



AFTER 25 YEARS OF TÜRKİYE'S OPENING TO (SUB-SAHARAN) AFRICA: FROM ENDEAVOURS TO STATE POLICY

TÜRKİYE'NİN (SAHRA ALTI) AFRİKA'YA AÇILIMINDA 25 YILIN ARDINDAN: GİRİŞİMLERDEN DEVLET POLİTİKASINA

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ABSTRACT

The increased focus of Türkiye on Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) has become a significant topic of examination owing to its notable characteristics. While the literature extensively explores the country's relations with Africa as a whole, there is a limited focus on its specific interactions with the SSA. This study comprehensively examines the diplomatic, normative power, and soft power aspects of the relations with the area from 1998 to the present, by incorporating up-to-date data on the subject matter.

Key words: Turkish Foreign Policy, Sub-Saharan Africa, Normative Power, Opening Policy, 25th year.

ÖZ

Türkiye'nin Sahra Altı Afrika'ya (SAA) artan odağı, dikkat çekici özellikleri nedeniyle önemli bir inceleme konusu haline gelmiştir. Literatür, ülkenin Afrika ile ilişkilerini bir bütün olarak kapsamlı bir şekilde incelerken, SAA ile özel etkileşimlerine sınırlı bir ilgi söz konusudur. Bu çalışma, 1998'den günümüze kadar bölgeyle olan ilişkilerin diplomatik, normatif güç ve yumuşak güç boyutlarını, konuyla ilgili güncel verileri de dahil ederek kapsamlı bir şekilde incelemektedir.

Anahtar kelimeler: Türk Dış Politikası, Sahra Altı Afrika, Normatif Güç, Açılım Politikası, 25'inci Yıl.

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1. Introduction

Before the Turkish Foreign Policy (TFP) commenced partaking in multidirectionalism in the 1960s, the great majority of relations with the SSA states were carried out on a bilateral basis. Although the TFP did not include an SSA component prior to the 1960s, TFP implementers closely monitored the initial wave of decolonization in those countries. Türkiye's indifference to the region has decreased steadily since the 1950s, Türkiye recognized all newly independent states and opted to develop diplomatic ties with them. The Cyprus problem significantly limited Türkiye's capacity to pursue a flexible foreign policy in the middle of the 1960s, and especially after the Johnson Letter was delivered in 1964, the TFP began to place a greater emphasis on the execution of multidirectional policies through adding an African dimension. For example, the bulletin of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs stated in 1964 that:

“In African countries, the memory of Atatürk's reforms is still alive. In these countries, we see an unsatisfied interest in Türkiye. In a number of these countries, it should not be impossible to convert this interest into friendship, and we need this friendship”.¹

When looking at the focus that the same bulletin places on Africa, it appears that there are two fundamental moral interpretations that can be used to construct Türkiye's reengagement with the area: The first one is based on the notion that Türkiye is the defender of oppressed nations, which is supported by the fact that the country fought against colonial powers. The second option is to highlight the shared-religion while also drawing attention to the reforms that were carried out in Türkiye during Atatürk's presidency. In this context, for example, Turkish diplomat Hamit Batu writes in his article titled ‘Foreign Policy and Publicity’ that:

“It is not often known that African nations have a widespread but unsatisfied interest in Türkiye. We have shared the same culture with Muslim countries for ages; in many categories, Turkish culture has produced the finest examples of Islamic art. In addition to our shared cultural background, the revolutions we have undertaken as a Muslim nation build a strong tie between us and other Muslim nations that are or will follow the same road.”²

In 1965, in accordance with the policies adopted under multidirectionality and

1 Republic of Türkiye, *Ministry of Foreign Affairs Bulletin*, July 1964, p.93.

2 Republic of Türkiye, *Ministry of Foreign Affairs Bulletin*, July 1964, p.118.

with the aim of overcoming Türkiye's isolation in international forums regarding the Cyprus conflict, the notion of opening to the area was first proposed in Türkiye. In the same year, seven different groups of politicians, diplomats, academics, and journalists formed the 'Goodwill Delegations'³ to Africa.⁴ Similarly, the visit to Türkiye by the Emperor of Ethiopia, Haile Selassie, which took place in March 1967⁵, and the visit by Cevdet Sunay⁶, which took place in December 1969, were both parts of that initiative. An analysis of the speech that Sunay delivered on the first visit reveals that the issue involving Cyprus is currently at the very peak of Türkiye's priority list. Significant moral aspects include the shared history of the two countries as well as the potential for economic support from Türkiye. In his address, Sunay, for instance, places an emphasis on the following points:

"Your historic visit will have a positive effect on the strengthening of the relations between our countries, which began four and a half centuries ago and have continued to the present day as a convergence due to the holy authorities in Jerusalem, by further developing them in every field in accordance with the shared aspirations of our nations. I am confident that our governments will make the required efforts and commitments in this regard."⁷

TFP's multidirectionality became significantly more attentive to the SSA area in the late-1970s, as it became clear that bilateral diplomatic interactions alone were not producing the desired outcomes. Therefore, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs developed a desk system, with Africa receiving the very first desk formed in the ministry's revised organizational structure. Selcuk İncesu, a former Turkish ambassador and the head of the Africa Department at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which was established in 1978, described the effort undertaken in the late 1970s during the administration of Prime Minister Bülent Ecevit⁸ (Republican

3 Total bilateral visits prior to 1998, Post-1965 Opening Attempt: Liberia, Mauritania, Nigeria, Senegal, Ghana, Sierra Leone, Gabon, Congo, Central African Republic, Chad, Cameroon, Ethiopia, Somalia, Burundi, Rwanda, Kenya, Tanzania, Madagascar, and Malawi; 1969-Ethiopia (Presidential Level), Post-1978 Opening Attempt: 1979-Nigeria, Kenya, Uganda, the Udan and Ethiopia. Post-1985 Opening Attempt: 1991-Senegal (Presidential Level), 1996- Nigeria (Prime Ministry Level)

4 Melek Fırat, "Türkiye-Afrika İlişkilerinin Tarihsel Arka Planı ve Afrika Açılımı'nda Sivil Toplum Kuruluşlarının Rolü" *Uluslararası Türk-Afrika Kongresi*, 2007, p.2.

5 Republic of Türkiye, *Ministry of Foreign Affairs Bulletin*, July 1967, p.32.

6 He was the first Turkish president to visit an SSA country in 1969.

7 Republic of Türkiye, *Ministry of Foreign Affairs Bulletin*, July 1967, p.32.

8 He was a Turkish democratic socialist politician who served as Prime Minister of the Republic of Turkey five times between 1974 and 2002.

People's Party, RPP, that is, the center left) as a second “opening” attempt following the 1965 initiative.⁹

After the occurrence of the Coup d'Etat in 1980, a civil administration was established in 1983 under the leadership of Turgut Özal¹⁰, who advocated for economic and political liberalism. It was during this period that the TFP reaffirmed its policy of engaging with Africa as a region of significance. The motivation behind Özal's endeavors to convert Türkiye into a trading nation prompted him to launch Türkiye's third “opening” with the region through the utilization of the State Planning Organization (SPO). On June 5, 1985, Türkiye initiated its autonomous foreign assistance program. The endeavor involved the allocation of a financial aid package worth 10 million dollars, with the aim of enhancing institutional capacity development in the countries of Gambia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Mauritania, Senegal, Somalia, and Sudan.¹¹

The adoption of the ‘Strategic Action Plan’ in 1998 has led to a notable enhancement in the relationship between Türkiye and the SSA. Türkiye's noteworthy involvement in the SSA can be attributed to its role as the successor to the Ottoman Empire and its current standing as one of the globe's most rapidly advancing economies. Prior to the early 2000s, Türkiye's presence in the region was relatively limited. However, given its historical ties and previous efforts to engage with the continent dating back to the mid-1960s, Türkiye does possess a noteworthy record of engagement with the SSA.

The focus of this study will be exclusively on the interconnections that exist between Türkiye and the countries in the SSA. It also aims to make an analysis of the historical context and relevant factors that may have contributed to the development of relationships. The inquiry pertains to the extent to which Türkiye's credentials can be deemed influential factors in the country's strategy towards tackling the SSA. The sub-queries are available here: What are the economic, developmental, and diplomatic strategies that Türkiye has employed

9 Selçuk İncesu, “Afrika Açılım Politikası”, 30.1.2020, <https://www.cumhuriyet.com.tr/yazarlar/olaylar-ve-gorusler/afrika-acilim-politikasi-1717211>, Accessed: 12.2.2020.

10 In 1983, he founded the Motherland Party, and after his party won the general election the same year, he was entrusted with forming the government and became the 19th Prime Minister of the Republic of Türkiye. After the elections of 1987, he once again established a cabinet and served as prime minister. Özal, who was elected the eighth president of the Republic of Türkiye by the Grand National Assembly of Türkiye on October 31, 1989, assumed this position on November 9, 1989.

11 On Birinci Kalkınma Planı 2019-2023, https://www.sbb.gov.tr/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/TeknikSirligi_ve_KalkinmaYardimlariCalismaGrubuRaporu.pdf Accessed: 11.8.2022.

since its opening in 1998 to strengthen its policies in the region? The expansion of Türkiye's ties with the SSA is contingent upon a number of critical factors, including normative and soft power competencies, as well as the magnitude of Türkiye's quantitative involvement in the region. So, the next issue is, how deep and solid are Türkiye's engagements? Despite advancements in diverse domains such as the economy, military, and culture, there are concerns regarding Türkiye's position in the SSA. Hence, the present article also investigates the likelihood of an "abandonment policy."

2. After Opening to the SSA: The Period of 1998-2022

2.1. Initial Years of Opening, 1998-2002

Due to Türkiye's non-inclusion in the EU's full membership during the 1997 Luxembourg Summit, İsmail Cem, who served as Türkiye's Foreign Minister from 1998 to 2002, led the implementation of the '1998 Opening Action Plan.' Cem's tenure consolidated TFP's multidirectional dimension by rooting it in a normative framework. According to Cem, the impact of cultural credentials on foreign affairs cannot be ignored. He opines that TFP has become estranged from its cultural and historical foundations and that it should be replaced by an altogether new perspective based on the acknowledgement of Türkiye's rich identity and historical assets, which also include pre-republican credentials, by stating:

"I have always argued that Türkiye, given her historical and civilizational realities, should have an encompassing approach towards her identity. It seems totally wrong to define our identity solely on the basis of one particular culture, as "Western", or "Islamic", or whatever. And, not many nations have the advantage of having a "multi-civilizational" characteristic. This, again, is what I try to put to use in our foreign policy formulation".¹²

Cem believes that an active and self-sufficient foreign policy will help Türkiye strengthen its worldwide standing, given the EU's exclusion. He characterized the Luxembourg Summit's decision as a reflection of the double standard and emphasized that Türkiye's EU accession process should not be an obsession. Cem's TFP diversification into other geographies becomes a priority in these circumstances. Thence, he emphasized that Türkiye is a country in the middle of Eurasia that could have ties with other parts of the world by saying:

12 İsmail Cem, *Turkey in the New Century: Speeches and Texts Presented at International Fora (1995-2001)*, Rustem, 2001, p.49.

“... the international role we envision for ourselves is not restricted to that of a peripheral country on the outskirts of Europe. The function we envisage is to have a leading role in the Eurasian reality, which is evident in its European and Asian dimensions”.¹³

‘1998 Opening Action Plan’ aimed to enhance Türkiye’s relations with Africa. The envisaged plan’s execution encompassed diplomatic, economic, and cultural facets. The objective of diplomacy was to enhance the country’s diplomatic representation in Africa, expedite official high-level engagements among these countries, and establish political dialogue mechanisms in conjunction with humanitarian assistance.¹⁴ With regards to the economic aspect, the objectives encompassed the resolution of trade, technical, economic, and scientific collaboration agreements; the prevention of dual taxation; the encouragement and safeguarding of mutual investments; the execution of business visits; the formation of joint business councils or chambers of commerce; and the attainment of Türkiye’s non-regional donor country membership in the African Development Bank (AfDB).¹⁵ The final iteration of the cultural aspect would be divided into five distinct components. The proposed initiative aims to establish cultural agreements, provide subsidies for African students, and extend invitations to African academics to participate in seminars and festivals. Furthermore, Hazar stated the setting up of training sessions for African military and diplomatic officials as well as the establishment of an Institute of African Studies.¹⁶

Despite the development of a comprehensive approach to engaging with Africa, the majority of the plan’s objectives were not adequately executed, and the measures taken to implement the plan were limited to being mentioned as a secondary topic during the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) plenaries held annually in September, alongside other primary themes such as development and terrorism. The plan’s initial lack of success can be attributed to two primary factors. During the period spanning from 1998 to 2002 in Türkiye, the country experienced a notable lack of economic stability, particularly in the aftermath of the 1999 earthquake and the 2001 economic crisis. Additionally, the country was governed by a series of unstable coalition governments throughout this time

13 Ismail Cem, *Turkey, Europe, Eurasia, the “Union” of Europe and Turkey*, 2009, Volume II.

14 Numan Hazar, “The Future of Turkish-African Relations”. *Diş Politika*, (3-4), 2000, p.110.

15 Elem Eyrice Tepeciklioğlu, & Ali Onur Tepeciklioğlu, *Turkey in Africa, A New Emerging Power*, Routledge, 2022, p.65.

16 Numan Hazar, “The Future of Turkish-African Relations”, p.111.

frame. As per Wheeler's account, the primary factors contributing to Türkiye's postponement of the majority of its African aspirations are outlined.¹⁷ Despite the insufficiency of the success achieved, some endeavors were undertaken towards the goal of opening. The measures undertaken by Türkiye to enhance its diplomatic relations with African countries during the turn of the millennium involved the establishment of friendship committees with the Sudanese Parliament in 1999, the signing of TET (economic and technical cooperation) agreements with Mali and Congo in 2000, and the visit of the President of Chad to Türkiye in the same year.¹⁸

2.2. From the Debut of Justice and Development Party (AK Party) Rule to the Second Türkiye-Africa Partnership Summit, 2002-2014

According to Hale, a special occurrence was the TFP's expansion into Africa during the AK Party's governance.¹⁹ The implementation of the plan in practice was contingent upon the outcome of the 2002 general elections, which ushered in political stability and an economic upswing due to the AK Party's continuation of economic reforms initiated by previous coalition governments prior to 2002. Following the rise of the AK Party to power, Türkiye continued to maintain its commitment to the EU process while simultaneously expanding its diplomatic relations. This expansion was characterized by a particular emphasis on the African dimension of the TFP. A document entitled 'Strategy for Development of Economic Relations with Africa' was produced by the Under-Secretariat of the Prime Ministry for Foreign Trade in 2003 with the aim of realizing the economic objectives of the action plan.²⁰ Subsequently, 2005 was declared as the 'Year of Africa.'²¹ In accordance with the declaration of 2005 the 'Year of Africa', the foreign policy tendencies of the AK Party led Türkiye to adopt a significantly stronger position in Africa.

17 Tom Wheeler, "Ankara to Africa: Turkey's Outreach since 2005". *South African Journal of International Affairs*, 2011, 18, no. 1, p. 45-46.

18 Volkan İpek, "The 2011 Landing of Turkey on Somalia: the "State to People" Aspect of Turkish Foreign Policy Towards sub-Saharan Africa", *European Scientific Journal*, 2014, p. 418-422.

19 William Hale, *Turkish Foreign Policy Since 1774*, Routledge, 2012, p. 247.

20 Savaş Genç & Oğuzhan Tekin, "Turkey's Increased Engagement in Africa: The Potential, Limits and Future Perspective of Relations" *European Journal of Economic and Political Studies*, 2014, 7(1), p. 88.

21 Republic of Türkiye, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, <http://www.mfa.gov.tr/turkey-africa-relations.en.mfa>, Accessed: 5.12.2020.

After 2007, according to scholars such as Aras²² and Öniş²³, the TFP began focusing less on the Western axis and more on regional interdependence and Türkiye's critical geostrategic position. AK Party aimed to implement a TFP by leaning on notions centered on the assumption that the country should obtain a central role in the area and beyond by exercising proactivity, while also incorporating TFP with values from the pre-Republican period. AK Party's proposed new perspective for the country can be interpreted as a reimagining of the country's longstanding pursuit of a diversified foreign policy role, which combines universal and national values. In this context, Africa and the SSA serves as a suitable region for showcasing the new texture of the TFP

Diplomatic Dimension

Cevdet Sunay's visit to an SSA country in 1969 marked the first instance of a Turkish president visiting the region. Subsequently, in 2005, H.E. Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, then serving as the Turkish Prime Minister, became the first to visit South Africa and Ethiopia. This followed former President Ahmet Necdet Sezer²⁴'s visit to South Africa in 2002²⁵. Although Türkiye's relations with the EU experienced a significant upswing in 2005, the country's foreign policy has endeavored to maintain a robust, multidimensional approach throughout this period. Türkiye focused on establishing itself as a viable option and simultaneously enhancing its economic influence in the SSA states.

In the lead-up to its election to the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) in 2008, the country heightened its attempts from 2005 to 2008 to improve its diplomatic ties with the continent. An analysis of the voting behavior of African nations regarding Türkiye's non-permanent membership in the UNSC indicates that the recently implemented opening policy has achieved its intended goals, as all but two African countries expressed their support for Türkiye's bid.²⁶ In order to achieve this goal, Türkiye made significant efforts in the following manner: In 2005, the TET Agreements were signed with Sudan, followed by Burkina Faso

22 Bülent Aras, "The Davutoğlu era in Turkish Foreign Policy", *Insight Turkey*, 2009.

23 Ziya Öniş, "Multiple Faces of the "New" Turkish Foreign Policy: Underlying Dynamics and a Critique". *Insight Turkey*, 13(1).

24 The Turkish Grand National Assembly elected him on May 5, 2000. He served from May 16, 2000 to August 28, 2007.

25 Presidency of the Republic of Türkiye, <https://www.tccb.gov.tr/basin-aciklamalari-ahmet-necdet-sezer/1720/5320/dunya-surdurulebilir-kalkinma-zirvesi> Accessed: 5.12.2020.

26 Elem Eyrice Tepeciklioğlu, & Ali Onur Tepeciklioğlu, *Turkey in Africa, A New Emerging Power*, p. 66.

and Malawi in 2006, and Madagascar and Kenya in 2007. Additionally, Ivory Coast and Angola signed the agreements in 2008. These agreements were signed subsequent to granting “observer status” to Türkiye by the the African Union (AU) in 2005.²⁷ In 2005, the Turkish Embassy in Nigeria received accreditation from the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS).

In 2006, Prime Minister H.E. Erdoğan conducted two additional visits to Sudan and Ethiopia, respectively. During his visit to Ethiopia in 2007, he delivered a speech to an AU Assembly, thus becoming the first Turkish Prime Minister to do so. In addition, the Ministerial Conference on Least Developed Countries was convened by Türkiye in Istanbul during July 2007.²⁸ In 2008, the President of Türkiye made a visit to Senegal, coinciding with Türkiye's accession to the African Development Bank as a non-regional member. The initial Türkiye-Africa Partnership Summit (TAPS) was convened in Istanbul in 2008, with participation from representatives of forty-nine distinct African states.²⁹ The inaugural summit marked a significant milestone as it established the enduring trajectory of the partnership. Consequently, a document entitled ‘The Istanbul Declaration on Africa-Türkiye Partnership’ was released, encompassing the overarching notion of ‘Solidarity and Partnership for a Common Future’. The aforementioned declaration commended Türkiye's efforts towards liberalization while also outlining the regulations governing the partnership and the nine specific domains of collaboration anticipated.³⁰

In 2008, during the tenth summit of the AU, Türkiye was designated as a strategic partner. Following the successful initiation of the opening process, Türkiye implemented measures to enhance its diplomatic presence in the SSA region. Prior to 2008, Türkiye's representation in the SSA region was restricted to seven countries, namely Ethiopia, Sudan, Senegal, Nigeria, Kenya, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and South Africa. Consequently, Turkish authorities have initiated a renewed focus on bilateral visits to the

27 Volkan İpek, “The 2011 Landing of Turkey on Somalia: the “State to People” Aspect of Turkish Foreign Policy Towards sub-Saharan Africa”, p. 420.

28 The Istanbul Declaration on Africa - Turkey Partnership “Solidarity and Partnership for a Common Future” https://www.iri.edu.ar/publicaciones_iri/anuario/CD%20Anuario%202008/Africa/ua/istambul%20declaration%20august%202008.pdf, Accessed: 25.8.2022.

29 Lesotho, Swaziland, and Mozambique did not participate. Morocco was not an AU member, but it was represented.

30 The Istanbul Declaration on Africa - Turkey Partnership “Solidarity and Partnership for a Common Future” Accessed:25.8.2022.

SSA region with the aim of consolidating the beneficial outcomes of the policy of opening.

The frequency of official visits increased, and it became customary for officials of lower ranks to conduct such visits. In this context, seven countries in the SSA, namely Kenya, Tanzania, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Cameroon, Nigeria, Ghana, and Gabon, received visits from high-level officials between 2009 and 2011. Following the year 2008, it was observed that additional progressions in relationships had occurred. In 2009, several transportation agreements were signed with Kenya, Gambia, Somalia, Mali, and Ghana with the aim of promoting unrestricted mobility of individuals and goods. In 2009, a number of countries, such as Djibouti, Ethiopia, Nigeria, and the Republic of South Africa, entered into agreements pertaining to educational cooperation and technical support. In the year 2010, a significant event occurred with the establishment of a TET agreement with Cameroon. During the year in question, transportation agreements were entered into with Uganda and Zambia. In the subsequent year, specifically in 2011, a transportation agreement was achieved with Sierra Leone.³¹ The Turkish embassy located in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, was granted accreditation by the East African Community (EAC) in 2010. In 2012, the Turkish embassy located in Lusaka, Zambia, received accreditation from the Common Markets for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA). The following year, in 2013, the Turkish embassy situated in Libreville, Gabon, was granted accreditation by the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS). Furthermore, the devastating drought and famine that transpired in Somalia in 2011 provided Türkiye with an incentive to accelerate its foray into the continent.

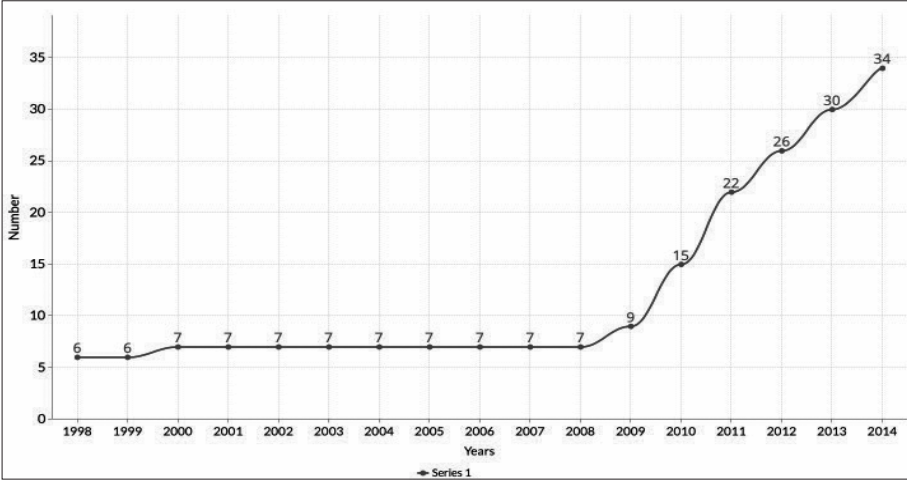
The Turkish diplomatic presence in the SSA increased from seven to thirty-four between 2005 and 2014, while Türkiye was campaigning for a non-permanent seat on the UNSC for the 2015–2016 term. High-level bilateral visits increased to seventeen.³² Thence, diplomatic missions were established in Angola, Cameroon, Ghana, Madagascar, Mali, and Uganda in the year

31 Volkan İpek, "The 2011 Landing of Turkey on Somalia: the "State to People" Aspect of Turkish Foreign Policy Towards sub-Saharan Africa", 2014.

32 Former President Abdullah Gül's Visits to the SSA Countries (2007-2014): 2008, Senegal; 2009, Kenya, Tanzania 2010, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Cameroon, Nigeria; 2011, Gabon, Ghana. Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan's Visits to the SSA Countries (2002-2014): 2005, Ethiopia, South Africa; 2006, Sudan; 2007, Ethiopia; 2011, Somali, South Africa; 2013, Gabon, Niger, Senegal.

2010; Gambia, Mauritania, Mozambique, Somalia, South Sudan, Zambia, and Zimbabwe in the year 2011; Burkina Faso, Gabon, Namibia, and Niger in the year 2012; Chad, Djibouti, Eritrea, and Guinea in the year 2013; and Benin, Botswana, the Republic of the Congo, and Rwanda in 2014.³³

Figure 1.1: Turkish Diplomatic Missions Established in SSA, 1998-2014



Source: Own Compilation Based on MoFA Website³⁶

Normative Power Dimension

Normative power is a rhetorical strategy employed by the EU to distinguish itself from other actors by re-examining traditional power concepts and highlighting the significance of ethical principles in international relations in order to attain its objectives in the world arena without resorting to forceful measures. The most crucial factor shaping the EU's international normative stance is "what it is, not what it does or says". So, the EU positions itself as a "force for good" by leveraging its *acquis* standards, values, and normative discourses. Nathalie Tocci stresses that the essential issue is not whether an entity is a normative power or not, but rather how much of a normative power a state possesses. According to Tocci, "a non-neutral definition of 'normative' (power) can reduce the possibility of subjectivity".³⁵ By emphasizing that a normative foreign policy's ethical

33 Republic of Türkiye, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, <https://www.mfa.gov.tr/default.en.mfa>, Accessed:23.8.2022.

34 Republic of Türkiye, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, <https://www.mfa.gov.tr/default.de.mfa>, Accessed: 24.8.2022.

35 Nathalie Tocci, "Profiling Normative Foreign Policy: The European Union and its Global Partners", CEPS Working Documents, 2007, (279), p. 3.

objective may enable ‘imperial’ foreign policy to emerge, the normative, in this case, normativity, cannot be analyzed in isolation from the actors’ power status. In essence, she defines it as a set of:

“... the function of ... ‘regulating power. In the search for these standards, we will consider three dimensions of a normative foreign policy: what an actor wants (its goals), how it acts (the deployment of its policy means) and what it achieves (its impact)”³⁶

Normative power is a generic which is not specific to the EU, Manners posits that the concept of normative power is constructed in a manner that influences opinions.³⁷ Therefore, analyzing normative power outside of a Eurocentric framework should be viewed as an emancipatory ethical and cultural attitude against a Westernly constructed reality as a given. As Tully states:

“Cultures are not internally homogeneous. They are continuously contested, imagined and re-imagined, transformed and negotiated, both by their members and through their interaction with others...Cultural diversity is a tangled labyrinth of intertwining cultural differences and similarities, not a panopticon of fixed, independent and incommensurable worldviews in which we are either prisoners or cosmopolitan spectators in the central tower”³⁸

An Aristotle codification of normative power, the EU, as “master” (subject) and the others as “matter” (object) has powerfully naturalized and de-politicized. According to Kavalski³⁹, Mitta⁴⁰, and Qin⁴¹, academics and policymakers frequently underestimate colonialism’s legacy by focusing exclusively on the normative power, regarding the EU, and asserting that mainstream international relations employs “politics of deflection” or “metaphysical component of the theoretical hard core” to mitigate the harm caused by Eurocentrism.

Furthermore, normative power is regarded as a means of eradicating worldwide injustice and aiding the marginalized population at large. The act of “altruism” is a global phenomenon that is motivated by moral principles rather

36 Nathalie Tocci, “Profiling Normative Foreign Policy: The European Union and its Global Partners”, p. 3.

37 Ian Manners, “Normative Power Europe: A Contradiction in Terms?”. *JCMS: Journal of Common Market Studies*, 2002, 40(2), p. 239.

38 James Tully, *Strange multiplicity: Constitutionalism in an Age of Diversity*, 1995.

39 Emilian Kavalski, “The Guanxi of Relational International Affairs”. *Chinese Political Science Review*, 2018 3(3), p. 55.

40 Gifawosen Markos Mitta, “Normative Power Europe? The European Union Democracy Promotion in Africa: A Focus on Ethiopia”, 2021, (Pre-April 2018). *Journal of African Studies and Development*, 13(1), p. 6.

41 Yaqing Qin, “A Relational Theory of World Politics”. *International Studies Review*, 2016, 18(1), p. 34.

than self-serving motives, as noted by Merlingen⁴² and Scheipers & Sicurelli⁴³. Normative power is all about communication and is built on persuading, evoking norms, controlling the discourse, and leading by example.⁴⁴ To put it another way, *A* is said to have normative power when it is capable of disseminating a norm *x* to *B* through communicative actions. Meanwhile, the emphasis here on communicative actions implies that participants negotiate 'normal' meanings among themselves.⁴⁵ Furthermore, the communicative actions used by *A* to communicate a norm *x* to *B* should be reciprocal⁴⁶, reflexive⁴⁷, and inclusive⁴⁸. Communicative actions can also include coercive means⁴⁹ since "power matters in great power calculations about norm promotion and enforcement".⁵⁰ Finally, but certainly not least, persuasion, which Manners emphasizes in his new explanation of norm diffusion processes⁵¹, may "cover both manipulative moves and propaganda, public diplomacy and (dis)information campaigns".⁵² Besides that, Kavalski and Zolkos suggest that a normative power's capability to exert influence contingent upon its ability to produce locally suitable interactions that pave the way for adaptive outcomes.⁵³ Simply expressed, concepts of 'norm(al)'

42 Michael Merlingen, "Everything Is Dangerous: A Critique of Normative Power Europe", *Security Dialogue*, 2007, 38(4), p.435.

43 Sibylle Scheipers & Daniela Sicurelli (2007) "Normative Power Europe: a Credible Utopia?", *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 2007, 45 (2), p. 444.

44 Tuomas Forsberg, "Normative Power Europe, Once Again: A Conceptual Analysis of an Ideal Type". *JCMS: Journal of Common Market Studies*, 2011, 49(6), p.1196-8.

45 Erik Oddvar Eriksen, "The EU – A Cosmopolitan Polity?", *Journal of European Public Policy*, 2006, 13 (2), p. 255.

46 Radha Kumar, (2008). *India as a Foreign Policy Actor–Normative Redux* In *Who is a normative foreign policy actor? The European Union and its Global Partners* CEPS Centre for European Policy Studies, 2008.

47 Thomas Diez, "Constructing the Self and Changing Others: Reconsidering Normative Power Europe" *Millennium*, 2005, 33(3), p. 623.

48 Erik Oddvar Eriksen, "The EU – A Cosmopolitan Polity?", p.258; Brantly Womack, *China as a Normative Foreign Policy Actor*. In *Who is a Normative Foreign Policy Actor?* CEPS Centre for European Policy Studies, 2008, p. 278; Ian Manners, "The Normative Ethics of the European Union". *International Affairs*, 2008, p. 57-8.

49 Thomas Diez, "Constructing the Self and Changing Others: Reconsidering Normative Power Europe", p. 616; Thomas Diez, & Ian Manners. (2007). *Reflecting on Normative Power Europe*, In *Power in World Politics (pp. 173-188)*, 2007, Routledge p. 176; Elisabeth De Zutter, "Normative Power Spotting: An Ontological and Methodological Appraisal". *Journal of European Public Policy*, 2010, 17(8), p. 1114.

50 Renee De Nevers, "Imposing International Norms: Great powers and Norm Enforcement", *International Studies Review*, 2007, 9(1), p. 77.

51 Ian Manners, "Assessing the Decennial, Reassessing the Global: Understanding European Union Normative Power in Global Politics". *Cooperation and Conflict*, 48 (2), 2013, p. 315.

52 Tuomas Forsberg, "Normative Power Europe, Once Again: A Conceptual Analysis of an Ideal Type", p.1196; Ian Manners, "The Normative Ethics of the European Union". *International Affairs*, 2008, p. 59-60.

53 Emilian Kavalski & Magdalena Zolkos (2016). *The Recognition of Nature in International Relations*. In *Recognition and Global Politics* (pp. 139-156). Manchester University Press, 2016, p. 148.

are causally formed from interactions based on the logic of relationships rather than logic of appropriateness. Through this way, normative power is transformed into ‘relational practice’.⁵⁴

Scholars have been able to expand their perspectives beyond the Eurocentric paradigm by utilizing the globalization of normative power when examining countries such as China⁵⁵, India⁵⁶, Japan⁵⁷, Iran⁵⁸, and Türkiye⁵⁹. Thus, Türkiye also sought to position itself in the SSA as a normative power based on relationship logic as opposed to the EU’s appropriateness logic.⁶⁰ So, what is relationship logic? Relational normativity is based on ideas that can be (re) produced not because of their universal pattern, but because of how the universal is conveyed to specific historical and local circumstances. This way of thinking about normative power creates the impression that the party spreading norms through relationship is also asserting its moral superiority.⁶¹ While normative power may help to build and strengthen norm-based governance, it does not seem to be the most important part of the normative power idea. The fact that *A* possesses influence is viewed as evidence of *B*’s greater genuine acceptability or of *A*’s normative power. Hence, relational normativity claims that the EU’s ‘logic of appropriateness-based normativity’ with some (coercive) conditions excludes the ethical and political concerns of others. In that sense, Harte explores Türkiye’s new attitude by analyzing Türkiye’s normative power role conception, also known as ‘virtuous power’, in the SSA and concluding that it must be founded

54 Brantly Womack, China as a Normative Foreign Policy Actor. In *Who is a Normative Foreign Policy Actor?* CEPS Centre for European Policy Studies, p. 295-297.

55 Emilian Kavalski. “The Shadows of Normative Power in Asia: Framing the International Agency of China, India, and Japan”. *Pacific Focus*, 2014, 29(3), p. 303-328.

56 Ian Hall, “Narendra Modi and India’s Normative Power”, *International Affairs*, 2017, 93(1), p. 113-131.

57 Andre Asplund, “Normative Power Japan: Settling for ‘Chinese Democracy’”. *Contemporary Japan*, 2018, 30(1), 117-134; Rok Zupančič, “Normative Power Japan: The European Union’s Ideational Successor or Another ‘Contribution in Terms’?”. *Romanian Journal of Political Science*, 2013.

58 Mahdi Mohammad Nia, Discourse and Identity in Iran’s Foreign Policy, *Iranian Review of Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 3, No. 3, Fall 2012, p. 29-64.

59 Shane Brennan & Marc Herzog, *Turkey and the Politics of National Identity: Social, Economic and Cultural Transformation*. 2014, Bloomsbury Publishing; EmelParlar Dal, “Assessing Turkey’s “Normative” Power in the Middle East and North Africa Region: New Dynamics and their Limitations”. *Turkish Studies*, 2013, 14(4), 709-734.

60 Ali Kaya, *Turkey’s Foreign Policy in Sub-Saharan Africa from 1998 to 2022: A Quest for a Normative Power Role, The Horn of Africa Case*, Leipzig University, Germany.

61 Michael Merlingen, “Everything Is Dangerous: A Critique of Normative Power Europe”, p. 443.

on a non-opportunistic understanding.⁶² Mark Langan, investigating Türkiye's normative power role in Africa, describes Türkiye's normativity as a strategy that builds upon the shared heritage of the Ottoman Empire with an eye toward soft power.⁶³ According to him, Türkiye's engagement with Africa set the attention on Türkiye's normative values, and the country's recent efforts have demonstrated that the Turks can use cultural similarities to become friends with Africans.⁶⁴

The calamitous drought and famine that struck Somalia in 2011 offered Türkiye with the impetus to increase its "normative responsibility". During the visit of Prime Minister H.E. Erdoğan to Somalia, a leader from outside Africa, for the first time in almost two decades, Türkiye presented an idea for TFP in Africa, focusing on humanitarian values. The statement reiterated the global disgrace of the thousands of individuals who are expected to pass away due to hunger in the twenty-first century. Türkiye has employed the circumstances in Somalia as a way to solidify its normative role. The policies under consideration exhibit the humanitarian focus of the TFP, with an emphasis on altruism, non-interventionism, non-conditionality, non-colonialism, non-imperialism, respect for sovereignty, adaptability to local norms, and non-hegemony. For instance, in his address to the United Nations General Assembly in 2011, Prime Minister H.E. Erdoğan stated that

"...The international community is watching the suffering in Somalia as if it were a movie. It is urgent, however, that we face this situation, which is a test of our humanity. In doing so, we should not only look at the picture we see today, but also at the shameful history that has led Somalia into this great tragedy...the situation in Somalia has also revealed the deep wounds inflicted by the colonialist mentality that kept Africa under its hegemony for centuries. Today, however, this cold colonial attitude stands aloof from places where it has no interest, and watches idly as millions of children die for want of a morsel of bread in Somalia. I will be frank. No one can speak of peace, justice or civilization in the world if the cry rising from Somalia is left unheard...Türkiye's approach to Somalia or any other international issue is firmly grounded on humanitarian principles..."⁶⁵

62 Julia Harte, "Turkey Shocks Africa". *World Policy Journal*, 2012, 29(4), p. 38.

63 Mark Langan, M. (2017). "Neo-Colonialism and the Poverty of 'Development' in Africa". 2017, Springer, p. 91.

64 Ibid, p.105.

65 United Nations General Assembly, 66th session, 15th Plenary Meeting, A/66/PV.15, Address by Mr. Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, Prime Minister of the Republic of Turkey, 22 September 2011, New York, p.30.

Soft Power Dimension

Soft power, in contrast to normative power, is a foreign policy tool that can be combined with hard power and used as a foreign policy tool for both “good” and “evil” objectives, whereas normative power claims to be a force “only for good” by definition. Thus, normative power, in theory, should not be considered as a foreign-policy tool to be employed to maximize national interests. Nye puts it this way:

“Soft power is a descriptive rather than a normative concept. Like any form of power, it can be wielded for good or bad purposes. Hitler, Stalin and Bin Laden all possessed a great deal of soft power in the eyes of their acolytes, but that did not make it good”⁶⁶

Regarding Türkiye’s engaging with the SSA between 2002 and 2014, significant improvements were observed in the domains of cultural, educational, media-related, religious, and developmental engagements with the area. In that sense, in 2013, the Yunus Emre Institute (YEI) established its first office in the SSA region, specifically in South Africa, as a component of a cultural advancement attempt. Likewise, there was a notable increase in the quantity of scholarships granted to students hailing from SSA states in 2014, with a total of 4,532 scholarships awarded.⁶⁷ Ankara University established ‘the Center for African Studies (AÇAUM)’ in 2008.⁶⁸ Additionally, it is intriguing that Anadolu Agency (AA) has established a branch in Ethiopia, Turkish Airlines has expanded its flight network to cover these countries, and the Presidency of Religious Affairs (Diyaret İşleri Başkanlığı) of Türkiye has amplified its discourse on shared religious notions in parts where it holds sway. The Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TİKA) is a recognized instrument of soft power beyond the borders of Türkiye. Its establishment dates back to 1992, and it has since expanded its reach to Africa, opening its inaugural office in Ethiopia in 2005.⁶⁹ It aims to enhance the visibility of Turkish soft power in African states.

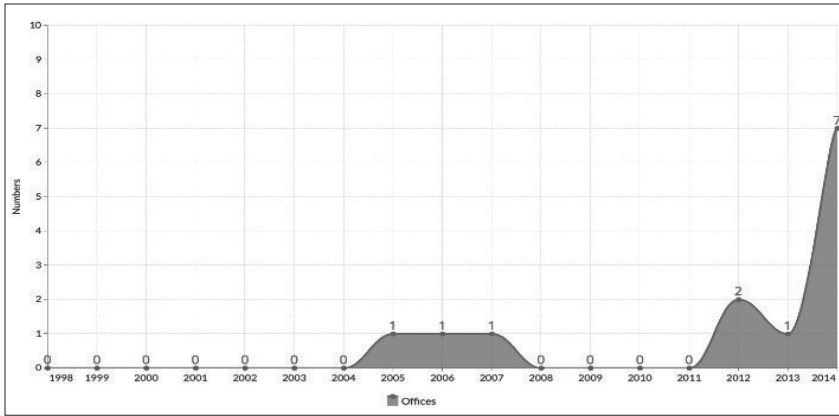
66 Joseph S. Nye, “China and Soft Power”, *South African Journal of International Affairs*, 2012, 19(2), p. 151-155.

67 Mehmet Baydemir, “Türkiye’nin ‘Afrika Açılımı’: Yükseköğretimde Sahraaltı Afrikalı Öğrenci Hareketliliği (2013-2018).” *PESA Uluslararası Sosyal Araştırmalar Dergisi*, 2020, 6.1 p. 59.

68 Afrika Çalışmaları Araştırma ve Uygulama Merkezi, <http://acaum.ankara.edu.tr/hakkimizda/bbbbbb/>, Accessed: 23.8.2022.

69 TİKA in Africa, https://www.tika.gov.tr/upload/2021/12/Afrika_Zirvesi.pdf, Accessed: 22.8.2022.

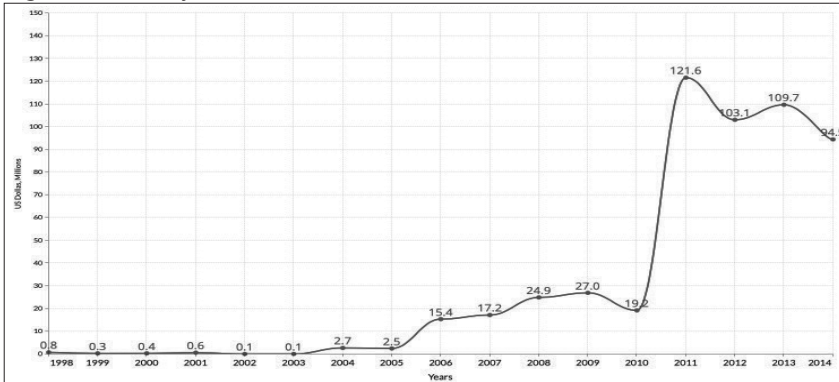
Figure 1.2: TİKA Offices Established in SSA, 1998-2014⁷²



Source: Own Compilation Based on TİKA Website⁷³

Türkiye also aimed to strengthen its economic and developmental interactions with SSA states during the period of 2008–2014, as part of its goal to adopt a more proactive stance in the region. The rising trend of Türkiye's Official Development Assistance (ODA) towards SSA countries during the period of 2004–2011, despite its relative instability, may be perceived as indicative of the strengthening of this partnership. Another significant factor illustrating the country's heightened focus on the SSA region is the notable increase in the ODA allocated to the SSA in 2011. This increase in funding "coincided" with President H.E. Erdoğan's visit to Somalia in the same year (see figure 1.3).

Figure 1.3: Türkiye's ODA for SSA, 1998-2014 (US Dollars, Millions)



Source: Own Compilation Based on OECD Website⁷⁴

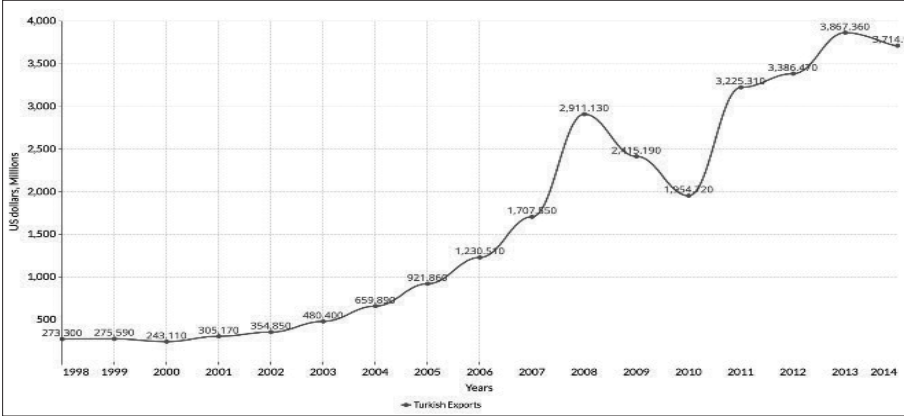
70 TİKA Offices established in the following years: Ethiopia in 2005, Sudan in 2006, Senegal in 2007, Somalia and Kenya in 2012, Niger in 2013, South Sudan, Namibia, Diibouti, Chad, Comor Islands, Tanzania, and Cameroon in 2014.

71 TİKA, <https://www.tika.gov.tr/tr>, Accessed: 24.8.2022..

72 OECD, <https://stats.oecd.org/#>, Accessed: 30.8.2022.

In addition to an increase in diplomatic missions, high-level bilateral visits, and normative policies, Türkiye gained ground in various SSA countries between 1998 and 2014, including commerce, as an extension of its soft power. In terms of trade, for instance, Turkish exports to SSA countries increased from 273.30 million US dollars in 1998 to 3.715 billion US dollars in 2014 (IMF, 2022).⁷³ In 2015, bilateral trade between Türkiye and countries in the SSA reached 6 billion US dollars.

Figure 1.4: Türkiye's Exports To SSA, 1998-2014 (US Dollars, Millions)



Source: Own Compilation Based on IMF Website⁷⁶

2. 3. The Period Beginning with the Second Türkiye-Africa Partnership Summit, 2014-2022

Diplomatic Dimension

The Second Türkiye-Africa Partnership Summit (TAPS), held in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea, November 19–20, 2014, under the theme ‘A New Model of Partnership for the Strengthening of Sustainable Development and Integration,’ elevated the opening process that began in 1998 to a new level.⁷⁵ During this summit, a ‘Declaration and Joint Implementation Plan for 2015–2019’ were accepted, and it was determined that ‘The Third Türkiye-Africa Partnership Summit’ would be held in Türkiye in 2019.⁷⁶ In the meantime, the third TAPS,

73 IMF, <https://data.imf.org/regular.aspx?key=61013712>, Accessed: 30.8.2022.

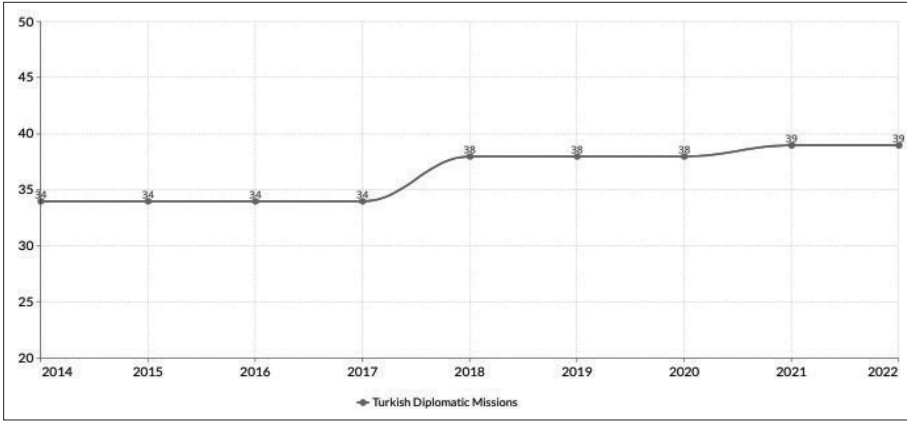
74 IMF, <https://data.imf.org/regular.aspx?key=61013712>, Accessed: 31.8.2022.

75 Africa-Turkey Summit Declaration, https://au.int/sites/default/files/documents/37754-doc-2014_africa_-_turkey_declaration.pdf, Accessed: 28.9.2022.

76 Republic of Türkiye, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, <https://www.mfa.gov.tr/turkey-and-the-african-union.en.mfa>, Accessed: 28.9.2022.

which took place in Istanbul from December 16–18, 2021, and whose theme was 'Enhanced Partnership for Common Development and Prosperity,' was planned to be held in 2019, but the unexpected global spread of covid-19 prevented this. Heads of state from 16 African states, along with more than 102 ministers and representatives of the AU and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), attended the summit.⁷⁷ Moreover, the number of reciprocal visits made by H.E. Erdoğan increased from nine to twenty-nine during the period spanning from 2014 to 2022.⁷⁸ Following the second stage of the TAPS, novel diplomatic missions were established within countries located in the SSA region, with the duration of these missions extending until the year 2022.

Figure 1.5: Turkish Diplomatic Missions Established in SSA, 2014-2022



Source: Own Compilation Based on MoFA Website⁸¹

In terms of diplomatic presence and bilateral visits, in only six SSA countries, including Guinea-Bissau⁸⁰, Liberia, the Central African Republic, Malawi, eSwatini, and Lesotho, Türkiye does not have an embassy. Yet, it was legally permitted to establish embassies in Monrovia, the capital of Liberia, Maseru, the capital of Lesotho, and Mbabane, the capital of eSwatini, and preparatory

77 Al Jazeera, Erdogan Seeks to Boost Ties at Turkey-Africa Summit <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/12/18/turkey-africa-partnership-summit>, Accessed: 11.10.2022.

78 2014, Equatorial Guinea; 2015, Somalia, Djibouti, Ethiopia; 2016, Senegal, Côte d'Ivoire, Somalia, Kenya, Uganda, Guinea, Nigeria, Ghana; 2017, Tanzania, Mozambique, Madagascar, Sudan, Chad; 2018, Mali, Senegal, Mauritania, Zambia, South Africa; 2020, Senegal, Gambia; 2021, Angola, Togo, Nigeria; 2022, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Senegal.

79 Republic of Türkiye, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, <https://www.mfa.gov.tr/default.de.mfa> and Anadolu Agency, <https://www.aa.com.tr/tr> Accessed: 3.10.2022.

80 The establishment of an embassy in Guinea Bissau is underway.

steps were taken to establish diplomatic representation.⁸¹ It appears that Türkiye's diplomatic presence in the SSA region has increased by a factor of approximately sevenfold ever since its opening policy was initiated in 1998 (see Figure 1.1 and Figure 1.5).

Comparing H.E. Erdoğan's bilateral visits to past high-level visits, it is evident that he is the most engaged Turkish leader in terms of Türkiye's opening to the SSA, particularly with regard to SSA countries. He made a total of thirty-eight bilateral visits to the countries that make up SSA between 2002 and 2022. Turkish Prime Ministers and Presidents have visited Senegal seven times since the country's first opening attempt in 1965, whereas they have not yet visited seventeen SSA countries, including Guinea-Bissau, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Burkina Faso, Benin, the Republic of Congo, the Central African Republic, South Sudan, Eritrea, Rwanda, Burundi, Malawi, Zimbabwe, Botswana, Namibia, eSwatini, and Lesotho.

Furthermore, as anticipated at the outset of the opening to Africa, the military dimension of partnerships with these countries has expanded. In that regard, twenty-six SSA states have signed security and defense agreements with Türkiye since 1998, and the country has military attachés in fourteen SSA states, including Senegal, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Ghana, Nigeria, Sudan, Ethiopia, Somalia, Kenya, Djibouti, Uganda, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Tanzania, and South Africa.⁸² Parallel to the expansion of its military cooperation with these countries, Türkiye has established military bases in two African countries, one of them in the SSA, Somalia and Libya, and conducts military training there as part of its capacity-building initiatives with its partners. In addition, in 2017, Türkiye built 'the Somali Turkish Task Force Command (Camp TURKSOM)' in Mogadishu, which is the biggest Turkish military training centre abroad.⁸³

Moreover, as of the year 2022, Türkiye has been providing support to the United Nations missions in South Sudan, Mali, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Central African Republic, and Sudan.⁸⁴ Türkiye has also provided support to a total of twelve United Nations Peace Keeping Operations (UNPKO) between the years 1998 and 2020. Since Türkiye has also positioned itself as a

81 Official Gazette of the Republic of Turkey, <https://www.resmigazete.gov.tr/eskiler/2018/06/20180622-11.pdf> Accessed: 3.10.2022.

82 Republic of Türkiye Ministry of National Defence General Staff, <https://www.tsk.tr/Sayfalar?viewName=Ataselikler> , Accessed: 8.10.2022.

83 Mohammed İbrahim Shire, "Turkey's Evolving Security Policy in Somalia", *University of Portsmouth*, 2002, February, p.11.

84 United Nations Peacekeeping, <https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/troop-and-police-contributors> , Accessed: 8.10.2022.

security-providing state, it has supplied SSA countries with military equipment, including its more economical unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), armoured cars, electro-optical sensor systems, surveillance systems, mine clearance vehicles, and rifles. Nigeria (18.3% of total exports to Africa), Rwanda (7.3% of total exports to Africa), Burkina Faso (5.5% of total exports to Africa), Ghana (4.9% of total exports to Africa), Uganda (3.7% of total exports to Africa), and Senegal (3% of total exports to Africa) are the primary recipients of Türkiye's large-scale military exports to SSA states between 2005 and 2021.⁸⁵

Normative Power Dimension

The second summit was noted as the completion of Türkiye's opening process to Africa, and the moral perspective of opening was reiterated by H.E. Erdoğan in his speech at the summit: "We have not viewed the plight of Africa from a political, geopolitical, or profit-driven perspective. We have always tackled situations with human empathy and care".⁸⁶ Between 2014 and 2022, H.E. Erdoğan's tours contributed to the consolidation of Türkiye's ambition of acquiring a normative power role in the region, as evidenced by the narratives employed by the parties involved during those visits. On H.E. Erdoğan's subsequent trip to Somalia, President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud made note of Türkiye's exemplary role in the region, saying that,

"Türkiye did not hold back, waiting for stability before it invested. Instead, it invested to achieve it... Where other international partners chose to plan their interventions from elsewhere, Türkiye put its people on the ground in Somalia".⁸⁷

Similarly, 2018 mentioned the ethical aspect and the potential for an equitable world in H.E. Erdoğan's speech in Zambia, stating that:

"We foresee that the African continent will shape the future of our changing world. We desire to act together with Africa for a more just and more equal world and, in this sense, to provide contribution to Africa's development attempt".⁸⁸

As the aforementioned point states, H.E. Erdoğan explained this normative differentiation in a more tangible manner during his address in Luanda, Angola, in the year 2021, by considering that:

85 Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, Arms Transfers Database, <https://www.sipri.org/databases/armstransfers>, Accessed: 8.10.2022.

86 Presidency of the Republic of Türkiye, <https://www.tccb.gov.tr/ozeldosyalar/turkiye-afrika/zirve/> Accessed: 29.9.2022.

87 Hürriyet Daily News, Turkish President Erdoğan Launches Projects in Somalia Under Tight security <https://www.hurriyetaidailynews.com/turkish-president-erdogan-launches-projects-in-somalia-under-tight-security-77392> Accessed: 11.6.2023.

88 Presidency of the Republic of Türkiye, <https://www.tccb.gov.tr/en/news/542/95940/president-erdogan-goes-to-south-africa-to-attend-brics-summit-> Accessed: 11.6.2023.

“The fate of humanity cannot, and should not, be left to the mercy of a handful of countries that were the victors of the Second World War... As Türkiye, we reject western-centered orientalist approaches to the African continent. We embrace the peoples of the African continent without discrimination”.⁸⁹

Soft Power Dimension

In the wake of the second TAPS, cultural, social, and religious ties have also been strengthened. Consequently, the YEI expanded from one to six centers in the SSA (Senegal, Sudan, Somalia, Rwanda, Nigeria, and South Africa) region, out of a total of ten centers across the continent. In a similar way, the number of scholarships offered to students from African states has increased dramatically, and between 2012 and 2021, Türkiye awarded grants to 12,600 students from 54 African states.⁹⁰ In 2021, the number of African-enrolled students in Turkish universities totaled 36,851 when additional funding programs and students who came to Türkiye at their own cost were included.⁹¹ Besides, Türkiye established the semi-public Maarif Foundation in 2016 in order to exert influence in the field of education. Currently, the Maarif Foundation runs schools in 30 African countries, the majority of which are in the SSA area.⁹²

In accordance with the aforementioned measures undertaken by Türkiye in the aftermath of the second TAPS, the media aspect of the opening has tried to be empowered, since it gives a platform for the Turkish perspective on African matters. In this way, AA opened new offices on the continent, in places like Senegal, Nigeria, Sudan, Kenya, Somalia, and South Africa, in addition to its office in Ethiopia.⁹³ As an extension of public diplomacy, TRT (Turkish Radio and Television) World was launched in 2015; it is the first station to broadcast in English. TRT Swahili was also established in 2020 in a similar manner, and the news websites TRT Hausa⁹⁴, Swahili, Arabic, and Portuguese serve multiple

89 Radio France Internationale, Turkey's Erdogan Serenades Africa as 'Alternative Partner' to post-Colonial Players, <https://www.rfi.fr/en/africa/20211020-turkey-s-erdogan-serenades-africa-as-alternative-partner-to-post-colonial-players> Accessed: 11.6.2023.

90 YTB, <https://www.ytb.gov.tr/haberler/afrikanin-kalkinmasini-onceleyen-projelerle-insani-temelli-yaklasim> Accessed:10.10.2022.

91 Council of Higher Education, <https://istatistik.yok.gov.tr/> Accessed:10.10.2022.

92 It operates schools in Burkina Faso, Burundi, Djibouti, Chad, Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, Cote d'Ivoire, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, South Africa, South Sudan, Cameroon, Kenya, Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Republic of the Congo, Liberia, Madagascar, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Sudan, Tanzania, and Togo.

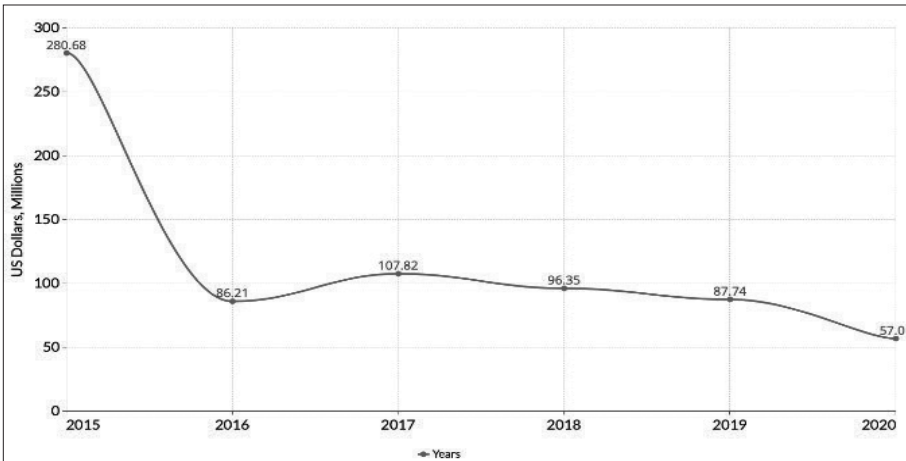
93 Anadolu Agency, <https://www.aa.com.tr/uploads/userFilesShared/AA-GLOBAL-FOY-TR.pdf> Accessed: 11.10.2022.

94 TRT Africa, <https://www.trt.net.tr/hausa/> Accessed: 11.10.2022.

African countries. TRT World is primarily used to bring Türkiye's foreign policy concerns onto the global agenda. However, it also strives to cover regional topics, ranging from those in the Balkans to those in Africa; for instance, TRT Africa is currently being broadcast.

In terms of aid allocation, Türkiye's aid to the region was supposed to stay consistent between 2014 and 2020; however, this appears not to be the case. Between the years 2015 and 2020, Türkiye's ODA to the SSA decreased from 280.68 million USD to 57 million USD. Consequently, the average ODA amount during this period was calculated to be 104.67 million USD. While there appears to be a significant decline in the year-on-year comparison between 2015 and 2016, it is noteworthy that the average value during the period spanning from 2005 to 2014 remains considerably lower, at 53.51 million USD. This figure is nearly half of the average value observed during the period from 2015 to 2020. (See Figure 1.6).

Figure 1.6: Türkiye's ODA for SSA, 2015-2020 (US Dollars, Millions)



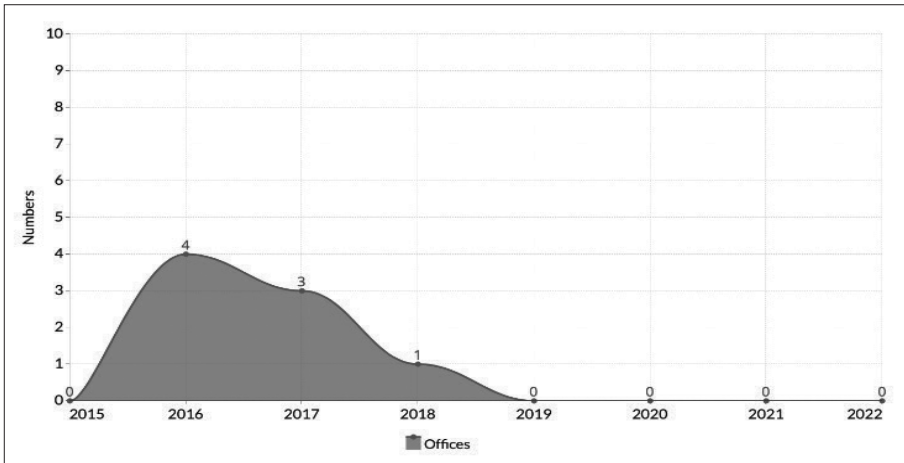
Source: Own Compilation Based on OECD Website⁹⁷

It is clear that Türkiye's aid policies in the SSA area are closely tied to its global agenda, as the expansion of TİKA offices in the SSA during 2005–2008 and 2012–2014 (see figure 1.2) and the growth of Türkiye's ODA for the SSA during 2006–2010 and 2011–2014 (see figure 1.3) cannot be analyzed without considering Türkiye's UNSC membership bids for 2009–2010 and 2015–2016. Furthermore, Türkiye has consistently been among the leading donor countries over the past decade. According to the UK-based organization Development Initiatives (DI), the country spent \$8.04 billion in 2020, placing it in second

95 OECD, <https://stats.oecd.org/#> Accessed: 4.10.2022.

place behind the US, which spent 8.9 billion US dollars. When gross national incomes (GNI) are included, Türkiye ranks first; humanitarian assistance accounted for 0.98 percent of GNI. However, it must be noted that most of the humanitarian expenditures by Türkiye go to Syrian refugees.⁹⁶ On the other hand, the last DI report in 2022 indicated that Türkiye's humanitarian assistance dropped to 5.58 billion US dollars, a change of -23.33% from the last report in 2021. Yet, Türkiye still preserves its first spot on the most generous donors' list when considering its GNI with other countries.⁹⁷ This dropping trend can also be seen in its ODA allocations to the SSA countries. They have been continuously dropping since their dramatic cut in 2015 (see figure 1.6), despite the fact that the number of TİKA offices in the SSA expanded to twenty-one including under-construction offices (see figure 1.7). The upward trend observed in 2011 after the visit to Somalia remained relatively constant, fluctuating between three three-digit numbers with the exception of 2014 (see figure 1.3). 2015 saw the maximum level of ODA to the SSA, which was followed by a significant decline in 2016 and never reached its three-digit levels.

Figure 1.7: TİKA Offices Established in SSA, 2015-2022¹⁰⁰



Source: Own Compilation Based Mostly on TİKA Website¹⁰¹

96 Global Humanitarian Assistance Report 2021, <https://devinit.org/documents/1008/Global-Humanitarian-Assistance-Report-2021.pdf> Accessed: 13.10.2022.

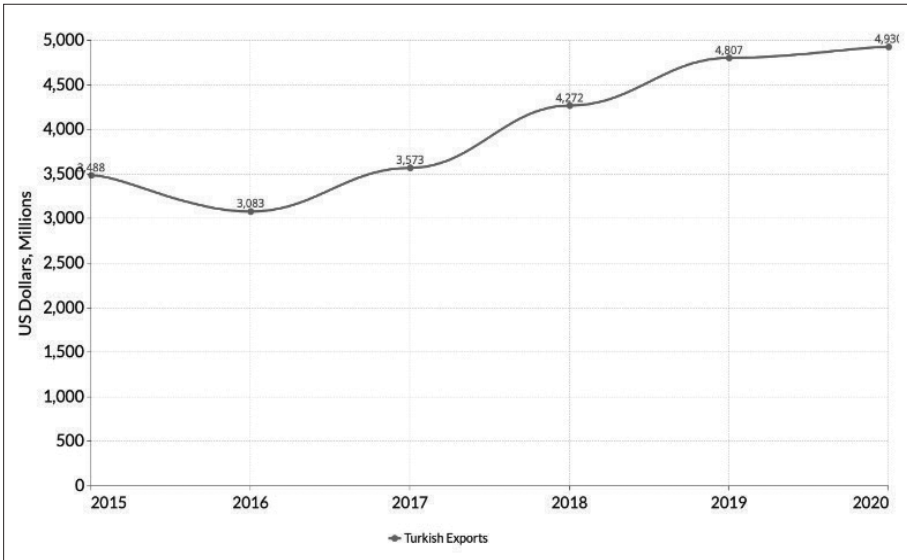
97 Global Humanitarian Assistance Report 2022, <https://devinit.org/data/datasets/global-humanitarian-assistance-report-2022/> Accessed: 13.10.2022.

98 TİKA Offices established in the following years: Nigeria (under construction), Guinea, Mozambique, Uganda in 2016; South Africa, Gambia, Mali (under construction) in 2017; Madagascar (under construction) in 2018. The graphic also includes the office that has been designated under construction.

99 TİKA, <https://www.tika.gov.tr/> Accessed: 30.9.2022.

Despite the fact that Türkiye's proactive efforts in the SSA region were motivated in part by political considerations, economic involvement with these countries appears to be an important aspect of relations. In this aspect, the country desires more access to the SSA's resources, businesses, and capacity to operate efficiently through manufacturing, construction, infrastructure, and final consumer goods. Turkish enterprises have undertaken about 1,150 projects in Africa with a total value of roughly 70 billion US dollars. Türkiye's exports to SSA countries and trade volume in Africa continue to represent a small portion (see Figure 1.8) of the country's total exports and total trade volume, which are roughly 26 billion USD on the continent.¹⁰⁰, compared to the SSA countries' 10.7 billion USD in 2021, and these figures are still a considerable distance from the target of 50 billion USD. However, the trade volume has increased by around 24.8% since 2003, when it was just 1.35 billion USD. Besides, the country's total trade volume with Africa increased from \$3.68 million in 2003 to \$29.45 billion in 2021.

Figure 1.8: Türkiye's Exports To SSA, 2015-2020 (US Dollars, Millions)



Source: Own Compilation Based on IMF Website¹⁰³

Türkiye's Foreign Economic Relations Board (DEİK), which has 45 business councils in African states to boost trade ties and reciprocal business, has organized

100 Turkish Statistical Institute, <https://data.tuik.gov.tr> Accessed: 6.10.2022.

101 IMF, <https://data.imf.org/regular.aspx?key=61013712> Accessed: 31.8.2022.

‘Türkiye-Africa Business and Economic Forums (TABEF)’¹⁰² in collaboration with the AU to govern trade relations between Türkiye and the continent.¹⁰³ Moreover, the total amount of Turkish Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) on the African continent reached roughly \$1.45 billion US dollars in the year 2020, although the SSA region represented a tiny percentage of that total. Based on the data provided by the Central Bank of the Republic of Türkiye, it can be inferred that Turkish residents have engaged in direct investments in the SSA countries. Notably, the three countries that have attracted the highest number of investments from Turkish residents are Ivory Coast with 22 million USD, Kenya with 19 million USD, and Senegal with 15 million USD.¹⁰⁴ Significantly, the number of trade and cooperation agreements between Türkiye and African countries increased to 49 in 2022 as a result of Türkiye’s growing engagement with the continent, with 44 of these agreements being with SSA states. In addition, Türkiye has double taxation agreements with a number of SSA countries, including South Africa, Ethiopia, and Gambia.¹⁰⁵

3. Conclusion

Turks have a notable historical heritage of establishing connections with the SSA region, which spans from the Ottoman Empire to contemporary Türkiye. The SSA arose as a concept for the TFP as a result of the Cyprus issue, which prompted the state’s leadership to adopt a multidirectional policy beginning in the midst of the 1960s.

Relations with the SSA have always had a moral foundation based on anti-colonial sentiments, which were supported by two pillars: the first was the Ottoman Empire’s lack of a systematic colonial mindset and the Turks’ Independence War against western colonial powers, and the second was the existence of a shared culture derived primarily from Islam.

102 On November 2 and 3, 2016, the first TABEF was held in Istanbul. The Forum was attended by Trade and Economic Ministers from 42 African countries, as well as nearly 2,000 businesses and officials. The Second TABEF was held in Istanbul on October 10-11, 2018, with the main theme ‘Investing in a Sustainable Future Together’. The event was attended by the presidents of the Republic of Turkey, the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, and the Republic of Rwanda, as well as 26 ministers from 43 African countries and more than 2,500 business people. And the last one was between October 21 and 22, 2022 in Istanbul.

103 Foreign Economic Relations Board, <https://www.deik.org.tr/uploads/deik-africa-presentation-11-05-rvz.pdf> Accessed: 6.10.2022.

104 Central Bank, Residents Foreign Direct Investments Abroad by Countries <https://evds2.tcmb.gov.tr/index.php?/evds/dashboard/4898> Accessed: 22.7.2023.

105 Ministry of Trade, <https://ticaret.gov.tr/> Accessed: 8.10.2022.

Ismail Cem's, the Foreign Minister of that period, aimed to shift the perception of Türkiye from being a peripheral country and instead provided an opportunity for policymakers to restructure relations with Africa. Notwithstanding the formulation of a plan in 1998 that delineated the country's approach towards the SSA, its execution had yet to be fully actualized at the time and remained at a level of aspiration. Since 2005, it has been recognized that Türkiye's strategy towards the SSA has become more distinct. The interrelationship between Türkiye's SSA policy and its overarching global objectives is evident, and it has been very parallel to the country's non-western tendencies since 2007. Considerable efforts have been made to advance relationships to a pivotal point; however, some scholars have expressed apprehensions regarding the potential implementation of an "abandonment policy". The country has devoted substantial resources to the development and enhancement of partnerships with that regions. This implies a decrease in the probability of withdrawal while also signifying a 'state policy'.

The increasing patterns in the conduct of the country's normative power role in the SSA region, specifically in relation to being a 'force for good', have yet to be systematized and analyzed by policymakers. Regarding the concept of soft power, it appears that TİKA will remain as the primary means for enhancing Türkiye's visibility. However, it is imperative for TİKA to maintain a consistent allocation of ODA for the SSA region, accompanied by a well-developed communication strategy. The SSA policy of Türkiye seems to have been efficacious in practice, particularly with regard to its soft power, and diplomatic aspects. Nonetheless, there exists a possibility for improvements in the domains of hard power and normative power. Ultimately, there seems to be potential for improving the current approach to addressing the normative dimension of relationships. Achieving equilibrium between normative and hard-power components is essential.

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