to be a member of the EU. The EU proposed "special partnership" to Turkey, instead of giving Turkey a candidate status. During this period relations between Turkey and EU were tense. In this respect, regarding the EU programs in Mediterranean, Turkey did not want to be treated as one of the EU's Mediterranean partners and rather claimed a role as a candidate.

Turkey was excluded from the European Neighborhood Project (ENP) launched in March 2003, as a result of the start of its accession process. Turkey was granted "candidate status" at the time, therefore did not participate to this program. The ENP forms the backbone of EU's foreign policy towards the Middle East in the post 9/11 era. The ENP introduced a new dimension to the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (EMP) and made EU's foreign policy in its neighborhood more solid with the introduced action plans, timetables, clear objectives and initiatives. The ENP is also very important in terms of political reform in the Middle East, because democracy promotion in the region is at the center of the programs agenda. Different from previous EU programs, the ENP sets democracy promotion as a priority.

With its membership Turkey will become a participant of the ENP. In this case, Turkey will be in the northern side of the table, along with the other EU members, and it can become a more enthusiastic supporter of the EU programs in the Middle East. " The EU could greatly benefit from Turkey's participation in the initiative on the EU side of the table"[118]. While negotiating with the Middle Eastern countries about the programs of democracy promotion, a Muslim EU member on the EU side of the table would be great advantage.

---

[118] Emerson, Michael and Tocci,Nathalie, <u>Turkey as a Bridgehead and Spearhead</u>, CEPS, August 2004.

2. Symbolic Effect of Turkey's Membership to EU

The biggest impact of the Turkey's EU membership will be symbolic on the minds of people. By accepting a Muslim member, the EU will prove that it is not a Christian club. There are still bureaucrats and politicians in the EU, who oppose the membership of a Muslim country. The former French president Valery Giscard d'Estang did the most crucial remark in this respect. Giscard is currently heading the EU's convention on the future of Europe. He is the creator of the EU Constitution. Giscard stated, "Turkish membership would spell the end of the EU"[119]. While supporting his argument, he emphasized the "historic and cultural differences between Muslim Turkey and the Christian West"[120]. Other EU officials criticized his assessment heavily and he was regarded as a 'Christian fundamentalist'. Besides Giscard, there were other oppositions to Turkey's possible EU membership. The former vice-president of the European Parliament, Fred Catherwood, also stated that "enlargement to further east would further undermine Europe's already threatened Christian tradition"[121]. Although most EU officials criticized these comments heavily, it is clear that, some European politicians and bureaucrats still think that religion is a criteria for the EU membership. These events often cause the EU to be criticized as a "Christian Club".

By praising the reform process Turkey have passed through in terms of democracy and human rights, the questions in Muslim people's mind about EU applying double standards will be erased. By successfully adapting democratic reforms and applying international norms of human rights, Turkey will show and

---

[119] O'Rourke, Breffni, Giscard's Rejectionist Remarks about Turkey, Radio Free Europe, www.rferl.org
[120] O'Rourke, Breffni, Giscard's Rejectionist Remarks about Turkey, Radio Free Europe, www.rferl.org
[121] Bos, Stefan J., Former EU Vice President Warns of Moral Decline, Assist News Service, 29.04.2005

prove that Islam and western values can go along together. Nevertheless, Turkey's membership to the EU, will have a huge effect in peoples minds and change both camps perception about each other. This enlargement of the EU will definitely challenge Huntington's theory of "Clash of Civilizations".

2.1.) "Clash of Civilizations" theory and Turkey's EU membership

The events of 9/11 have brought the idea of "clash of civilizations" back at the top of the agenda. In his work "The Clash of Civilizations?" Samuel P. Huntington argued that the "fundamental source of conflict in this new world will not be primarily ideological or primarily economic. The great divisions among humankind and the dominating source of conflict will be cultural"[122]. Huntington claimed that, although nation states will remain the most powerful actors in the international affairs, the principle conflicts would occur between nations and groups of different civilizations. The argument was based on the fact that 'civilizations are different from each other' in terms of history, language, culture, tradition and religion. And these differences make different civilizations to have different perceptions about the "relations between God and men, the individual and the group, citizen and the state, parents and children, husband and wife as well as differing views of the relative importance of rights and responsibilities, liberty and authority, equality and hierarchy"[123]. All these differences do not necessarily mean conflict. However, since the world is getting smaller each day, the differences between the civilizations will become more obvious with the increasing interaction in the world. This increasing interaction between the civilizations will intensify civilization consciousness. Also, Huntington claims that economic modernization and globalization separate people from their local identities and weaken the nation state

---

[122] Huntington, Samuel P., The Clash of Civilizations?,Foreign Affairs, Summer 1993.
[123] Huntington, Samuel P., The Clash of Civilizations?,Foreign Affairs, Summer 1993.

as a source of identity. "Religion has moved into fill this gap, often in the form of movements that are labeled fundamentalists"[124]. Huntington foresees the central conflict in the world politics in the future as the "West versus rest" and evaluates Turkey as a torn country between East and West and claims that "Turkey will never become a member of the EU and the real reason is that Turkey is Muslim and EU is Christian"[125].

As the whole world started to debate over the theory of "clash of civilizations" in the post 9/11 era, Turkey's EU membership became very strategic. Turkey's EU membership seriously challenges the "clash of civilizations" theory. Turkey, by being accepted to a Western organization and adapting democracy and human rights, will act as a bridge between the western and Islamic world. This event will have a great impact over the relations between Europe and the Middle East. "Turkey's impending accession to the EU has the power to bridge chasm between Islam and Christianity and bring hope to millions in the Middle East"[126].

The approval of Turkey as an equal, free, strong member of the western world will send a strong message to the whole Muslim Arab nations. This message will declare that Muslims can interact and cooperate with west economically politically and through other peaceful ways following Turkey's example. "For many Arabs and Iranians the EU is a white Christian Club with dubious colonial legacies"[127]. There is a deep sense that the West is a hostile force to Muslims. If Turkey becomes a member of the EU, this would send a powerful signal to the contrary.

---

[124] Huntington, Samuel P., The Clash of Civilizations?,Foreign Affairs, Summer 1993.
[125] Huntington, Samuel P., The Clash of Civilizations?,Foreign Affairs, Summer 1993.
[126] Laciner, Sedat, Turkey's Possible EU Entry's Impact on the Islamic World, The Journal of Turkish Weekly, 13.12.2004.
[127] Everts, Steven, An Asset but not a Model, Center for European Reform, October 2004.

2.2.) Turkey's EU membership and its symbolic effect on the concepts of "Islam and Democracy"

The major obstacle that the EU faces while guiding democracy promotion programs in the Middle East, is the stereotyping in peoples minds that; democracy and human rights are western values and they do not go along with the Middle Eastern culture. However, these are universal values and they do not contradict with the rules of the Islam. This misperception is valid in both Western and Middle Eastern countries.

Most people in the West have been evaluating concepts like democracy, human rights and freedom as western values and thinking that these principles do not go along with Islam. For too long "many in the West have been deluding themselves with absurdist notions that 'Muslims' 'Arabs' or those in the Middle East are simply not interested in such lofty concepts or do not have such basic human needs"[128]. Often the debates searching for the reasons of lack of democracy in the Middle East, were twirled around the idea that democracy is not in the tradition of the Middle East. However, when we look at the history of the Europe we witness that Europe was not also a democracy all along. Although, western democracy has roots going back to ancient Greece, even the last century witnessed fascist, racist and communist governments in Europe. Therefore, accusing "Islam" or the "Arab race" for the undemocratic governments of the Middle East is not a realistic argument

However, when we look at the other side of the coin, we see that the same stereotyping is valid also in the Middle Eastern states. Values of democracy and human rights are perceived as western values among the Middle Eastern populations. In the Middle East, for too long "words like gender quality and democracy have been

---

[128] Eltantawi, Sarah, The Limitations of a Dialogue of Civilizations, The Daily Star, 04.04.2005

blithely dismissed, simply because such concepts have been developed and practiced in the West"[129]. The ancient problematic relations between the Middle East and the West cause the major reason behind such attitude to the values of democracy and human rights. There is distrust towards the West, because of the legacy of colonialism in which foreign ideas were used to prove the native inferior and as a cover for economic exploitation. Still today, the concepts of democracy and human rights are perceived as tools of the imperialist aims of the West.

The Turkey's membership of the EU will prove these theories wrong. Both sides, which are suspicious of each other's sincerity, will understand that two worlds can merge. Turkish membership will show that Islam and these universal values can go along together. A Muslim country can manage to have a democratic system with respect to human rights. The "EU is associated with peace, democracy, economic development while the Middle East is characterized by instability, authoritarianism, and economic backwardness"[130]. Turkey's reform process and the EU membership will show that the latter one is not the unavoidable destiny of the Middle Eastern countries.

By accepting Turkey, EU will show its sincerity in promoting democracy in the Middle East. By accepting a Muslim member, EU will prove that, the main problem with Middle East is not the fact that it is Muslim, rather the problem is the fact that it is undemocratic. A EU with a Muslim member can have the ability to change Middle Eastern peoples perception of the "imperialist west". Nevertheless, the Middle Eastern people can believe in the objectives and motives of the EU in promoting democracy in Middle East and they can be much more enthusiastic about the EU programs in the region.

---

[129] Eltantawi, Sarah, The Limitations of a Dialogue of Civilizations, The Daily Star, 04.04.2005
[130] Aras, Bulent, Turkey and Middle East Security, Project Syndicate, 03.04.2005.

Another crucial importance of this symbolic effect is in terms of war against terrorism. The compatibility of Islam and the universal values of; democracy, human rights and the rule of law, will be a challenge to the totalitarian and terrorist ideas. As stated by Joschka Fischer, Turkey's EU membership "would be almost a D-Day for Europe in the war against terror, because it would provide real proof that Islam and modernity, Islam and the rule of law are compatible"[131].

2.3.) The future of the European Integration and Turkey's EU membership

The European integration was launched by Christian democrat statesmen such as; Jean Monnet, Robert Schuman, Konrad Adanauer, Alcide de Gasperi. The main aim of the integration was to form a cohesive and federal union of western European states. But the EU today has came a long way and has a much different construction. Today, the EU is continent wide, a union of diverse population and a political outlook. "Turkey's accession will confirm and accentuate this shift whereby the EU has become a continent-wide"[132]. This event will further materialize EU's ambition to become a world power rather than a regional club.

Furthermore, there have never been any religious criteria for membership to the EU. By accepting Turkish candidacy and starting the accession talks with Turkey, EU has showed that it is a secular organization. Even without the Turkish membership, Islam is valid in the EU. "There are today 15 million Muslims in the EU, which is more than the number of Protestant Scandinavians"[133].

---

[131] Kagan, Robert, <u>Embraceable EU</u>, Washington Post, 05.12.2004.
[132] Everts, Steven, <u>An Asset but not a Model</u>, Center for European Reform, October 2004.
[133] Karlsson, Ingmar, "<u>Turkey's Cultural and Religious Heritage-An Asset to the EU</u>", CEPS, Issue 10, October 2004

3. Turkey's EU membership and its influence over Turkey's neighbors

The Turkish membership can enhance EU's ability to effect the region for various reasons. First of all, Turkey cannot be considered as a complete outsider to Middle East. Turkey has historical, cultural and religious values with the region countries. Turkey often shares the problems and dilemmas of the Middle Eastern societies. Addition to this, with its performance during the Iraq War and the "proactive policies it pursued with the Justice and Development (AKP) government, prejudices and misunderstandings about Turkey in the region have decreased"[134].

The net benefits of Turkey's EU membership in terms of Middle East can be best explained by evaluating Turkey' bilateral relations with its neighbors and possible contributions Turkey can make to their democratization process.

3.1.) Iraq

Following possible Turkish membership, EU will border Iraq. However, EU is affected from the incidents in Iraq already, like the rest of the world. "From oil to migration and terrorism and Christian-Muslim relations"[135]. While some members as Britain, participated to the Iraqi intervention, some others such as Germany and France opposed the war. However, developments in Iraq have been at the top of the agenda in all these countries, and the EU as a whole has been effected from the developments in Iraq. In order to help Iraq to stabilize and to democratize EU should work hard and benefit from the connections of Turkey, who has a strong regional position.

Iraq today is hardly more stable than Saddam Hussein era and is suitable for terrorism to breed more than ever. Inter-ethnic tension is climaxing and reaching

---

[134] Laciner, Sedat, Turkey's EU Membership's Possible Impacts on the Middle East, The Journal of Turkish Weekly, 24.12.2004.
[135] Laciner, Sedat, Turkey's EU Membership's Possible Impacts on the Middle East, The Journal of Turkish Weekly, 24.12.2004.

dangerous levels. Although the military operation in Iraq managed to withdraw a tyrant, the situation in Iraq is far from being stable and democratic. Iraq needs to preserve its security, stability and integrity. In order to reach this objective, "soft power" rather than the "hard power" is needed. The EU should promote socio-economic instruments and dialogue. The EU is already contributing to reconstruction heavily. "In early 2003, the Community set aside €100 million for the European Community Humanitarian Office (ECHO) to provide humanitarian aid to Iraq; EU Member States pledged more than €731 million. At the Madrid donors' conference held on 23-24 October 2003, the Union as a whole, including the Acceding Countries, pledged over €1.25 billion for Iraq's reconstruction"[136]. Making Iraq stable and democratic is in the advantage of EU as well as Turkey.

Turkey favors Iraq's territorial integrity. Despite some tensions about a possible autonomy of Iraqi Kurds, Turkey is one of the most active countries working for the stability of Iraq. Turkey's activities mostly aim for the regions economic development and security. Turkey argues "once the basic infrastructure and security problems of Iraq are solved, increased regional economic and cultural transaction would bring stability to Iraq and the region"[137]. Turkey's power rests on the support it has from the region. Other neighbors of Iraq support Turkey's policies on the issue. Both Iran and Syria gave support to Turkey's policies on Iraq. "The Syrian prime minister calls Turkey's policies towards Iraq as correct and constructive, whereas Iran is happy to increase cooperation with Turkey in the field of counter-terrorism"[138]. This grants a vital advantage to Turkey, since these two countries have problematic relations with the USA. The Turkish membership to EU

---

[136] EU Official Web Site, The EU's Relations with Iraq, www.europa.eu.int

[137] Laciner, Sedat, Turkey's EU Membership's Possible Impacts on the Middle East, The Journal of Turkish Weekly, 24.12.2004.

[138] Everts, Steven, An Asset but not a Model, Center for European Reform, October 2004.

would help EU to gain the regional support, which is very crucial for the Iraq's future.

Besides Iran and Syria, Turkey tries to gain the support of the other Middle Eastern countries on the issue of Iraq. Turkey leaded the formation of 'summit of the Iraqi neighbors'. Iraq's neighbors had eight meetings up to today. The last one was on 30 April 2005 in Istanbul. The main goal of these meetings is to "pledge support and cooperate with the newly elected government and to stress the unity and territorial integrity of Iraq"[139]. Besides Turkey, Jordan, Syria, Kuwait, Iran and Egypt participate to the meetings.

3.2.) Iran

Since the 1979 Revolution, Iran had become the symbol of religious extremism. "Political Islam first became a major international factor with the Iranian Revolution"[140]. The efforts of the Iranian leaders to export their religious regime to the other Muslim states, and the inability of them to integrate Iran to the global system have further reinforced this perception about Iran. The Khatami government tried to make Iran more liberal and democratic in the recent years, however it has failed to achieve this goal. The problematic relations with the USA and Israel further push Iran to isolation, since revolutionaries in the country use this as a chance to increase their power.

However, Iran is strategically very important country for the future of the Middle East. Leaving it to its own destiny or trying to find solutions with military operations cannot be an answer to the ongoing problems. Iran is the only non-Arab country in the Persian Gulf, has full authority over the Gulf's eastern shores and in

---

[139] Aljazeera, Iraq Neighbors Boost Border Security, english/aljazeera.net/NR/exeres.
[140] Lewis, Bernard, Freedom and Justice in the Modern Middle East, Foreign Affairs, May/June 2005, p.49.

terms of its regime, serves a key to liberalization and democratization in the Arab world.

The integration of Iran to the international system can be achieved by Iran's attainment of a more open system. Democratization of the Iranian regime, growth of minority rights and endorsement of human rights and the liberalization of economy should be promoted in the country. However, "Iran has proven that it will not change due to outside pressure"[141]. In order to accomplish a transition, the internal dynamics of Iran should be in motion. Turkey can gain a role in this process as a friend encouraging the reform process, rather than a complete stranger pushing and threatening for reform. Turkey can be an inspiration in opening up the Iranian system. The role of the Azerbaijani Turkish population living in Iran has a crucial role to play. These people constitute nearly half of the Iran's population and they are open to change from Turkey. Iranian Azeri's have played a key role in Iranian nationalist freedom movements throughout the twentieth century. "The Azeri city of Tabriz is widely acknowledged as the host of the most active and progressive student democracy movement outside of Tehran"[142].

Secondly, Iranians do not perceive a threat from Turkey. Although, relations between the two states were tense in the last decade, the main reason behind that conflict was the Iranian ambition to export its regime to Turkey. However, Turkey has never caused a threat to Iran. Two countries never engaged into fighting and Turkish-Iranian border has not changed since centuries. Therefore, assistance from Turkey would not be threatening to Iran, as it is in the case of other western powers that push for reform in Iran. Also, Turkey is a Muslim country who has passed through similar difficulties in the road to democratization. Although Turkish Islam

---

[141] Everts, Steven, An Asset but not a Model, Center for European Reform, October 2004
[142] Molavi, Afshin, Iran's Azeri Question, Eurasianet.org, 15.04.2003

and the Iranian one differ, Turkey can share its own experience with Iran. Also the economic relations between the two states are very important for Iran. "Turkey is a great market for Iran in all respects and Iran has much to gain by cooperating with Turkish firms in the markets that it tries to access"[143].

Today Iran faces extreme outside pressure because of its regime, links with the Islamist groups and the nuclear enrichment programme. As the issue of Iran's nuclear program moves to a crisis point, Turkey and EU have a shared interest in seeking diplomatic yet effective solution. Tehran, which insists its nuclear program is for peaceful purposes only, agreed in November to suspend enrichment activities as a goodwill gesture for a maximum of six months, but the Europeans want the suspension to become permanent, a demand the Iranians have termed "absurd". Both Turkey and EU want the problem to be solved with peaceful means. "Together they must underline that if Iran continues to insist on the enrichment activities, it will never win trade, security and technology rewards it is expected to win. Addition to this, such Iranian insistence would be followed by economic sanctions"[144].

EU with a Muslim member will definitely be more effective in terms of opening Iran to the world. Iran has already stated its appreciation of Turkey being a EU member. Iranian foreign ministry spokesman Hamid Reza Asefi stated, "We welcome any development which forwards the interests of Turkey, a neighboring and brotherly country"[145].

3.3.) Syria

Syria has a special status for the Middle Eastern affairs, in terms of its role in the solution of the Iraqi question, Palestinian Israeli conflict, and the support of

---

[143] Laciner, Sedat, Turkey's EU Membership's Possible Impacts on the Middle East, The Journal of Turkish Weekly, 24.12.2004.
[144] Everts, Steven, An Asset but not a Model, Center for European Reform, October 2004
[145] Mideast hails Tukish advance that could bring EU to doorstep, EU Business, 19.12.2005

radical Islamist groups. Syria has been ruled by the Baathist regime under the leadership of Hafez Assad, later his son Bashar Assad. During these years, Syria has given support to terrorist groups such as Hezbollah, PKK and many others. Also Syria engaged in military conflict with Israel and gave support to many groups fighting against Israel. Syria has faced accusations of US about being a part of the Iraqi insurgency. USA claims that, "the body of the insurgency lies in Iraq, but its head hides in Syria"[146].

Also, due to its relationship with Lebanon, Syria is facing protests from both inside and outside, Bashar Asad had to pull the Syrian troops out of Lebanon. All these factors have placed Syria on top of the agenda in the post Iraqi war period. USA adopted a hardening line towards Syria and everybody started to question the fate of Syria and will it be another Afghanistan or Iraq.

The resolution of the Syrian problem by peaceful means is extremely important for the EU and Turkey. Syrian-Turkey relations, which were very problematic during the latte 1990s, experienced a rapid transformation with the beginning of century. "More than 45 visits have been made on the ministerial level for the last four years in which many accords that are making the legal ground for the bilateral ties linked"[147]. Syria's leader Bashar Assad visited Turkey in February 2004 and considered the level of Turkish-Syrian relations as perfect:

> "My visit coincides with a period when Syrian-Turkish relations are reaching a peak…we have moved together from an atmosphere of distrust to one of trust. We must create stability from a regional atmosphere of instability"[148]

---

[146] Vallely, Paul, Syria at the Tipping Point, www.centerforsecuritypolicy.org
[147] Laciner, Sedat, Turkey's EU Membership's Possible Impacts on the Middle East, The Journal of Turkish Weekly, 24.12.2004.
[148] Laciner, Sedat, Turkey's EU Membership's Possible Impacts on the Middle East, The Journal of Turkish Weekly, 24.12.2004.

Today Syria and Turkey have closer relations than ever. The unstable situation in Iraq and the neighbor's mutual interests in the region further reinforced this cooperation. Syria often stated its intention to reintegrate to the world system and Turkey is willing to help Syria in this respect.

Therefore, Turkey as a future EU member can contribute greatly on the question of Syria. Turkey can bring Syria closer to EU and promote EU programs in the region for the democratization. Syria is a participant in the EU's Euro-Mediterranean Partnership. However, the development of closer relations with the EU has been rather slow, due to Syria's inability to apply reforms necessary in the context of the EMP. Syria and the EU started negotiations for the Association Agreement in 1998, however little progress was made in the first four years. At the end of 2001, "a government reshuffle took place, as Bashar Al-Assad put in reform minded ministers at most technical and sector ministries"[149]. Since then, the process accelerated in 2002 and 2003 and in December 2003 an understanding was reached on all issues except the provisions for non-proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction. Finally "an agreement on the text for such provisions was agreed in September 2004"[150]. Besides continuous efforts to improve relations with the EU, Syria also applied for membership of the World Trade Organization (WTO). The accession process of Syria to the WTO is problematic as the process it had experienced for the Association Agreement with the EU.

Evaluating the Syrian efforts, its seems that Syria is trying to integrate itself to the world system. Although the reforms applied in the country are not sufficient yet, it is possible for Syria to achieve faster progress with the guidance of its neighbor. Turkey can guide Syria to integrate into the world economic and political

---

[149] EU Official Web Site, The EU's Relations with Syria, www.europa.eu.int
[150] EU Official Web Site, The EU's Relations with Syria, www.europa.eu.int

system and help the opening up of the Syrian system to external influence. In that case the EU programs would reach to its targets much easily.

The AKP government plays a crucial role on the deepening of relations with Syria. Because of its moderate orientation, the AKP government is welcomed in Syria as well as other Middle Eastern states. A Syrian deputy " expressed that he liked Prime Minister Erdogan so much because of his Muslim identity and his policies concerning Middle East and EU "[151]. The policies of the AKP are also praised and stated that "Erdogan government had found the right policy on Iraq and Palestine"[152]

Syria has welcomed the prospect of Turkey's EU membership. Syrian journalists and intellectuals reacted very positively. "While some of them pointed out that because of this, their country will have a door opening directly onto Europe, others stress that it will contribute great to the relations with the West"[153]. Also Syrian Information Minister expressed Syria's support to Ankara stating that they are "very pleased that Turkey will be an EU member in the near future, making them a neighbor to the EU"[154].

---

[151] Bilici, Abdulhamit, Ankara Models itself on EU, Syria Models itself on Turkey, Zaman Online, 31.12.2004
[152] Bilici, Abdulhamit, We are Happy, the EU will be our Neighbor, Zaman Online, 23.12.2004
[153] Bilici, Abdulhamit, We are Happy, the EU will be our Neighbor, Zaman Online, 23.12.2004
[154] Erisik, Cihan Nazif, Turkey will Bridge us with the EU, Zaman Online, 23.12.2004

VI. CONCLUSION

The events of the September 11 mark an important turning point in the world political order. Different than the Cold War, in this new decade the threats are invisible and the targets are unknown such as terrorism and the weapons of mass destruction. This drastic change in the concept of security in the new millennium has also changed the attitude of the European Union. It has become evident that no matter what, Europe was faced with these new threats and it has to construct alternative ways to protect it security.

The issue of democracy promotion in the Middle East has been seen as the antidote of terrorism. The undemocratic governments of the Middle East were tolerated during the Cold War, in the order to secure the status quo against the Soviet Union. However, with the emerging new threats to the security, it was realized that these governments were acting as a haven for the terrorist groups with their oppressive and undemocratic systems. In this respect the EU has placed democracy promotion as a priority in its Middle East foreign policy and started to introduce democracy promotion programs in the region.

Turkey's EU membership has been at the center of this debate about the interaction of the EU with the Middle East. Some argued that the EU neighboring the Middle East would be dangerous for the EU security. However, today it is clear that the EU already faces threats rooted from the Middle East. On the contrary the Turkish membership would enhance EU's ability to cope with the Middle Eastern affairs and promote democracy in the region. "The Turkish membership of the EU would demonstrate the falsity of the argument that Islam and democracy cannot

mix"[155]. With the EU membership, the Middle Eastern states will see that the values of democracy, human rights, the rule of law and secularism are not specific to any culture or religion and these are universal values. Furthermore, the EU with a Muslim member will have much more credibility in the Middle East while directing its programs in the region. The EU will show its sincerity and prove that the main problem with the Middle East is not the fact that it is Muslim; it is the fact that it is undemocratic.

Turkey's membership will prove the compatibility of Islam and the universal values of democracy and human rights and will challange the totalitarian and terrorist ideas in this respect. The Turkish membership will pose a counter argument to the fundamentalists in the Middle East who argue that "the Muslim world must turn inwards because the rest of the world conspires against it"[156].

Turkey as a EU member will merge the two worlds. As a Muslim country bordering the Middle East who is accepted by a western organization and adapting democracy and human rights, Turkey will act as a bridge between the East and the West as well as Islam and Christianity. This event will further increase cooperation between the EU and the Middle East and will prove EU's sincerity in running democracy promotion programs in the Middle East. The stereotyping in both sides will decrease, as Turkey will prove both sides wrong by combining the values of the both camps in itself.

Also, with this enlargement the EU will border Middle East and will devote more resources to the region. Nonetheless, the Middle East bordering the EU will be much more open to influence in terms of democracy promotion programs.

---

[155] Everts, Steven, "An Asset but not a Model", Center for European Reform, October 2004.
[156] Emerson, Michael, Tocci, Nathalie, "Turkey as a Bridgehead and Spearhead", CEPS, August 2004.

Turkey's EU membership will grant both symbolic and material advantages to the EU and will definitely enhance EU's ability to influence the Middle East. With this enlargement, the EU will become a global power who has powerful influence in its neighborhood. In this respect, it will be easier for the EU to direct democracy promotion programs in the region.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

BOOKS

1. Ebenstein, William, Ebenstein, Alan O., <u>Great Political Thinkers</u>, Harcourt Brace Company, 1990.

2. Fuller, Graham E., Lesser, Ian O., <u>Turkey's New Geopolitics</u>, Westview Press, 1993.

3. Kaynak, Mahir, Gürses, Emin, <u>Büyük Ortadoğu Projesi</u>, İlk Yayınları, 2004.

4. Liel, Alan, <u>Turkey in the Middle East</u>, Lynne Rienner Pub., 2001.

5. Martin, Leonard G., <u>The Future of Turkish Foreign Policy</u>, The MIT Press, 2002.

6. Oran, Baskın, <u>Türk Dış Politikası Cilt I-II</u>, İletişim Yayınları, İstanbul, 2001.

7. Özsoy, Osman, <u>AB Yolunda Türkiye</u>, TUGİK, İstanbul, 2002.

8. Turan, İlter, <u>Water and Turkish Foreign Policy</u>, The MIT Press, Cambridge, 2002.

9. Vasquez, John A., <u>Classics of International Relations</u>, Prentice Hall Inc., 1996.

ARTICLES

1. Anadolu Agency, <u>"Erdogan: Developments in Kirkuk are not Positive"</u>, 29.01.2005.

2. Anadolu Agency, <u>"Turkey Different Post Dec.17"</u>, 12.01.2005.

3. Aljazeera, <u>Iraq Neighbors Boost Border Security</u>, english/aljazeera.net/NR/exeres.

4. Anderson, Donald, <u>Reform in the Middle East</u>, Transmission, Spring 2005.

5. Aras Bülent, "Turkey and Middle East Security", Project Syndicate, 03.04.2005.

6. Aras, Bülent, "Limits of regional politics in the Middle East", International Relations and Security Network, 07.03.2005.

7. Aras, Damla, "A New Opportunity to Re-evaluate Muslim Interaction in EU" The Journal of Turkish Weekly, 04.01.2005.

8. Asmus, Ronald D., Diamond, Larry, Leonard, Mark and McFaul, Michael, "A Transatlantic Strategy to Promote Democratic Development in the Broader Middle East", The Center for European Reform Bulletin, March 2005.

9. Associated Press, "EU- Iran Nuclear Talks Deadlocked", Jerusalem Post, 25 January 2005.

10. Barkey, Henri J., "The present U.S.-Turkish Turbulence is Transitory", The Daily Star, 16.04.2005.

11. Baroudi, Sami, "The 2002 Arab Human Development Report: Implications for Democracy", Middle East Policy Council,Volume XI, Spring 2004, Number 1.

12. BBC News, No Deal in Iranian Nuclear Talks, 23.03.2005.

13. Beatty, Andrew, "Europe's Middle East Adventure", EU Observer, 15.12.2004.

14. Bendersky, Yevgeny, "Western State Building in the Muslim World", International Relations and Security Network, 26.01.1005.

15. Bergmann, Max, "Why Europe Matters, Center for American Progress", 22.02.2005.

16. Bilici, Abdulhamit, "Ankara Models itself on EU, Syria Models itself on Turkey", Zaman Online, 31.12.2004.

17. Bilici, Abdulhamit, "We are Happy, the EU will be our Neighbor", Zaman Online, 23.12.2004.

18. Bilici, Abdulhamit, "Dialogue between Religions is a must", Zaman Online, 31.12.2004.

19. Bos, Stefan J., "Former EU Vice President Warns of Moral Decline", Assist News Service, 29.04.2005.

20. Boztas, Salih, "Team Harmony Makes Turkey more Influential in the Middle East", Zaman Online, 08.01.2005.

21. Cook, Steven A., "The Right Way to Promote Arab Reform", Foreign Affairs, March/April 2005.

22. El-Amir, Ayman, "Bridging the Mediterranean", Al-Ahram Weekly, 15.11.2004.

23. Eltantawi, Sarah, "The Limitations of a Dialogue of Civilizations", The Daily Star, 04.04.2005.

24. Emerson, Michael, Tocci, Nathalie, "Turkey as a Bridgehead and Spearhead", CEPS, August 2004.

25. Emirates News Agency, "UAE-Turkish ties set to see a significant leap: Gul", 06.04.2005.

26. Erickson, Edward J., "Turkey as Regional Hegemon", Turkish Studies, Vol 5, No 3, Autumn 2004.

27. Ergil, Dogu, "Foreign Policy Challenges", Turkish Daily News, 24.01.2005.

28. Erisik, Cihan Nazif, "Turkey will Bridge us with the EU", Zaman Online, 23.12.2004.

29. Everts, Steven, "An Asset but not a Model", Center for European Reform, October 2004.

30. Friedman, Thomas L., "Holding Up Arab Reform", New York Times, 24.12.2004.

31. Galadari, Mohammed,"OIC Needs People Power", Khaleej Times, 28.01.2005.

32. Gnesotto, Nicole, "What the European Union Does", International Herald Tribune, 19.02.2005.

33. Grabbe, Heather, "Turkey During Negotiation Process", Center for European Reform, November 2004.

34. Ham, Peter Van, "Europe Gets Real: The New Security Strategy Shows the EU's Geopolitical Maturity", American Institute for Contemporary German Studies, 09.01.2004.

35. Hanson, Victor Davis, "European Sentiment", National Review Online, 04.03.2005.

36. Huntington, Samuel P., "The Clash of Civilizations?", Foreign Affairs, Summer 1993.

37. Jinsa, "Amid Opposition from Muslim states", The Jewish Institute for National Security Affairs, 12.12.1997.

38. Kagan, Robert, "Embraceable EU", Washington Post, 05.12.2004.

39. Karlsson, Ingmar, "Turkey's Cultural and Religious Heritage-An Asset to the EU", CEPS, Issue 10, October 2004.

40. Karmi, Ghada, "Chaos or Renewal", Arab Media Watch, 09.01.2005.

41. King Abdullah II, "The Road to Reform", Foreign Policy Nov/Dec 2004.

42. Kohen, Sami,"What sort of a role in the Mideast?", Milliyet, 10.01.2005.

43. Kut, Gun, "Burning Waters; the Euphrates and Tigris", New Perspectives on Turkey, Fall 1993.

44. Laciner, Sedat, "Turkey's EU Membership's Possible Impacts on the Middle East", The Journal of Turkish Weekly, 24.12.2004.

45. Laciner, Sedat, "Turkey's Possible EU Entry's Impact on the Islamic World", The Journal of Turkish Weekly, 13.12.2004.

46. Leonard, Mark, "Europe: The New Superpower", Irish Times, 18 February 2005.

47. Leonard, Mark, "Why the US Needs the EU", Time, 28.02.2005.

48. Mahony, Honor,"EU to Restart Talks with Iran", EU Observer, 11.01.2005.

49. Mcgeary, Johanna, The Trouble with Syria, Time, 28.02.2005.

50. "Mideast hails Tukish advance that could bring EU to doorstep", EU Business, 19.12.2005.

51. Middle East Online, "EU GCC Target Free Trade Deal by Year End", 05.04 2005.

52. Moaveni, Azadeh, "Iraq Invasion Poses Kurdish Dilemma", Time, 04.10.2003.

53. Molavi, Afshin, "Iran's Azeri Question", Eurasianet.org, 15.04.2003.

54. Mufti, Malik, "Daring and Caution in Turkish Foreign Policy", Middle East Journal, Vol. 52, No:1, Winter 1998.

55. O'Rourke, Breffni, "Giscard's Rejectionist Remarks about Turkey", Radio Free Europe, www.rferl.org.

56. Oğutcu, Mehmet, "Turkey and the EU: How to achieve a forward-looking and 'win-win' accession by 2015?",23.03. 2005.

57. Ottoway, Marina and Carothers, Thomas, "Middle East Democracy", Foreign Policy Nov/Dec 2004.

58. Ottoway, Marina, "Democracy and Constituencies in the Arab World",

    Carnegie Endowment, July 2004.

59. Primor, Adar, "Who's Afraid of Europe", Haaretz, 04.01.2005.

60. Rhein, Eberhard, "Ramifications for the Middle East and Islam",

    Bitterlemons International, 04.11.2004.

61. Robins, Philip, "Turkey's Game of Regional Triangulation", The Daily Star,

    13.01.2005.

62. Ruuda, Marit, "Solana; Military Strike on Iran would be a Mistake", EU

    Observer, 07.02.2005.

63. "Solana sees new chapter in EU-Iranian nuclear talks", EurActiv.com, March

    2005.

64. Siegle, Joseph, Weinstein, Michael and Halperin, Morton, "Why

    Democracies Excel", Foreign Affairs, Sep/Oct 2004.

65. Snyder, Jack," One World Rival Theories", Foreign Policy, Nov/Dec 2004.

66. Soylemez, Yuksel, "Turks are not Paranoid", Turkish Daily News,

    06.03.2005.

67. Uzum, Bulent, "Call for Sharia in Sincan", Istanbul Sabah, 02.02.1997.

68. Vallelersundi, Ana Palacio, "The Barcelona Process", Georgetown Journal,

    ws04.

69. Vallely, Paul, "Syria at the Tipping Point", www.centerforsecuritypolicy.org.

70. Yacoubian, Mona, "Promoting Middle East Democracy", United States

    Institute of Peace, October 2004.

71. Youngs, Richard, "Europe's Uncertain Pursuit of Middle East Reform",

    Carnegie Endowment, June 2004.

WEB PAGES

1. EU Official Web Site, <u>The EU's Relations with Yemen</u>, www.europe.eu.int

2. EU Official Web Site, <u>The EU's Relations with GCC Countries,</u>

   www.europe.eu.int

3. EU Official Web Site, <u>MEDA Programme</u>, www.europa.eu.int

4. EU Official Web Site, <u>The EU's Relation with Iran</u>, www.europa.eu.int

5. EU Official Web Site, <u>The EU's Relations with Iraq</u>, www.europa.eu.int

6. EU Official Web Site, <u>The EU's Relations with Syria</u>, www.europa.eu.int

7. <u>OIC Official Web Site</u>, www.oic-oci.org

8. World Health Organization Official Web Site,

   http://www.wpro.who.int/chips/chip02/terms.htm

REPORTS & EU COMMUNICATIONS

1. Communication from the Commission to the Council, <u>COMM(2004) 795 FINAL</u>, 9 December, 2004.

2. Council of the European Union, <u>Strengthening the EU's partnership with the Arab World,</u> 15935/03 PESC 791 NOTE, Brussels, 9 December 2003.

3. Euromed Report, <u>Council Conclusions on European Neighborhood Policy</u>, Issue no: 79, 23.06.2004.

4. European Security Strategy, <u>A Secure Europe in a Better World</u>, Brussels, 12.12. 2003.

5. Mena Report, <u>Iran-Turkey Trade up by 15%</u>, www.albawaba.com, 02.02.2005.

6. United Nations Development Programme, <u>AHDR 2002</u>.

7. United Nations Development Programme, <u>AHDR 2003</u>.

8. United Nations Development Programme, <u>AHDR 2004</u>.

LECTURE NOTES

1. Haeverbeke, Guy, <u>EU Law and Institutions</u>, Lecture Notes, Izmir University of Economics, Fall 2003.

2. Yilmaz, Suhnaz, <u>Turkish Foreign Policy</u>, Lecture Notes, Koc University, Spring 2001.