

## TURKEY'S MATURING FOREIGN POLICY: A VIEW FROM THE USA

*Türkiye'nin Olgunlaşan Dış Politikası: Amerika'dan Bir Bakış*

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### **Abstract:**

In 2009, both the US and Turkey witnessed significant changes to both their domestic and foreign policies. After an examination of how key figures' ideas have impacted the trajectory of the US and Turkey's domestic policies, the article looks beyond the domestic context at how each country is pursuing its foreign policy. Within each country's foreign policy schemes the most important emerging issues affecting both nations and the US-Turkey relationship are discussed. Considering leaders' statements and influential academics' and journalists' views, the article looks at whether US and Turkish policies converge or diverge on individual issues.

**Keywords:** *US Foreign Policy, Turkish Foreign Policy, Diplomacy, US-Turkish Relations*

### **Özet:**

2009 yılı hem Washington'ın hem de Ankara'nın iç ve dış politikalarında önemli değişikliklerin yaşandığı bir dönem oldu. Bu makale, Amerikalı ve Türk liderlerin ülkelerinin iç siyasi gelişmelerine olan etkisinden hareket ederek iki ülkenin dış politikalarını incelemektedir. Makalede, Washington ve Ankara'nın dış politikalarında ikili ilişkileri ve iki ülke halklarını etkileyen en önemli mevzular ele alınmaktadır. Siyasi liderlerin açıklamalarının yanında ilgili akademisyenlerin ve gazetecilerin görüşleri dikkate alınarak, ABD ve Türkiye'nin dış politika hedeflerinin birleştiği ve ayrıldığı belirli konular üzerinde durulmaktadır.

**Anahtar kelimeler:** *Amerikan Dış Politikası, Türk Dış Politikası, Diplomasi, ABD-Türkiye İlişkileri*

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## **INTRODUCTION**

The past year was one of dynamic change for both the US and Turkey. As each country's domestic and foreign agendas dramatically expanded, the possibility for new issues and interests to affect the US-Turkish relationship also increased. For the US, the exit of former President George W. Bush and entrance of President Barack Obama ushered in a new approach to international affairs that at times took the country on a markedly different path and at others was indistinguishable from the previous administration's policies. Turkey has likewise opened several notable new channels in its foreign policy. With the appointment of Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu in April 2009, the implementation of his foreign policy vision succinctly summarized as "zero problems with neighbors" has become the ideological foundation for Turkey's interaction with its near abroad. The distinguishing features of this vision are its independence, multi-lateral and proactive nature.<sup>1</sup>

Although the basis for the US-Turkey relationship remains strongly anchored in shared values, NATO, and US support for Turkey's European Union membership, as a result of both the change in American leadership after eight years of the Bush administration and the intensified pursuit of Davutoğlu's strategy, it is important to examine some of the new issues that are becoming central to US-Turkish relations. Additionally, taking into account the domestic agenda of both President Obama and Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan is essential in understanding the approach and perspective of Washington and Ankara towards international affairs and the US-Turkey relationship.

### **1. OBAMA'S FOREIGN POLICY**

President Obama took office in January 2009 embodying the 'change' he promised to bring to America as the first African-American president who

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<sup>1</sup> Yenal Belgici, Semin Gumsel, Owen Matthews, "Risky Diplomacy," *Newsweek*, 28 November 2009, <http://www.newsweek.com/id/224704>.

also has Islamic family roots. While the US continues to face the worst economic crisis in decades, Obama sought to tackle the difficult domestic problem of health care reform. However as his recent State of Union address underlined, reducing America's 10% unemployment rate is and will continue to be the main focus of his administration, even at a time when the US is conducting two foreign wars.<sup>2</sup> Congressional elections will be held at the end of 2010 in which Obama's political party will be extremely vulnerable to losing its majorities in Congress. This situation dramatically increases the urgency to improve the domestic economic situation and will demand an ever greater amount of Obama's attention. Any work that Obama has attempted to do on the international stage must be seen within this domestic context. Despite coming into office with a distinctly different foreign policy vision than his predecessor George W. Bush, Obama has achieved little success beyond simply articulating his perspective, partially because he has had limited time to focus on international issues as a result of the dire economic situation.

During his first year in office one of Obama's central foreign policy themes was to change the global perception of the US from one based on arrogant unilateralism to one based on 'mutual respect' and engagement. The center of this initiative has been the Muslim world which saw a rapid decline in relations with the US particularly following the invasion of Iraq and Bush's 'global war on terror.' The effort to change the US image was paralleled by efforts to use diplomacy to solve some of the biggest foreign policy challenges facing the US and the world. In his first trip overseas, Obama emphatically stated his commitment to one day achieving a world free of nuclear weapons. As a centerpiece of this vision is a pledge to reduce the US stockpile of weapons, in conjunction with Russia, and to prevent new nuclear-armed states from emerging. A dialogue with Iran was opened as part of this plan to negotiate an end to what the US and Europe considers a threatening nuclear weapons program in the country. The President has also

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<sup>2</sup> (Obama gives the annual State of the Union address in Washington D.C., 27 January 2010), <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/remarks-president-state-union-address>.

committed himself to the difficult process of reopening diplomatic talks between Israelis and Palestinians in an effort to find a path towards the hitherto elusive two-state solution that Obama supports.

While the administration's multi-front diplomacy resulted in few concrete policy changes during 2009, Obama did take real action in altering the US military engagements around the world. Remaining committed to his promise of ending the Iraq War by 2012, Obama oversaw the removal of US troops from Iraqi cities in the summer and has remained firm in his assertion that the timeline for US withdrawal of all combat troops will not be altered regardless of changing circumstances on the ground. Drawing down the Iraq War, Obama simultaneously increased the US involvement in the war in Afghanistan when he announced at the beginning of December that he will send an additional 30,000 US troops to the country.

The difficult process of trying to repair relations with the Muslim world while simultaneously escalating a war in a Muslim country has and will continue to beleaguer Obama over the course of his administration. In his effort to define how the US views and relates with the Muslim world, Obama made two important speeches in Ankara and Cairo. On the last stop of his first overseas tour, Obama addressed the Turkish Grand National Assembly (TGNA) where he stressed his desire to work with the Islamic world on 'mutual interests' with 'mutual respect'.<sup>3</sup> Obama was clear that the symbol of him ending his European tour in Turkey was representative of the high importance his administration places on Turkey and the connection he sees between Turkey and the West.

Avoiding the term 'model Muslim democracy'<sup>4</sup> that Ankara had unenthusiastically heard from the Bush administration to define its view of

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<sup>3</sup> (Obama addresses the Turkish Grand National Assembly in Ankara, 6 April 2009), [http://www.whitehouse.gov/the\\_press\\_office/Remarks-By-President-Obama-To-The-Turkish-Parliament](http://www.whitehouse.gov/the_press_office/Remarks-By-President-Obama-To-The-Turkish-Parliament).

<sup>4</sup> "Bush Says Democracy will Bring Justice, Freedom, Prosperity," (President speaks at Galatasaray University, 29 June 2004), <http://www.america.gov/st/washfile-english/2004/June/20040629081619frllehctim0.1081812.html>.

Turkey, Obama used the phrase 'model partnership' to explain his vision for the US-Turkey relationship. Introducing this term, Obama said that "Turkey and the United States can build a model partnership in which a predominantly Christian nation and a predominantly Muslim nation...can create a modern international community that is respectful, that is secure, that is prosperous." Turkey's connection to the Muslim world is therefore seen as one among several important components of Turkey's position in its region. During Erdoğan's visit to Washington at the end of 2009, 'model partnership' was included his description of the growing economic ties between the two countries. Since then, a discussion about how to further define the term 'model partnership' has continued amongst media and academic circles of both countries. However, neither government has released any additional clues as to how this new term defines the relationship.

## **2. THE DEMOCRATIC OPENING**

In 2009, the ruling Justice and Development Party (AKP) which has been in power since 2002, restarted the difficult process of finding a political solution to ongoing issues surrounding Turkey's Kurdish population. Although the future of the process is in serious turmoil, particularly following the Constitutional Court's decision to close down the Kurdish Democratic Society Party (DTP) in December, its initiation was significant as it attempted to move what had been a largely military issue into the public political sphere.

Without commenting directly on Turkey's domestic initiatives, the Obama administration's view of democratization efforts in Turkey was broadly articulated at the TGNA when he said, "An enduring commitment to the rule of law is the only way to achieve the security that comes from justice for all people. Robust minority rights let societies benefit from the full measure of contributions from all citizens." This perspective would fall in line with a vision of the 'democratic opening' reforms that allows not just Kurdish citizens but citizens of all religions and ethnicities to benefit from this process and to have equal opportunities to participate in their

government. The US has been a vocal supporter of Turkey's candidacy for European Union membership and the democratization reforms the Turkish government has made as part of this bid. The US has also been clear that it supports these reforms for Turkey's own benefit and not solely to move it closer to EU membership.

Although there is consistent support for Turkey's continued democratization, there is a limit to the level of attention the current Obama administration pays to Turkey's 'democratic opening'. This is the result both of a significant preoccupation with the US's own economic problems and the peripheral place Turkey's domestic circumstances occupies in American foreign policy interests. Within US government circles, the awareness of this domestic process is essentially only present in the context of how Turkey will develop relations with its southern neighbor Iraq and particularly the Kurdish Regional Government as the US prepares to leave.

Perhaps both the impetus and largest obstacle for the 'democratic opening' has been the continued existence of the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) with its bases in northern Iraq. Regarded as terrorists by both Ankara and Washington, the PKK has been a critical issue in US-Turkish relations especially throughout the Iraq War, which noticeably exacerbated the conflict between the PKK and Turkish state. During Erdoğan's visit in December, Obama linked the ability to end the PKK's terror campaign with Turkey's domestic reform process saying that the steps Erdoğan has taken to reach out to the Kurdish population have been 'very helpful' because 'terrorism cannot just be dealt with militarily; there is also social and political components.'

The US views the level of success Turkey has in solving its domestic problems with its Kurdish population as an indicator of how Turkey may be able to help keep Iraq a stable and unitary state in the future. Proposals to open a consulate in Irbil and continuing investments in northern Iraq, particularly in the energy sector, are also viewed as methods by which Turkey can contribute to the strengthening of the Iraqi state while also bolstering its own economy and security. However, beyond its extension to

Turkish-Iraqi relations, the US does not have a particular interest in how the 'democratic opening' proceeds in Turkey.

### **3. IRAN**

Throughout 2009 one of the most dynamic examples of both Obama's commitment to diplomacy and Turkey's attempt to strengthen relations with its neighbors was Iran. Both the US and Turkey witnessed their respective governments taking new steps to warm, or in the US case defrost, relations with Tehran. For the US, Obama's attempt at diplomacy with the Islamic Republic largely was the result of a strategic concern about the continuation of Iran's nuclear program, which the US believes is intended not just for civilian purposes but to acquire nuclear weapons. For Turkey, the presence of a largely unused natural gas supply as well as the opportunity for increased trade with a bordering country seem to be the driving force behind Ankara's deepening relations with Iran. In each process the importance of diplomacy was emphasized as the best way to ensure Iran would be a constructive international actor. However, the pursued format of each process has set Ankara and Washington on slightly different paths.

In the US attempt to change its relations with Iran, Obama sent a message for the Iranian new year, Nowruz, in which he attempted to articulate directly to the Iranian people a new theme of 'respect' that would characterize his administration's approach to the nation.<sup>5</sup> With little reaction to the turmoil following Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's re-election in June, the US continued its opening to Iran by beginning a dialogue with the nation on October 1 as part of the P5+1 talks. After what seemed like an initial agreement for Iran to send the majority of its enriched uranium stockpile to Russia, the talks have steadily worsened as neither proposals from the P5+1 members nor Iran have been acceptable to all sides. As 2009 came to an end the US administration began laying the groundwork

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<sup>5</sup> "Remarks by the President in Celebration of Nowruz," White House, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/Nowruz>.

for tougher sanctions to be brought against Iran by attempting to consolidate international opinion against Tehran's perceived confrontational stance.<sup>6</sup>

As the country sharing Turkey's longest border, increasing relations with Iran seemed to be a natural step in Davutoğlu's 'zero problems' policy. Following unmatched haste in congratulating Ahmadinejad on his controversial re-election, Ankara's growing relationship with Tehran has been a mix of concrete economic developments and flowery rhetoric of 'brotherhood.' Erdoğan's visit to Iran last October resulted in new commitments by Turkey to invest \$3.5 billion in Iran's South Pars gas field. As part of an understandable desire to diversify its gas supply which is dominated by Russia, Erdoğan's proclamation that Iranian gas could not only be used as a domestic supply for Turkey but also could be included in the proposed western-backed Nabucco pipeline<sup>7</sup> went beyond what the US and other European partners will accept.<sup>8</sup> Coupled with talks on a joint airline as well as multiplying the bilateral trade volume, Erdoğan's visit seemed to indicate his view that the way to best deal with Iran is to bring it into the international community through trade and energy links instead of isolating the regime as punishment over the secretive nature of its nuclear program.

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<sup>6</sup> On December 9, 2009 Assistant Secretary of State for Europe and Eurasia Phil Gordon gave a speech at the Council on Foreign Relations in which he said "...Iran needs to understand the message of the international community that there are consequences for not responding to what we think are generous offers of engagement."

[http://www.cfr.org/publication/20980/useurope\\_partnership.html?breadcrumb=%2Fpublication%2Fby\\_type%2Ftranscript](http://www.cfr.org/publication/20980/useurope_partnership.html?breadcrumb=%2Fpublication%2Fby_type%2Ftranscript).

<sup>7</sup> Steve Bryant and Rob Verdonck, "Nabucco Gas Pipeline Forges Ahead Without Contracts," *Bloomberg* 13 July 2009.

<http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=20601100&sid=ad2v9rmABZ.k>

<sup>8</sup> While on November 6, 2009 during a press conference at the US Embassy in Ankara, Gordon stated the US position that "Just to emphasize the core point, even when investments or exchanges with Iran do not fall afoul of our law, as a general principle we don't think now is the time for business as usual with Iran." [http://turkey.usembassy.gov/statements\\_100609.html](http://turkey.usembassy.gov/statements_100609.html).



In addition to the growing trade and business links between Iran and Turkey, Erdoğan and Ahmadinejad showed a particular affinity towards proclaiming the relationship as a 'brotherhood' between the two nations. This new description included Erdoğan's continual support for Iran's right to enrich uranium for peaceful nuclear purposes and a dismissal of fears that Iran is attempting to acquire a nuclear weapon. While in Iran on October 27, Erdoğan stated "This is an exercise on nuclear energy; it is an exercise with peaceful and humanitarian goals."<sup>9</sup> Interestingly a recent poll of the Turkish population's perception of Iran's nuclear program reveals that Erdoğan's stance reflects the sentiment of a majority of Turks who do not see Iran's nuclear program as a threat.<sup>10</sup> This poll is particularly relevant as it may indicate to Washington that Erdoğan's stance on Iran is unlikely to change despite an almost assured increase in American pressure to support new sanctions.

Obama and other senior US officials have made clear their desire to present a united international front against Iran's nuclear program. A first test of this effort was the UN-IAEA resolution to condemn Iran's evasion of IAEA regulations. Turkey abstained from the vote. Undersecretary of State Philip Gordon expressed US 'disappointment' with Turkey over its failure to support the resolution while emphasizing his perception that both Washington and Ankara share a desire to prevent a nuclear arms race from developing in the Middle East. Recognizing Erdoğan's view that Turkey's links with Iran could allow it to play a mediating role between Iran and the west, the US has expressed openness to such a possibility, but has qualified any support with a desire for the message being conveyed to be consistent.<sup>11</sup> For the US, that means the message is one of diplomacy with consequences

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<sup>9</sup> Abdülhamit Bilici, "Iran's nuke program for humanitarian ends, Erdoğan says," *Today's Zaman* 28 October 2009, <http://www.todayszaman.com/tz-web/news-191248-irans-nuke-program-for-humanitarian-ends-Erdoğan-says.html>.

<sup>10</sup> "Türk Dış Politikasının Yeni Yüzü," *MetroPoll*, <http://www.metropoll.com.tr/report/turk-dis-politikasinin-yeni-yuzu>.

<sup>11</sup> "US-Europe Partnership," *Council on Foreign Relations*, [http://www.cfr.org/publication/20980/useurope\\_partnership.html?breadcrumb=%2Fpublication%2Fby\\_type%2Ftranscript](http://www.cfr.org/publication/20980/useurope_partnership.html?breadcrumb=%2Fpublication%2Fby_type%2Ftranscript).

if no agreement is reached. As National Security Advisor Jim Jones seemed to indicate in an interview at the end of 2009, the US is apparently not convinced that Turkey will be supportive of any sanctions that the US seeks to impose on Iran.<sup>12</sup> Although the US may recognize the potential for Turkey to act as a link to Iran, without certainty that leaders in Ankara and Washington are envisioning the same path for negotiations and ‘consequences’ to follow, it’s unlikely that the US will be supportive of Turkey’s growing ties with Iran. Particularly if the diplomatic process comes to an end, the US may become more vocally unsupportive and uncomfortable with Ankara’s close relationship with Tehran.

#### **4. ARMENIA**

Among the most praised steps Ankara has taken as part of its ‘zero problems’ policy has been the rapprochement with Yerevan, which became public in 2008 when President Abdullah Gül visited the country in what became dubbed ‘soccer diplomacy.’ Unpublicized negotiations that began with Swiss mediation eventually became a source of criticism for both nations’ leaders who faced strong opposition to any reconciliation between the two countries which have never had formal diplomatic relations. After announcing at the end of August 2009 that a process to normalization had been agreed upon, it was still unclear whether negotiations over the establishment of ties would result in any concrete action. However on October 10, despite a lack of popular support, Armenian Foreign Minister Edward Nalbandian and Davutoğlu signed a protocol to normalize relations, including opening the border between the two countries. Major powers showed their support for the protocol as Secretary of State Hilary Clinton, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov and EU Foreign Policy Chief Javier Solana came to Zurich and helped facilitate the actual signing.

In addition to the important step towards building a peaceful and stable Caucasus region, for the US-Turkey relationship the protocol also

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<sup>12</sup> “US Growing Impatient with Iran,” *Wall Street Journal*, 11 December 2009. <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB126049205433686663.html>.

symbolized some progress on the issue of the “Armenian genocide” that annually plagues relations. With a large and politically active Armenian diaspora, the debate over the nature of events at the end of the Ottoman Empire is also a domestic issue for American politicians. As a candidate, Obama stated his view that there was an “Armenian genocide” and even pledged to openly recognize it if he became president, something no other sitting president had previously done.<sup>13</sup> However, when the critical April 24<sup>th</sup> date approached, Obama failed to outright fulfill his campaign promise and instead used the Armenian term “Meds Yeghern” to describe the events. Obama’s skirting of the problem was largely possible because of the newly opened Turkish-Armenian dialogue which Obama said he hoped would allow the two countries to come to terms with the past on their own.<sup>14</sup> US support for the protocol has been clear and consistent and in Obama’s most recent meeting with Erdoğan, he expressed the American desire to see the process carried through to completion saying he “congratulated the Prime Minister on some courageous steps that he has taken around the issue of normalizing Turkish/Armenian relations, and encouraged him to continue to move forward along this path”.

With strong opposition to ratifying the agreement in both the Armenian and Turkish parliament, the prospect of a closed border come April is becoming more real. This will have a serious implication when the “Armenian Resolution” again surfaces as a problem in US-Turkish relations. If Obama is unable to point to any significant steps forward in the implementation of the protocol, he will have a difficult time maneuvering around the “g-word” as he did in 2009. Although the likelihood of him triggering a crisis in the Turkish relationship by using the word is still unlikely, Obama may not be able to prevent US Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi, who comes from a state with a large Armenian population from finally bringing the “Armenian Resolution” up for vote. This danger is

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<sup>13</sup> “Barack Obama on the importance of US-Armenian Relations,”

[http://www.barackobama.com/2008/01/19/barack\\_obama\\_on\\_the\\_importance.php](http://www.barackobama.com/2008/01/19/barack_obama_on_the_importance.php)

<sup>14</sup> “State of the President on Armenian Remembrance Day,” White House,

[http://www.whitehouse.gov/the\\_press\\_office/Statement-of-President-Barack-Obama-on-Armenian-Remembrance-Day](http://www.whitehouse.gov/the_press_office/Statement-of-President-Barack-Obama-on-Armenian-Remembrance-Day).

particularly real as 2010 is an election year in which democrats are feared to lose in several congressional and senate races. As the Armenian diaspora is a particularly well-funded and politically active group that generally supports democrats, there is a real danger that Pelosi will again try to push through the “Armenian Resolution” in an attempt to hold onto as many democratic supporters as possible.<sup>15</sup> Therefore, a clear if unstated goal for the Obama administration will likely be to avoid any problems in the US-Turkey relationship by strongly encouraging both Ankara and Yerevan to continue in their process to normalize relations and open the border as quickly as possible.

## **5. SYRIA, ISRAEL, GAZA**

Erdoğan’s now infamous “one minute” remark that preceded his walk out from the 2009 World Economic Forum in Davos, has come to be a significant moment in the evolution of the Prime Minister’s rhetoric about Turkey’s neighbors in the Middle East. Despite a high level of theatrics, this move revealed the real frustration that Turkey had felt when the indirect peace talks it was mediating between Israel and Syria abruptly ended as a result of the Gaza War in late 2008. Since Davos, Erdoğan has increased his criticism of Israel’s actions, and positioned himself as the most outspoken Muslim leader against the mistreatment of Palestinians.

In an interview with the American magazine *Newsweek*, Erdoğan elaborated on his view of the situation in Gaza calling it an “open air prison” and stating his belief that Hamas “is not an arm of Iran” but is a “political party”.<sup>16</sup> Even during his December visit to Washington, Erdoğan spent considerable time speaking about this issue both in his speech at Johns

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<sup>15</sup> The Federal Election Commission’s report of campaign contributions by the Armenian American Political Action Committee (PAC), [http://query.nictusa.com/cgi-bin/com\\_supopp/C00352054/](http://query.nictusa.com/cgi-bin/com_supopp/C00352054/).

<sup>16</sup> Lally Weymouth, “‘We believe we can achieve something’: Turkey’s Prime Minister speaks out from Davos,” *Newsweek*, 31 January 2009. <http://www.newsweek.com/id/182448/page/2>.

Hopkins University and the German Marshall Fund.<sup>17</sup> As a problem in US-Turkish relations, condemnation of Israel over the Gaza War plays a peripheral role in how the US approaches the relationship. In the past year, the most tangible affect was the cancellation of the “Anatolian Eagle” joint military exercise following Turkey’s exclusion of Israel and the subsequent US withdrawal which signaled Washington’s displeasure over Ankara’s decision. However, the increased criticism of Israel coupled with Turkey’s warming relations with Syria and Iran, have helped fuel the debate in the US about whether Turkey is reorienting itself away from the West and towards its Middle East neighbors.

For its part, the Obama administration has made it clear that they do not believe Turkey’s axis is shifting away from the West saying instead that they appreciate and understand Turkey’s desire to have ties with its neighbors.<sup>18</sup> The US has also made it clear that they do not see the issues surrounding the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in the same way. Obama acknowledged in his Cairo speech that Hamas does have support among the Palestinians.<sup>19</sup> However, this is qualified by the US policy that negotiations with Hamas cannot occur until the organization denounces violence and recognizes Israel’s right to exist. As a result, US officials have not met with the leaders of Hamas and have been clear about their opposition to doing so until the stated conditions are met.<sup>20</sup> This puts US policy squarely opposite Turkish policy which recognizes Hamas as the governing party of Gaza and saw Erdoğan play host to senior Hamas officials in 2006.

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<sup>17</sup> Audio and video of Erdoğan’s speech can be found at <http://www.sais-jhu.edu/news-and-events/fall2009.htm>.

<sup>18</sup> “4 December 2009 Background Briefing by Senior Administration Officials on Turkish Prime Minister Erdoğan’s Trip to D.C,” U.S. Department of State, <http://www.state.gov/p/eur/rls/rm/2009/133233.htm>.

<sup>19</sup>“Briefing by Special Envoy for Middle East Peace George Mitchell,” U.S. Department of State, <http://www.state.gov/p/nea/rls/rm/2009/124342.htm>.

<sup>20</sup> 1 June interview with National Public Radio in which Obama declines the notion that opening a dialogue with Hamas is necessary at this stage, [http://www.whitehouse.gov/the\\_press\\_office/Transcript-of-the-Interview-of-the-President-with-Michele-Norris-and-Steve-Inskeep-NPR-6-1-09](http://www.whitehouse.gov/the_press_office/Transcript-of-the-Interview-of-the-President-with-Michele-Norris-and-Steve-Inskeep-NPR-6-1-09).

Nonetheless, Gordon as well as US Special Envoy for Middle East Peace George Mitchell have stated Washington's view that Turkey could still play a role in the peace process.<sup>21</sup> Yet Gordon also elaborated that the likelihood of Turkey playing a mediating role either between Israel and Syria or Israel and the Palestinians is slim unless Turkey is seen by all parties as being an "honest broker" again. This seems to indicate that among administration officials there is a perception of imbalance in how Turkey has approached its 'zero problems' policy in the Middle East.<sup>22</sup> Apart from a somewhat ambivalent position on future Turkish mediation in Middle East peace talks, the Obama administration does not seem to have fundamentally changed its view of Turkey's relations with its Middle East region despite debate to the contrary.

## **6. AFGHANISTAN**

The war in Afghanistan has dramatically gained importance on the American foreign policy agenda after Obama declared it the "right war" (as opposed to the "wrong" Iraq war) and then announced he would send 30,000 more US troops to the country. Additionally included in Obama's new strategy is the commitment of 10,000 more NATO troops which he hopes will join the American forces in pushing back the Taliban and ensuring the stability of the Afghan government. Turkey's role in Afghanistan as part of NATO has been one of peace-keeping and development. In addition to reconstruction work the Turkish government has sponsored the Friendship and Cooperation in the Heart of Asia summit to discuss ways of creating a stable and functioning state for the people of Afghanistan.<sup>23</sup> While it is clear that the

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<sup>21</sup> 25 November US Special Envoy George Mitchell responds to a question about future Turkish mediation in peace talks between Syria and Israel, <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2009/nov/132447.htm>.

<sup>22</sup> 12 November Ankara Embassy Phil Gordon: "... when Turkey says it wants to have zero problems with its neighbors and wants to have good cooperative relations with its neighbors, I think most Americans hope that includes Israel." [http://turkey.usembassy.gov/statements\\_100609.html](http://turkey.usembassy.gov/statements_100609.html).

<sup>23</sup> "The Summit of Friendship and Cooperation in the Heart of Asia Convened in Istanbul." *TRT English*, 26 January 2010,

US appreciates the Turkish role in Afghanistan as Obama reiterated during his visit with Erdoğan, it is also clear that the US had hoped greater military participation in the NATO mission would be included in Turkey's expanding regional influence.

Recent revelations that the actual commitment from NATO for the Afghanistan 'surge' is not even at the 7,000 level as previously stated, could mean that the US will start to push harder for Turkey, as well as other NATO members, to add more troops with less "caveats" as US Ambassador to Turkey James Jeffrey stated.<sup>24</sup> However, as Erdoğan has explained, there are real problems with asking a Muslim majority country to send combat troops to fight in another Muslim nation.<sup>25</sup> Obama's attempt at improving relations with the Islamic world may have the affect of sensitizing him to the difficult position Erdoğan is in as a result of his request. For both this reason and a pragmatic understanding that pushing Ankara will only strain relations without extracting the commitment Washington wants, it is possible that the US will instead look to Turkey to continue its role as developer and peace-keeper, and not push for Turkey to send combat troops, as the fight to hold Afghanistan together continues to be more difficult and costly.

## **7. ENERGY AND RUSSIA**

The emergence of a strong Turkish-Russian partnership is a clear example of Turkey reversing a historical rivalry in favor of pursuing Davutoğlu's 'zero problems' strategy, although the relationship began its warming trend earlier. As a regional power and supplier of 65% of Turkey's natural gas, Russia plays a significant role in Ankara's calculations over both its

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<http://www.trtdari.com/trtinternational/en/newsDetail.aspx?HaberKodu=2185282d-f840-4338-bcde-6f3e06305bcc>.

<sup>24</sup> Craig Whitlock, "NATO struggling to fulfill commitments for more troops in Afghanistan," *Washington Post*, 27 January 2010,

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/01/26/AR2010012603698.html>.

<sup>25</sup> 8 December 2009 Erdoğan is a guest on the Charlie Rose Show. <http://www.charlierose.com/guest/view/5400>.

Caucasus and energy policies. Turkey's geographic position between Europe and the Caspian, Middle Eastern and Russian energy supplies has been at the center of Erdoğan's argument that Turkey should be seen as an "energy hub" on the world stage.<sup>26</sup> This goal has driven Ankara to participate in a range of energy projects with both Russia and European countries, which Washington has at times viewed as competitors and not supplements as Ankara may wish.

One of two key energy transit concepts that elevate Turkey's importance as a contributor to regional energy security is the Western backed "southern corridor." The Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline, which came online in 2006, was the first manifestation of this vision whose core concept is to diversify energy supplies away from the Russian-dominated market. As part of the next stage in developing the "southern corridor" Turkey joined Austria, Romania, Hungary, and Bulgaria in the Nabucco pipeline project that is intended to bring Caspian natural gas through Turkey and into Austria's Baumgarten station for distribution. Despite having the support of the US and EU, Nabucco's future remains in question because of uncertainty over which countries will supply the gas and because other Russian-backed projects have been more successful in moving through the development process.

In addition to the "southern corridor" or the "east-west" energy supply route, the "north-south" corridor that connects Russian supplies under the Black Sea to Anatolia and optimistically to Israel and India, is also key to Turkey's vision of being an "energy hub." Blue Stream, completed in 2003, is an essential part of this conception with the South Stream pipeline, set to open in 2015, seen as the next phase. While visiting Russia in January, Erdoğan is reported to have affirmed Turkey's backing of South Stream, which would rival Nabucco as an alternative way of providing southern Europe with a natural gas supply. Russian President Vladimir Putin

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<sup>26</sup> Tuncay Babalı, "Turkey at the Energy Crossroads: Turkey, Present and Past," *Middle East Quarterly* (Washington DC, Spring 2009).



announced that by November 10 Turkey would make all its necessary considerations for construction of the project to begin.<sup>27</sup>

The US interest and involvement in the Caspian energy market is the result of an overall strategy of increasing diversity in global supplies and ensuring that Europe's energy security facilitates economic success.<sup>28</sup> As a result, the US interest in completing Nabucco makes it markedly less enthusiastic about Turkey's other energy projects that would challenge the pipeline. Furthermore, Turkey's additional pacts would rely on the already existing supply from Russia instead of diversifying to include other sources which is part of the US energy strategy.

As an alternate to Russia and an additional country that would join Azerbaijan as a supplier for Nabucco, Washington's main candidate has been Iraq. Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki attended the July 2009 intergovernmental agreement signing ceremony for Nabucco and announced that Iraq would indeed contribute 15 bcm to the proposed pipeline. For Turkey, the most consistently proposed additional supplier for Nabucco has been Iran. The US special envoy for Eurasian energy Richard Morningstar has articulated Washington's opposition to Iran's participation in global energy projects until questions over its nuclear program are resolved.<sup>29</sup> Although there is agreement over Turkey's importance as a center of energy transit in its region, the Nabucco project is clearly revealing differences

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<sup>27</sup> "Turkey, Russia Report Progress on Pipeline Deals," *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty*, 13 January 2010, [http://www.rferl.org/content/Turkey\\_Russia\\_Report\\_Progress\\_On\\_Pipeline\\_Deals\\_/1928840.html](http://www.rferl.org/content/Turkey_Russia_Report_Progress_On_Pipeline_Deals_/1928840.html).

<sup>28</sup> At a 15 July speech at the Brookings Institute in Washington DC, US special envoy for Eurasian Energy Richard Morningstar outlined the US energy strategy for Eurasia, [http://www.brookings.edu/~media/Files/events/2009/0715\\_turkey\\_russia/20090715\\_turkey\\_russia\\_energy.pdf](http://www.brookings.edu/~media/Files/events/2009/0715_turkey_russia/20090715_turkey_russia_energy.pdf).

<sup>29</sup> At the Center for American Progress on 28 January 2010 Morningstar stated "We see no place for Iranian gas in a Southern Corridor given the current approach of its leadership and while international efforts to address Iran's nuclear program are underway." <http://www.state.gov/s/eee/rmk/136141.htm>.

between Ankara and Washington over how to develop the concept of the “southern corridor” beyond just principle.

## **CONCLUSION**

The US-Turkey relationship has entered 2010 with some familiar problems looming ahead and some unknown ones likely to emerge. As a relationship that has always faced multi-dimensional and multi-regional issues, the newly opened channels of diplomacy that are central to Turkey’s maturing foreign policy will continue to add further substance to the evolution of the relationship.

Among the most threatening issues for the US-Turkey relationship in the coming months are Iran and Armenia. Now that Russia has joined the US, France, Great Britain, and Germany in publically criticizing Tehran’s nuclear program the likelihood of a UN vote on sanctions is quickly growing, leaving Turkey in a precarious position of supporting its neighbor or joining a consortium of its NATO allies and Russia.<sup>30</sup> The familiar problem of the US Congressional ‘Armenian Resolution’ is also on the list of potentially harmful situations for the US and Turkey in the near term. In early February the House Foreign Affairs Committee Chairman vowed to bring up a vote on the resolution which would mandate official US policy to use the word ‘genocide’ and would call on Obama to use the word during his annual April 24 address. If there is not significant movement of the protocol through both the Armenian and Turkish parliaments before April the difficulty of preventing the US House of Representatives from bringing the resolution to a full vote will increase.

The situation in Gaza and Israel’s relations with Syria are likely to remain a point of divergence for the US and Turkey publically but it is unlikely that

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<sup>30</sup> Damien McElroy, “Iran defiant as Russia joins US and France in nuclear sanctions push,” *Telegraph*, 16 February 2010.  
<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/middleeast/iran/7252461/Iran-defiant-as-Russia-joins-US-and-France-in-nuclear-sanctions-push.html>.

the issues will greatly affect US-Turkish relations. Likewise, as Turkey and the US continue to pursue energy projects in the Caspian region, differences over supply countries and competing pipelines may remain. However, the overall effect is unlikely to do anything but harm the projects themselves, Nabucco in particular, and not significantly damage the relationship. For the Obama administration, the war in Afghanistan will still be the main focus but the push for Turkey to add combat troops to the mission is likely to continue to fade from the discussion.

While the undoubtedly strong foundation of the partnership will continue to bind the two countries together, as developing issues progressively gain more importance on Washington and Ankara's agenda, the approaches to solving these issues may increasingly draw each country down slightly divergent paths.

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## **BİLGE ADAMLAR STRATEJİK ARAŞTIRMALAR MERKEZİ**

Türk tarihi incelendiğinde geçmişteki başarıların arkasında iyi yetişmiş bilge adamların bulunduğu görülmektedir. Ancak günümüzde olayların çok boyutlu olarak gelişmesi ve sorunların karmaşıklaşması, birkaç bilge kişinin veya aydının gelişmeleri zamanında ve doğru olarak algılamasını ve alternatif politikalar üretebilmesini zorlaştırmaktadır. Gelişmelerin yakından takip edilmesi, gelecekle ilgili gerçekçi öngörülerin yapılabilmesi ve doğru politikalar üretilebilmesi için farklı disiplinlere ve görüşlere sahip bilge adamlar ile genç ve dinamik araştırmacıların, esnek organizasyonlar içinde sinerji sağlayacak şekilde bir araya getirilmesi gerekmektedir.

Dünya'daki ve yurt içindeki gelişmeleri takip ederek geleceğe yönelik öngörülerde bulunmak; Türkiye'nin ikili ve çok taraflı uluslararası ilişkilerine ve güvenlik stratejilerine, yurt içindeki siyasi, ekonomik, teknolojik, çevresel ve sosyo-kültürel problemlerine yönelik bilimsel araştırmalar yapmak; karar alıcılara milli menfaatler doğrultusunda gerçekçi, dinamik çözüm önerileri, karar seçenekleri ve politikalar sunmak maksadıyla Bilge Adamlar Stratejik Araştırmalar Merkezi (BİLGESAM) kurulmuştur. BİLGESAM'ın vizyonu, amacı, hedefleri, çalışma yöntemi, temel nitelikleri, teşkilatı ve yayınları <http://www.bilgesam.org/tr> web sitesinde sunulmaktadır.



## **BİLGE STRATEJİ DERGİSİ**

Bilge Strateji; hakemli ve bağımsız bir dergidir. Bilge Strateji, Bilge Adamlar Stratejik Araştırmalar Merkezi (BİLGESAM) tarafından yayınlanmaktadır. Yayın politikası ve bilimsel kriterler, bağımsız editörler ve Yayın Kurulu'nca tespit edilmektedir.

Alanında Türkçe ve İngilizce makaleleri yayımlar. Güz ve Bahar dönemlerinde olmak üzere yılda iki kez yayınlanmaktadır. Bilge Strateji, uluslararası ilişkiler başta olmak üzere tüm sosyal bilimler konularında makaleler içerir.

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1-Bilge Strateji Dergisi ulusal hakemli bir dergidir. Bilge Strateji Dergisi'nde yayınlanmak üzere gönderilen makale daha önce herhangi bir yerde yayınlanmamış olmalıdır.

2-Yazarlardan gelen makaleler alanında yetkin iki hakeme gönderilir. Hakemlerden rapor alınır ve rapora göre yazarlara geri dönüş yapılır. Yazarın hakemlerin raporları doğrultusunda ilgili düzeltme, değişiklik ve eklemeleri yapması durumunda makaleler yayınlanır. Makalenin yayınlanması konusunda hakemlerden biri olumsuz diğeri olumlu değerlendirme verirse, makale üçüncü bir hakeme gönderilir. Üçünü hakemin verdiği değerlendirmeye göre makalenin yayınlanmasına karar verilir.

3-Makale dili Türkçe veya İngilizce olmalıdır.

4-Makale; yazım stili, anlatımda akışkanlık, dilin doğru kullanımı, yazının planlaması, dipnotlar ile yazı arasındaki uyum, dipnotlardaki bilgilerin eksiksiz ve doğru olması, dipnotların yeterliliği, yazı ile ilgili yeterli kaynağın kullanılıp kullanılmadığı, çalışmanın bilim dünyasına katkısı, orijinalliği, yazarın iddialarını savunmadaki yeterliliği, yazının derinliği ve kalitesi gibi noktalarda tutarlı olmalıdır.

5-Makale 4.000 kelimedenden az, 10000 kelimedenden fazla olmamalıdır. Kitap inceleme çalışmaları ise 1500-2000 kelime arasında olmalıdır.

6-Makale ile birlikte 80-110 kelimeyi aşmayan özeti (Türkçe ve İngilizce olarak) ve yazar hakkında 5-6 satırlık bilgi notu da gönderilmelidir.

7-Makale, Times New Roman formatında 11 puntoda ve 1,15 satır aralığında yazılmalıdır. Dipnotlar için Times New Roman formatında 10 punto kullanılmalıdır.

8-Makalenin başlığı Türkçe ve İngilizce olarak metne uygun kısa ve açık ifadeli olmalı; başlık ve alt başlıklar **kahın harflerle** yazılmalıdır.

9- Ana başlıklar ve alt başlıklar rakamlarla numaralandırılmalıdır. Ana başlıklar büyük harflerle yazılmalıdır. Takip eden alt başlıklar ise, kelimelerin ilk harfleri büyük diğer harfler küçük olacak şekilde düzenlenmelidir.

## 1. ANA BAŞLIK

### 1.1. Alt Başlık

#### 1.1.1. Alt Başlığın Bölümü

10-Alıntılama Alıntılama Chicago Manual of Style sistemi kullanılmalıdır. Ayrıntılı bilgi için bakınız.

[http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools\\_citationguide.html](http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html).

Örnek:

- Kitabın dipnot olarak gösterimi;

Michael Pollan, *The Omnivore's Dilemma: A Natural History of Four Meals* (New York: Penguin, 2006), 99–100.

Pollan, *Omnivore's Dilemma*, 89.

- Kitap içindeki bölümün dipnot olarak gösterimi;

John D. Kelly, "Seeing Red: Mao Fetishism, Pax Americana, and the Moral Economy of War," in *Anthropology and Global Counterinsurgency*, ed. John D. Kelly et al. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010), 77.

Kelly, "Seeing Red," 81–82.

- Akademik dergi makalesinin dipnot olarak gösterimi;

Joshua I. Weinstein, “The Market in Plato’s Republic,” *Classical Philology* 104 (2009): 440.

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- İnternette alınan dipnotun gösterimi;

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Pollan, Michael. *The Omnivore’s Dilemma: A Natural History of Four Meals*. New York: Penguin, 2006.

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McDonald’s Corporation. “McDonald’s Happy Meal Toy Safety Facts.” Accessed July 19, 2008. <http://www.mcdonalds.com/corp/about/factsheets.html>.

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2-Articles must be written in Turkish or English.

3-Submitted articles are viewed by two competent referees, who are renowned experts in their field. The authors are then given feedback according to the reviews given by these selected referees. Articles are published pending that the author makes the required corrections, changes, and additions to the article per the suggestions of the referees' review. In the case that referees submit contradicting reviews about the article, the article in question is then sent for review to a third referee. The ultimate publication of the article is lastly determined by the review given by the third referee.

4-Meticulous attention should be paid to the following criteria: writing style, academic accuracy, correct language usage, organized and cohesive writing, appropriate and adequate use of footnotes, and relevant and sufficient use of resources. Studies should exhibit originality, depth, and quality in their contribution to the science world.

5-Articles should not be less than 4,000 and more than 10,000 words. The number of words for book reviews should be between 1,500-2,000 words.

6-A summary of the article and a short biography of the writer (both not exceeding 100 words, in either Turkish or English) ought to be sent with the article.

7-The article must be written in 11-point Times New Roman font and 1.5 line spacing. Footnotes must also be written in Times New Roman font, size 10.

8-The article's title must be short, appropriate, and clearly expressed; headings and sub-headings should be marked in bold.

9-Headings and sub-headings ought to be numbered, as exhibited in the example below. Headings must be written in all capital letters. For the subsequent sub-headings, the first letter of the first word must be capitalized while the following letters are lower-cased.

## **1. MAIN HEADING**

### **1.1. Sub Heading**

#### **1.1.1. A Brief Chapter Under Sub-Heading**

10-For the use of citations, the system of the Chicago Manual of Style ought to be used. For further details, please see [http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools\\_citationguide.html](http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html).

- For a book;

Michael Pollan, *The Omnivore's Dilemma: A Natural History of Four Meals* (New York: Penguin, 2006), 99–100.

Pollan, *Omnivore's Dilemma*, 89.

Pollan, Michael. *The Omnivore's Dilemma: A Natural History of Four Meals*. New York: Penguin, 2006.

- For a chapter or other part of a book;

John D. Kelly, "Seeing Red: Mao Fetishism, Pax Americana, and the Moral Economy of War," in *Anthropology and Global Counterinsurgency*, ed. John D. Kelly et al. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010), 77.

Kelly, "Seeing Red," 81–82.

Kelly, John D. "Seeing Red: Mao Fetishism, Pax Americana, and the Moral Economy of War." In *Anthropology and Global Counterinsurgency*, edited by John D. Kelly, Beatrice Jauregui, Sean T. Mitchell, and Jeremy Walton, 67–83. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010.

- For a journal article;

Joshua I. Weinstein, "The Market in Plato's Republic," *Classical Philology* 104 (2009): 440.

Weinstein, "Plato's Republic," 452–53.

Weinstein, Joshua I. "The Market in Plato's Republic." *Classical Philology* 104 (2009): 439–58.

- For a website;

"McDonald's Happy Meal Toy Safety Facts," McDonald's Corporation, accessed July 19, 2008, <http://www.mcdonalds.com/corp/about/factsheets.html>.

"McDonald's Happy."

"McDonald's Happy Meal Toy Safety Facts." McDonald's Corporation. Accessed July 19, 2008. <http://www.mcdonalds.com/corp/about/factsheets.html>.

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The submission process will include notifying the writer of changes and corrections to the article that have been suggested by the selected referees. Authors must then re-send the final amendments to the article to the above email

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11-The views expressed are solely those of the contributing author and do not necessarily reflect those of Bilge Strateji.

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