Continuity and Change in Turkish Foreign Policy Toward Africa

Afrika'ya Yönelik Türk Dış Politikasında Süreklilik ve Değişim

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Özet

Bu makale Türkiye'nin Afrika ülkeleri ile gelişen ilişkilerinin genel bir bakışını vermeyi amaçlamaktadır. Türkiye'nin uluslararası ilişkilerinin daha ziyade Avrupa Birliği, Kafkaslar, Balkanlar, Ortadoğu ve Amerika Birleşik Devletleri ilişkileri üzerine yoğunlaştığını bu çalışma göstermektedir. Türkiye'nin bugün Afrika'ya açılması uluslararası ilişkilerinde yeni bir gelişmedir. Ancak bu ilişkiler özellikle Kuzey Afrika ile Osmanlı İmparatorluğu zamanında vardı. Türk akademisyenleri, üniversiteleri ve basını hala Afrika'nın bilimsel açıdan önemini kavrayamadığı gibi hiçbiri Afrika araştırmaları üzerine bir merkeze sahip değildir. Aynı şekilde Afrika akademisyenleri, üniversiteleri ve basını da. Türkiye-Afrika ülkeleri ve ilgili kurumlar arasındaki irtibattan başka konuşulacak dikkate değer ciddi bilgi bulmak mümkün değildir. Türkiye-Afrika ilişkileri başlı başına Afrika ülkelerinin her biri ile ayrı ayrıdır. Fakat bugün dünyada "globalizayon" denilen yeni gelişmelerle, Türkiye, politik ve ekonomik ilişkilerini tüm Afrika kıtası ile geliştirmeye gayret göstermektedir ve yakın gelişmelerle yüksek seviyede temasların olduğunu görüyoruz. Yine ticaret ilişkileri her iki ülke arasında gelişmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: *Dış Politika Analizi, Süreklilik ve Değişme, Ticaret ve Ekonomik İşbirliği Sözleşmeleri*

Abstract

This article aims to give an overview of Turkey's improving relations with African countries. It indicates that Turkey's international relations concentrate more on her relations with the European Union, Caucasians, Balkans, the Middle East and USA. Turkey's opening up to Africa today, is a new development in her international relations. However, such relations had existed during the times of the Ottoman empire, especially with north Africa. Turkish academics, universities and media have not yet grasped the importance of Africa in the academic sense and as such none of them has a center on African research. Likewise, the African academics, universities and media. Other than communications between Turkey and African countries and related institutions on the subject matter, it is not possible to talk about significant serious data on Turkey-Africa relations. The relations between Turkey and Africa were on each individual African country's basis. However, with the recent development in the world today known as "globalization", Turkey is trying to improve her political and economic relations

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with the entire African continent and with the recent development, we have seen that there are high level visits between Turkey and African conutries. Trade relations between Turkey and African countries are in progress.

Key Words: *Foreign Policy Analysis, Continuity and Change, Trade and Economic Cooperation Agreements.*

Introduction

It is somewhat difficult to talk about relations between Turkey and African countries. This is because Turkey's interest concentrates most on her relations with the European Union, Caucasians, Balkans, the Middle East, United States, Southern Asian, Far Eastern and Pacific countries. My assumption is that "change of regime and personality are the determinant factors for Turkey and African relations". The questions this paper asks are: (1) Why does Turkey need relations with the entire African continent? (2) What would Turkey and African countries gain from the advancement of these relations? (3) How did the European Union (EU) react towards Turkey-African relations? (4) How did the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) react towards Turkey-African relations? The paper is an attempt to provide information on the recent relationship between Turkey and African countries. Its purpose is to analyse the continuity and change of Turkish foreign policy towards African countries since the Ottman era. Based on Turkish foreign policy analysis, the paper argues that despite globalization forces, Turkish foreign policy towards African countries is nationally driven, guided by historical legacies and domestic political factors. That the recent development has since its initiation developed varied adaptive policy responses. Taking the continuity and change of Turkish relations with African countries seriously, this paper will argue that successive Turkish governments have been facing with great challenges to join the European Union (EU). That the recent Turkish and African relations is an alternative to those challenges.

To understand Turkey's current policy towards Africa countries, the paper begins with foreign policy analysis. It goes on to analyze the historical background of Turkish and African countries' relations. It does this by tracing the relations from the Ottman era to the Prime Minister, Recep Tayip Erdoğan's regime. The choice of timeframe is expedient since the paper uses data, which covered decades of Turkish and African countries' relations. That is, from the 16th century to 2008. This is followed by analysis of formal relations between Turkey and the African countries; high level visits; the first international Turkish-African summit, the second international Turkish-African summit, the third international Turkish-African summit, the fourth international Turkish-African summit, commercial contacts between Turkey and the Africa countries, trade and economic cooperation agreements, Turkish contracting firms in Africa, Turkish investors and entrepreneurs in Africa, Turkish

airlines and routes to Africa, African perspectives toward Turkey, intercultural marriages, the European Union (EU) perspectives toward Turkey-African relations, the Organization of Islamic countries (OIC) perspectives toward Turkey-African relations, conclusion and recommendation.

Foreign Policy Analysis

Foreign policy analysis is the study of the conduct and practice of relations between different actors, primarily states, in the international system. Diplomacy, intelligence, trade negotiations and cultural exchanges all form part of the substance of Foreign policy analysis. By virtue of this approach, foreign policy analysis is necessarily concerned with the boundaries between the external environment outside of the nation state and the internal or domestic environment, with its variety of sub-national sources of influence. FPA, as foreign policy analysis is often referred to, developed as a separate area of enquiry within the discipline of international relations, both because of its initially exclusive focus on the actual conduct of interstate relations and due to its normative impulse. While international relations scholars understood their role to be to interpret the broad features of the international system, FPA specialists took as their mandate a concentration on actual state conduct and the sources of decisions themselves. Moreover, scholars working within FPA saw their task to be normative, that is to say, as one aimed at improving foreign policy decision making so that states could achieve better outcomes and, in some instances, even enhance the possibility of peaceful relations between states.

To put this in the context of David Singer's well known schema of international relations, he says that in grappling with world politics, one necessarily focuses on either the study of phenomena at the international system level, the state (or national) level or the individual level.[1] FPA has traditionally emphasised the state and individual levels to be the key areas for understanding the nature of the international system. At the same time, as globalisation has transformed the international system, making interconnectivity outside of traditional state-to-state conduct more likely, FPA has had to expand its own outlook to account for an increasingly diverse range of non-state actors such as global environmental activists or multinational corporations. An underlying theme within the study of FPA is the 'structure–agency' debate. Like the other branches of the social sciences, FPA scholars are divided as to the amount of influence to accord to structural factors (the constraints imposed by the international system) or human agency (the role of individual choice in shaping the international system) in analysing foreign policy decisions and decision-making environments.

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1 Singer, J.D. 1961. 'The Level of Analysis Problem in International Politics,' *World Politics*, Volume 14, pp.77-92.

FPA's starting point is the state and its interactions with other states, be this through direct bilateral relations or through multilateral institutions such as the United Nations (UN). In keeping with the realist paradigm, FPA understood the state to be a unitary actor, that is to say, one in which it is not necessary to analyse the role of the discrete components of government (be it the executive or the legislature) in order to assess a state's foreign policy. In this context, a key concept in FPA is that of the 'national interest'. A much disputed term, the national interest nonetheless remains a central preoccupation of foreign policy decision makers and a reference point for foreign policy analysis hence interpreting a state's action. Hans Morgenthau defines national interest as synonymous with power and, as such, both the proper object of a state's foreign policy and the best measure of its capacity to achieve its aims.[2] What constitutes national interest, how it is determined and ultimately implemented are crucial to understanding the choices and responses pursued by states in international affairs. Realists assert that the character of the international system, that is to say its fundamentally anarchic nature, is the most important guide to interpreting foreign policy. The pursuit of security and efforts to enhance material wealth place states in competition with other states, limiting the scope for cooperation to a series of selective, self interested strategies. In this setting, the centrality of power, especially manifested as military power, is seen to be the key determinant of a state's ability to sustain a successful foreign policy. Geographic position, material resources and demography are other important features in this equation as well. Realists believe that all states' foreign policies conform to these basic parameters and that, above all, scholars need to investigate the influences of the structure of the international system and the relative power of states in order to understand the outcomes of foreign policy decisions. Calculations of national interest are self evident and can be rationally arrived at through a careful analysis of material conditions of states as well as the particulars of a given foreign policy dilemma confronting states.

The original studies of foreign policy in the 1950s and 1960s were explicitly aimed at challenging the realist assumptions that were the dominant approach to International Relations at the time. Rather than examine the outcomes of foreign policy decisions, behaviourists sought to understand the process of foreign policy decision making itself. In particular, scholars like Robert Jervis, Harold and Margaret Sprout investigated the role of the individual decision maker and the accompanying influences on foreign policy

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2   Hans Morgenthau, Realism, and the Scientific Study of International Politics, *Social Research*, Volume 61, (1994), pp. 867-869; Carlnaes, W. 'The Agency Structure Problem in Foreign Policy Analysis', *International Studies Quarterly*, Volume 36, 1992, pp.245–70.

choice.[3] This emphasis on the individual decision maker led to a focus on psychological and cognitive factors as explanatory sources of foreign policy choice. For instance, Jervis asserted that the psychological disposition of a leader, the cognitive limits imposed by the sheer volume of information available to decision makers and the inclination to select policy options that were patently second-best all contributed to imperfect foreign policy outcomes. In addition, other scholars pointed out that the decision-making process was itself subject to the vagaries of group dynamics, while the constraints imposed by crises introduced further distortions to foreign policy choice. The result was a comprehensive critique of many of the key findings on foreign policy found in the traditional realist perspective.

The focus on individual decision makers, despite its insights, was seen by some scholars to be excessively narrow. Even within states, the conflicting outlooks and demands of foreign policy bureaucracies such as the ministry of trade and the ministry of defence clearly influence foreign policy decisions in ways that reflect parochial concerns first over considerations of national interest. For Graham Allison and others, an analysis of foreign policy decision making had to start with these bureaucracies and the various factors that caused them to play what was, in their view, the determining role in shaping foreign policy outcomes.[4] This approach to understanding foreign policy therefore emphasises the interplay between leaders, bureaucratic actors, organisational culture and, to an extent, political actors outside of the formal apparatus of the state. Broader than the behaviourists' singular focus on the individual decision maker, advocates of the bureaucratic politics approach to FPA began a process of investigation into sources of influence on foreign policy beyond the state that was to culminate in a radical rethinking of the importance of the state itself in international relations.

While the previous approaches sought to understand FPA through, respectively, recourse to the structure of the international system and the decision-making process within states, a third approach introduced a new means of interpreting foreign policy. Pluralists disputed the belief that states formed the only significant actors in international politics and asserted that, at least since the 1970s (if not earlier), increased linkages between a variety of state, sub-state and non-state actors were eroding the traditional primacy of the state in foreign policy. Indeed, the possibility of multinational companies exercising de facto foreign policy through their financial resources or

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3 Jervis, R. 1989. 'Rational Deterrence: Theory and Evidence,' *World Politics*, Volume 41, pp.183-207; Harold Sprout and Margaret Sprout, (1969), "Explanation and Prediction in International Politics" in James N. Rosenau, ed., *International Politics and Foreign Policy*, Revised. New York: Free Press, pp.60-72.

4 Allison, G. and M. Halperin. (1972) 'Bureaucratic Politics: A Paradigm and Some Policy Implications,' *World Politics*, Volume 24, pp. 40-79.

non-governmental organisations through their ability to mobilise votes was recognised as a central feature of the globalising world. Thus for pluralists, an analysis of the influences upon foreign policy which are derived from domestic and transnational sources, and which were not necessarily tied to the state, is crucial to understanding foreign policy outcomes. This environment of complex interdependency effectively diminishes the scope of state action in foreign policy making to that of a manager of a diversity of forces inside the domestic sphere, including government, and outside the boundaries of the state. Robert Putnam's 'two level game' attempts to capture the challenges imposed by complex interdependency on foreign policy decision makers.[5] He suggests that the decision-making process involves both a domestic arena, where one set of rules and interests govern, as well as an international arena, where a different set of rules and interests prevail. Balancing the logic and demands of the two arenas, which are often in conflict, forms the central dilemma of foreign policy making as seen by pluralists.

As can be seen from this brief overview of the field, FPA provides many different ways of understanding the conduct and significance of state, substate and non-state actors in foreign policy making. Though there is no consensus among these approaches, each is seen to contribute to a fuller picture of the workings of states and ultimately the international system. Indeed, FPA illuminates much that is otherwise left obscure in the study of international relations. While international relations emphasises the role and influence of structural constraints on the international system, FPA focuses on the inherent possibilities of human agency to affect and even change the international system. In short, as Valerie Hudson says:

'The single most important contribution of FPA to IR theory is to identify the point of theoretical intersection between the primary determinants of state behaviour: material and conceptual factors. The point of intersection is not the state, it is human decision makers. If our IR theories contain no human beings, they will erroneously paint for us a world of no change, no creativity, no persuasion, no accountability'.[6]

Foreign policy is, to use Christopher Hill's definition, 'purposive action with the view towards promoting the interests of a single political community or state'.[7] The study of foreign policy is referred to as foreign policy analysis, and its focus is the intentions and actions of (primarily) states aimed at the external world and the response of other actors (again, primarily states) to these actions. This unit is not designed to give you detailed exposure to the

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5   Putnam, R. 'Diplomacy and Domestic Politics: The Logic of the Two-Level Game', *International Organization,* Volume 42, Number 3, 1988, pp.427–60.

6   Hudson, V. 'Foreign Policy Analysis: Actor Specific Theory and the Ground of International Relations', *Foreign Policy Analysis,* Volume 1, Number1, March 2005, p.3.

7   Christopher Hill, 'The Changing Politics of Foreign Policy,' in C. Alden, *Foreign Policy Analysis,* University of London Pres, 2006, p. 7.

changing foreign policies of any particular country, though of course you will have many opportunities to learn about the foreign policies of major, middle and small powers through the reading material. It is aimed at giving you the tools to analyse, interpret and, ultimately, understand the dynamics of foreign policy generally so that you might apply these to your study of the role of states in international affairs. A successful foreign policy is measured in terms of a state's ability to assert itself and promote its interests with consistency within the international system. Crucial to this success is an understanding of power, its sources and an assessment of the means needed to achieve state aims. Equally important is an ability to forge these dimensions into a coherent foreign policy appropriate to the state in question, its particular material conditions as well as its position within the international system.

Classic approaches to foreign policy focus on the formulation of aims and objectives based upon 'national interest'. An elusive concept, national interest is defined by the influential international relations scholar Hans Morgenthau as synonymous with power and, as such, both the proper object of a state's foreign policy and the best measure of its capacity to achieve its aims.[8] What constitutes national interest, how it is determined and ultimately implemented are crucial to understanding the foreign policy choices and responses pursued by states. For realists like Morgenthau, the fundamentally anarchic condition of the international system is the most important guide to decision making in foreign policy.[9] Classic assumptions of rationality, which are founded on the belief that foreign policy aims ('preferences') of decision makers are self-evident, further reinforce the realist view. Rationality and its application to foreign policy decision making is one of the most influential approaches to understanding contemporary international politics. Derived from public choice theory (which itself emerged out of the fields of economics and policy sciences), rational choice scholars have actively sought to utilise a well-established methodology of decision making to enhance and assess foreign policy decision making. At the same time, the use of rationalist approaches to foreign policy has inspired considerable commentary and criticism. Indeed, much of the work of FPA has been devoted to assessing the weaknesses of this school of thought and its links to the assumptions underlying realism.

Realists believe that all states' foreign policies conform to basic parameters set by the anarchic international system and that, above all, scholars

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8   Hermann, M. 'Explaining Foreign Policy Behaviour Using the Personal Characteristics of Political Leaders', *International Studies Quarterly*, Volume 24, Number 7, 1980, pp.7–46; Carlnaes, W. 'The Agency Structure Problem in Foreign Policy Analysis', *International Studies Quarterly*, Volume 36, 1992, pp.245–70.

9   Hermann, C. 'Changing Course: When Governments Choose to Redirect Foreign Policy', *International Studies Quarterly*, Volume 34, Number 3, 1990, pp.3–22.

need to investigate the influences of the structure of the international system and the relative power of states in order to understand the outcomes of foreign policy decisions. Calculations of national interest are self-evident and can be rationally arrived at through a careful analysis of material conditions of states as well as the particulars of a given foreign policy dilemma confronting states. The classical realism formulation of balance of power provides a crude but effective tool for analysing state action in international affairs. Rational choice theory (sometimes called public choice theory), as applied to international affairs, sought to introduce a more rigorous, methodologically sound approach that could use the basic laws of choice to assess the process and outcome of foreign policy decision making. From this perspective, the maximisation of utility by actors (in this case, states) is the ultimate aim of foreign policy decision makers. By maximisation of utility, we mean a state first identifies and prioritises foreign policy goals; it then identifies and selects from the means available to it which fulfil its aims with the least cost. In this regard, the focus of this approach is traditionally on policy outcomes and therefore assumes a relatively undifferentiated decision-making body for foreign policy (a 'unitary actor'), rather than one composed of different decision makers.

However, some scholars have recognised that an assessment of national interest, defined as enhancing security and wealth maximisation (or, to use the public choice jargon, 'preference formation'), is crucial to determining policy choice. In any case, as all states reside within the same international setting in which the conditions of anarchy tend to structure the 'rules of the game' in a similar fashion for all states, coming to an interpretation of action and reaction should not be out of reach for foreign policy analysts. Game theory, with its application to nuclear strategy, is one concrete expression of this approach to foreign policy. From this perspective, developing foreign policy goals and implementing them therefore involves a relatively straightforward assessment of the situation and other actors' potential actions based on their status and material endowment within the international system. Optimal outcomes, albeit within the framework of available choices, are both the goal and the guide for foreign policy choice. Good foreign policy is achievable and, presumably, a realistic source for ordering the international system through some form of balancing or tradeoff mechanism.

Historical Background of the Relationships between Turkey and African Countries

The relationship between Turkey and Africa is rooted in history. Their social and cultural relations predate the founding of the Turkish Republic in 1923, and can be traced back to the predecessor, the Ottoman empire. At its height the empire encompassed large parts of North Africa. By the late nineteenth century, and rather belatedly, through the Mamluk dynasty in Egypt, the Ott-

mans were already finding their way into Sudan in the shape of the Anglo-Egyptian relationships. Westwards, it had already insinuated itself into some areas of West Africa. Where it had not established its physical presence in military or bureaucratic form, it had established diplomatic and political contact, like in the case of the Sultanate, of Zanzibar. The Ottoman empire, or Kânim Bornu Sultanate that ceased to exist in spite of its history of more than a thousand years was, deemed to be the oldest and longest rulership in the world located in the center of Africa.[10] Historically, Egypt, Libya, Tunisia, Morocco, Algeria and Ethiopia were all said to be provinces of the Ottoman empire which were cut off as they were split between the United Kingdom, France and Italy.[11]

It could be argued that the presence of a Muslim population and the discovery of rich gold and diamond resources in these African states perhaps prompted the Ottomans to have established closer relations with some of the regions in Africa. Some scholars have even speculated that the expansion of the Ottoman empire in the 14th century contributed indirectly to the discovery of the southern part of Africa and the Cape of Good Hope. The above analysis indicates that diplomatic contacts between Turkey and the African states were formally established centuries ago, this relationship starting around the 16th century. If a general assessment would be made in which some of the African states were ruled by the Ottoman empire, then, it can be remarked that the Ottoman empire had closer contacts with the Sub-Saharan Africa. The particular aspects trough which the Turks shared the same history, culture, economic, administrative and military values as as Sub-Saharan Africa, at one time disappeared. Evidently, the disappearence of this relation could be as result of change of regime and personality on both sides. However, Turkey has made strenuous efforts to renew her old relations with the Sub-Saharan Africa in recent years.

Formal Relations between Turkey and Africa Countries

Formal relations between Turkey and the African countries are established at consular and embassy levels. Turkey recognized all the new African states which gained their independence in the 1960s and established diplomatic relations with those countries. Today, Turkey has 12 representative offices as embassies in African countries and honorary consulates general in approximately 20. These are the Turkish embassy in Egypt, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia, Sudan, Nigeria, South Africa, Ethiopia, and

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10 Kieran E. Uchehara, "Turkey and Nigeria: A Centuries-Old Relationship", *Turkish Daily News*, http://www.turkishdailynews.com.tr/archives.php?id=15151, (02.12.1999).

11 Hess, Andrew C., "The Ottoman Conquest of Egypt (1517) and the Beginning of the Sixteenth-Century World War", *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Volume. 4 , Number 1, January 1973, pp. 55-76.

Senegal. Turkey was granted "observer" status in the AU on 12 April 2005.[12] Similarly the African countries have 10 representative offices as embassies and honorary consulates general in Turkey. These are the Nigerian embassy, Tunisian embassy, South African embassy, Moroccan embassy, Egyptian embassy, Algerian embassy, Ethiopian embassy, Seneganese embassy, Sudanese embassy and Libyan embassy. Recently, Turkey has been advancing to renew relations with the Africa states and high level state visits have been taking place between Turkey and the African countries.

High Level State Visits

On 1 March 2005, Turkish prime minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan paid a three day official visit to South Africa.[13] In March 2005, Recep Tayyip Erdogan paid an official visit to Ethiopia. On 28-30 March 2005, Erdoğan visited Tunisia. In 2005, Erdoğan also paid an official visit to Morocco.[14] In 2003, Jacob Zuma, the South African deputy president paid a three day official visit to Turkey. In March 2003, president Ahmet Necdet Sezer visted Tunisia. In June 2000, Aziz Pahad, the South African deputy minister, visited Turkey as the first high-level visitor from South Africa to Turkey. The deputy minister's visit was followed by a visit to South Africa by the head of Turkish foreign trade department in 2000. Another official visit was observed the two countries in February 2001.[15] In July 2000, Nigerian president Olusegun Obasanjo paid an official visit to Turkey.[16] In April 2001 the then Turkish foreign minister, Abdullah Gül visited Algeria. In September 2000, a delegation of Turkish businessmen headed by state minister, Hasan Gemici, travelled to the Democratic Republic of Congo and the Gambia.[17] In 1999, president Suleyman Demirel paid an official visit to Algeria, the first Turkish president to visit Algeria for ten years.[18] In 1998, Turkish prime minister Necmetin Erbakan paid and official visit to Nigeria.[19]

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12 Speech Delivered by H.E. Mr. Abdullah Gül, Deputy Prime Minister and the Minister of Foreign Affairs, on the Occasion of the 2nd Istanbul Conference on Democracy and Global Security, Istanbul, 14 June 2007, (Unofficial Translation).

13 *Turkish Department of Foreign Affairs*, http://www.dfa.gov.za/docs/speeches/2005/paha0302.htm, (01.03.2005).

14 14 H. Kaan Nazlı, *Turkey and North Africa: Challenge and Opportunity*, http://www.esiweb.org/pdf/esi_turkey_tpq_id_33.pdf

15 Bülent, Aras, 'Africa in International Relations', First Turkish-African Conference, Africa Enstitüsü, Türk-Asya Stratejik Araştırmalar Enstitüsü, İstanbul, Türkiye, 23 Kasım 2005.

16 *Anadolu Agency: News in English*, http://www.hri.org/news/turkey/anadolu/2000/00-07-24.anadolu.html, (24.07.2000).

17 *Turkish Daily News*, http://www.byegm.gov.tr/YAYINLARIMIZ/CHR/ING2000/09/00X09X19.HTM, (19.09.2000).

18 *Anadolu Agency: News in English*, http://www.hri.org/news/turkey/anadolu/1999/99-01-26.anadolu.html, (01.26.1999).

19 Uchehara, op. cit; Hasan Ulusoy, 'Turkish-Nigeria Relations (With A View to Turkey's Policy Towards Black Africa for the Next Millennium' *Perceptons, Journal of International Affairs*, September-November, 1998, Volume 111, Number 3, p. 147.

In June 1997, the Gambian president Yahya Jammeh paid an official visit to Turkey on the invitation of president Demirel.[20] In 1997, prime minister Necmettin Erbakan paid an official visit to Libya. This resulted in a high profile diplomatic scandal triggered by Qadhafi's harsh rhetoric regarding Turkey's policies towards the Kurds, which caused domestic political problems for Erbakan. Today Africa has become a centre for attraction for partnership with the international community and regional organizations such as the European Union (EU) and Turkey that target closer trade relations with the African countries. Turkey is making a great advance in African relations in recent years. The high level visits from both directions and the establishment of joint economic cooperation in order to promote trade and economic activities with the African countries have provided structures in the relations between Turkey and the African countries. It worth noting that under prime ministers Mesut Yilmaz, Tansu Ciller and Bülent Ecevit relations between Turkey and the African countries were not cordial.

The First International Turkish-African Summit

Turkish and African relations were observed for the first time at an international summit that was organized by TASAM in Istanbul, Turkey, from 23 to 24 November, 2005. At that congress, Turkey declared 2005 to be "Year of expansion into Africa". The goals of the first international Turkish and African summit were: (a) to improve economic, social , cultural and political relitions between Turkey and the African states, (b) to suggest possible solutions on the existing problems in Africa, and (c) to make decisions on how to regulate the relations between Turkey and the African states.[21] Tracing the relationships from the Ottoman era, the then Turkish foreign minister, Abdullah Gul, claimed that Turkey and the African people have deeply rooted ties. He stressed that the Turkish government wants to develop her old cultural and economic relations with the African countries.[22] Pointing to the importance of Alpha Oumar Konare's visit to Turkey, the African Union Commission's Chairman, Gul, stressed that it was the first visit from an African regional organization since 1963. Arguably, Turkey does not have experts on African affairs nor do the African countries on Turkey. The first international Turkish and African congress was a good step to compensate for the old neglected relations. It is through meetings on specific issues that both sides would have the chance

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20 Hurriyet, 'The Gambian President in Turkey', *Turkish Press Review*, Wednesday, 18 June, 1997.

21 "The Secretary General Participated in the First Turkish-African Congress," http://www.theunity. org/en/index.php?view=article&catid=1:haberler&id=145:the-secretary-general-participated-the-first-turkish-africa-congress&tmpl=component&print=1&page=, (24.11.2005).

22 *Turkish Press Review*, Istanbul Hosts Turkish-African Congress, http://www.hri.org/news/turkey/ trkpr/2005/05-11-24.trkpr.html, (11-24.05.2005).

to get acquainted with each other. Moreover, the peoples of Africa shall see Turkey as a friendly nation on her quest for a new partnership.[23]

The Second International Turkish-African Congress

The second international Turkish-African Congress was held from 12 to 14 December 2006.[24] The aim of that congress was to analyze the issues that are related to economic cooperation, development aid and investment opportunities between Turkey and the African countries, and to provide necessary information for a closer cooperation. At that congress, about 30 African countries, 550 businessmen, ministers and senior bureaucrats participated. Similarly, about 1,300 Turkish businessmen attended in the congress. The significance of the summit is that both parties were well represented. The summit, which was organized by the Turkish Confederation of Businessmen and Industrialists (TUSKON), offered an opportunity to bargain and strike business between Turkish and African businessmen. Considerable steps were taken in the summit negotiations as trade agreements were signed between Turkish and African businessmen.

The Third International Turkish-African Congress

The third international Turkish and African congress was organized by the Turkish Asian Center for Strategic Studies (TACSS) and it was held in Istanbul, on 4 December 2007. The summit provided a ground for improving cooperation between Turkey and the African countries.[25] It was the outcome of this summit that a TİKA coordination office was opened in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia and this was followed by the establishment of the TİKA offices in Sudan and Senegal".[26] Arguably, this opportunity was created by the agreement which was signed between TASAM and the Ethiopian International Institute for Peace and Development in 2005.[27] More than 60 ministers and government officials as well as 500 businessmen from 40 African states, including South Africa participated in that summit. They met and networked with approximately 1500 Turkish entrepreneurs. Compared to the first African summit, which was held in 2006, the second Turkish and Africa congress captured more attention among the African business community. The summit hosted

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23 Süleyman ŞENSOY / Chairman of TASAM, *Turkish Asian Center For Strategic Studies,* http://www.tasam.org/index.php?altid=1910, (21.09.2007).

24 Ufuk Tepebas, *II. International Turkish-African Congress* http://groups.yahoo.com/group/ngo_az_org/message/1726, (12-14.12.2006).

25 *News Archives,* The Third International Turkish-African Congress http://www.tika.gov.tr/EN/Icerik_Detay.ASP?Icerik=811, (04.02.2008).

26 Ibid.

27 Mogus Teklemikael, African Perspectives on Relations between Africa and Turkey, Paper Presented at The Third International Turkish-African Congress, Istanbul, Turkey, 4-6 December, 2007, p. 2.

delegates from Angola, Benin, Burkina Faso, Algeria, Chad, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Ghana, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Morocco, Ivory Coast, South Africa, Cameroon, Kenya, Comoros, Liberia, Mali, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Mauritania, Egypt, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Central Africa, Sudan, Tanzania, Togo, Uganda and Senegal.[28] About 1,600 Turkish businessmen also attended. Those events played vital roles in bringing Turkish and African business communities as well as investors from both sides together. It is possible that those summits resulted in the signing of business agreements which laid the foundations for the future trade relations between Turkey and the African countries.

The Fourth International Turkey-African Summit

The fourth Turkey and African summit, which was organized by the Turkish Confederation of Businessmen and Industrialists (TUSKON) in İstanbul in 2008 affected the participation of more than 3,500 African and Turkish businessmen from 45 countries.[29] At this summit, Turkish foreign trade minister, Kürşad Tüzmen, spoke about the "opportunities the African market presents for Turkey".[30] He stressed the need for Turkey to establish a stronger friendship with the African countries. In support of this, Atilla Kızılaslan, from the Turkish foreign trade undersecretariate, suggested that "the conditions are very ripe", especially for small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs), in Africa. Furthermore, Turkish foreign minister Ali Babacan stressed that the meeting would contribute to the improvement of cultural, economic and commercial ties between Turkey and the African countries. With him, "Turkey places great importance on its relations with Africa, which has a great potential. Turkey's relations with African countries are based on principles of sharing, friendship, partnership and brotherhood. These relations can be characterized as a win-win relation." He added that Turkey would open 15 more embassies in the continent, bringing the total number of Turkish embassies in Africa to 22.[31] Babacan also underlined Turkey's rising aid efforts to Africa and said that those efforts would increasingly continue in the future. The initiative is also finding an echo and is being reciprocated by some African countries. Kenya's assistant trade minister, John Magara claims that Kenya will open an embassy in Turkey soon to promote bilateral relations. Many other African countries state that they will follow suit. President Abdullah Gul also met with the African businessmen as part of the meeting. In related news,

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28 Abdulhamit Yıldız, *İstanbul*,
    http://www.todayszaman.com/tz-web/detaylar.do?load=detay&link=111435, (17.05.2007).

29 *Today's Zaman*, 'Turkey Extends Economic Reach Globally', http://www.newstime7.com/haber/20080518/Turkey-extends-economic-reach-globally.php, (18.05.2008)

30 Ibid.

31 Ibid.

Turkey's membership application for African Development Bank (AFDB) was accepted. Thanks to this membership, Turkish companies investing in Africa can join all kinds of economic projects in the continent.[32]

Commercial Contacts between Turkey and African Countries

In the past, the idea of trade with the African countries was impossible in Turkish society but today a number of Turkish businessmen invest in Africa with good economic earnings for Turkey. Towards the end of the 1980s, commercial contacts between private business firms in Turkey and Africa were established. As early as 1998, Turkish government drafted a plan, called "Opening up to Africa".[33] In the 1990s, Turkey's interest in Africa developed rapidly. In 2000, Turkey's dream of opening up to Africa became a reality and course of action was taken by the Turkish government. In 2003, Turkey's strategy of developing economic relations with Africa was established. This was followed by the government's announcement of 2005 as the "Year for Africa". Evidently, the opening up to Africa may be considered as a step towards globalization. Turkish foreign policy for opening up to African countries may, however, be viable if her policy would be beneficial for Turkish and African citizens. Generally speaking, in inter-state relations, state interests are divided into economic and political. However, in the present setting of international affairs, it is understood that economic interest of a country cannot be pursued in isolation from its political interest or vice versa. In this globalisation era economic and political interest are complementary to one another because economic power effects political power. Similarly, the economic influence of a country in another country impinges on its political influence therein. This is particularly valid in African countries as they attach the utmost importance and priority to their economic development. What matters is to find the right combination to channel economic power in the service of political interest. With this understanding, this paper will try to analyse Turkish and African economic relations below.

Trade and Economic Cooperation Agreements

Since 2003, trade and economic cooperation agreements have been concluded between Turkey and some African countries. In 2003, the trade between Turkey and African countries was around US$5.4 billion with a total share of trade (2.1 percent) while efforts were made to raise this to 3 percent in the same year. In 2005, this amount climbed to US$10 billion. It increased to 120% and reached to US$12 billion by the end of 2006. It is expected that the Turkish exports to African countries will increase to US$120 billion and

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32 *Turkish Pres Review*, http://www.byegm.gov.tr/YAYINLARIMIZ/chr/, (16.05.2008).

33 *Turkish Press Review*, 05-11-24, http://www.hri.org/news/turkey/trkpr/2005/05-11-24.trkpr.html, (24.11.2005).

imports to US$180 billion in 2008. Turkey's target is to increase trade volume with the Africa countries to US$25 billion by the end of 2010.[34] According to sources, Turkey's target is to export US$500 billion to African countries yearly, from 2010 to 2023.[35] In 2007, the volume of trade between Turkey and Africa countries was 15 billion dollars. Turco-African trade volume, which was US$5.4 billion in 2003 went up by 120%, to US$11.9 billion by the end of 2006. It is hoped that trade relations between Turkey and African countries will grow still further in the future.[36]

Meanwhile, Turkey's trade and investment with the African countries have reached unprecedented levels in a short time. According to the Turkish Institute of Statistics (TURSTAT), in the first quater of 2008 Turkey's export figures to Africa shows 42.9 percent increase compared to the same period in 2007.[37] March 2008 figures indicate an increase over 2007 in Turkey's exports volume to Africa. The export volume to North Africa reached US$531 million in March 2008 compared to US$302 million in March 2007. The rest of Africa also witnessed the rise in exports, with last March's figure of US$183 million jumping to US$381 million in 2008.[38] As economic relations expand, Turkey has started to reap the benefits politically and diplomatically from Africa. Indeed, the latest economic figures show that the strategic initiatives adopted by Turkey to diversify its international market portfolio in the last decade have started to bear fruit. With respect to Turkish contracting firms' activities in Africa, there are steady contracts for the Turkish firms in Africa. In 2006, the contracting projects that were undertaken by the Turkish contracting firms' in Africa were valued at US$16 billion.[39] In terms of economic cooperation agreements, Turkey has signed free trade agreements with Morocco, Tunisia and Egypt. There is hope that this will be doubled to $30 billion by 2010.

Turkish Investors and Entrepreneurs in Africa

As regards investments, Turkish entrepreneurs have realized over US$500 million in many sectors in Africa and the investments may exceed US$4 billion in five years.[40] Turkish investment sectors in Africa include textiles and apparel, automotive and industrial supplies, house holdutilities, chemicals,

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34 Abdulhamit Yıldız, *İstanbul*,
http://www.todayszaman.com/tz-web/detaylar.do?load=detay&link=111435,(17.05.2007).

35 *Journal of Turkish Weekly (JTW)*, http://www.turkishweekly.net/news.php?id=31361,(05.08.2006).

36 Ibid.

37 Ibid.

38 Richard Gueli and Oguzhan Kase. *Sunday Independent*,
http://www.iol.co.za/index.php?set_id=1&click_id=594&art_id=vn20080210091806952C7973
76,(10.02.2008).

39 *Journal of Turkish Weekly (JTW)*, http://www.turkishweekly.net/news.php?id=31361,(05.08.2006).

40 *SkyLife,* http://www.thy.com/en-INT/corporate/skylife/article.aspx?mkl=402, (May 2007).

food, construction materials, trade and transportation. This is great progress and would encourage the Turkish business community to invest more in Africa because it is believed that such investments are not only necessary for the development of Africa but also very profitable for Turkish investors and Turkey as a whole.

Turkish Airlines and Routes to Africa

Following Turkey's declaration of 2005 as "the Year of Africa", in 2006, Turkish Airlines introduced new routes to Sudan, Ethiopia, and to Nigeria as well as contributing to joint flights to Kenya.[41] After suspending flights to South Africa in March 2003, Turkish Airlines added to its flight network routes to Johannesburg and Capetown, thereby extending its service to the farthest corners of the continent.[42] Meanwhile the Turkish Airlines deputy board chairman, Hamdi Topçu, has been assessing market conditions in these two major South African cities. He is holding bilateral talks with a high level trade delegation from South African Airlines and the Turkish delegation is evaluating prospects for joint flights and other forms of cooperation. Following the consensus reached in the talks, regular flights are targeted four times a week to South Africa and may be increased to daily flights in the future.

African Perspectives Towards Turkey-African Relations

African perspectives on Turkey were inspired by the Turkish prime minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan's visit to the AU headquarters in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, on 2 March, 2005. His visit marked Turkey's renewal of her relationships with the African countries. During his visit to Ethiopia, the prime minister assured the Africa countries that Turkey would always stand by her African friends. His visit signified positive attempts in pursuit of a Turkish and African common vision for promoting peace, stability and prosperity in Africa. African perspectives toward Turkey depend on the New Partnership for Africa's Development's (NEPAD) strategies. NEPAD was created in Abuja, Nigeria, in 2001, and its goals are based on "The New African Initiative."[43] It is a framework for a global partnership which is based on development, security and stability in Africa. The role that Turkey plays in the United Nations (UN) is in accordance with the NEPAD charter in conflict prevention, management, resolution, maintenance of regional peace and stability. Turkey is recognized by the Africa countries as one of the main players in peacekeeping operations in the UN. Turkey's contributions to the UNOSOM II in Somali, from 1993 to 1994, her support for the UN operations in Sierra Leone, Congo and

41 *IZMIR (A.A),* "Turkey's national air carrier Turkish Airlines (THY) will begin flights to Johannesburg and Cape Town, South Africa as of September 2007", http://gazeteler.hossohbet.com/daily/210728-turkish-airlines-fly-south-africa.html,(28.09.06).

42 Mogus Teklemikael, op. cit

43 Ibid.

Ivory Coast are recognized by the African countries.[44] Her support to the UN operations in those African conflicts represent the aspirations of NEPAD. Intercultural marriages is another factor that has influenced African attitudes positively towards Turkey.

Intercultural Marriages

Intercultural marriages also played their part in improving relations between Turkey and the African countries. There is a small number of Turkish communities in Africa compared to the influx of African community "students" in Turkish Universities. A good number of them have graduated or are about to graduate and are married either to Turkish women or to Turkish men. Some of them have either taken their spouses back to Africa or have chosen to stay in Turkey for a while. Some have either acquired Turkish or African citizenship. In this case, to maintain future relations between Turkey and African countries, those African and Turkish citizens residing either in Turkey or in Africa should be properly protected by both the Turkish and African governments.

The EU Perspectives Toward Turkey-African Reations

As for the EU views, since Turkish foreign trade minister Kurşad Tuzmen, warned Turkish businessmen to avoid using the Euro for expenditures, but use US dollars for sales, then, the EU countries may implement obstacles to Turkish exporters' business by hardening visa procedures.[45] For example, Sarkozy, like the previous former French president who opposed Turkey's entry into the EU on cultural and antiterrorist grounds, may not like to see Turkey- African relations initiative because this relation will affect France's role in north Africa.

The OIC Perspectives Toward Turkey-African Reations

The OIC is composed of 57 countries and its member states are dispersed over a large geographical Region, covering four continents.[46] It extends from Albania (Europe) in the north to Mozambique (Africa) in the south and from Guyana (Latin America) in the west to Indonesia (Asia) in the east. 27 countries out of the 57 OIC member states are from Africa. This indicates that Africa constitutes a substantial part of the organization. Its member states share common problems and are severely affected by the globalization process. Severe international competition has caused marginalization of the economies of some its member states, especially those from Africa. Considering the fact that globalization is connected with international competition, its

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44 TURKEY, "Minister of State: Non-Tariff Barriers with the EU should be Removed" *Today's Zaman*, http://www.todayszaman.com/tz-web/detaylar.do?load=detay&link=123559,(1.10.2007).

45 Ahmet Kavas, *Rising Africa and Turkey*, First Turkey-African Congress, http://www.google.com. tr/search?q=Is+the+EU+in+Favor+of+Turkish- African+Relations%3F&hl=tr&start=20&sa=N ,(23.11.2005).

46 Ibid.

member states tend to develop means for their survival and to improve their standard of living in order to derive benefits from this process. In this regard, a solution for them is to find means to enhance their economic and commercial ties.

Since the new government assumed office in Turkey in January 2005, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, the Turkish prime minister has given great importance to socioeconomic wellbeing of the OIC member states, especially in Africa. He has undertaken a tour to 6 OIC member states in Africa, namely Burkina Faso, Chad, Gambia, Mali, Niger and Senegal. During his tour, he launched a programme aimed at strengthening sustainable development in Africa, including initiatives to develop food and improve cotton industries in West Africa through joint ventures, to strengthen the capabilities of African member states in combating poverty, to eradicate polio, and to develop a stronger partnership between businessmen and entrepreneurs of the OIC member states in Africa. The summit that was held in Makkah Al Mukarramah on 7-8 December 2005 could be considered as one of his measures to support the OIC member states in Africa. Again, in colaboration with the government of Burkina Faso, the Islamic Development Bank (IDB) and the Islamic Center for Development of Trade (ICDT), Erdogan organized a forum on "Energizing Trade and Investment in the Cotton Sector in the OIC Member States".[47] The forum took place in Ouagadougou and Burkina Faso in Africa on 18-19 April, 2005. The objective of the summit was to discuss how to support industrialization in Africa. However, it should be noted that Malaysia initiated the programme of the "Capacity Building for Poverty Alleviation" in the low income and the least developed OIC member states. On 8-9 October 2005, summits were held at the Islamic Development Bank (IDB) headquarters in Burkina Faso, Comoros, Guinea, Senegal and Somalia. Since African countries constitute a substantial part of the OIC member states and Turkey supports Islamic solidarity and cooperation, then, the OIC member states' reaction to Turkey-African relations will always be positive.

Conclusion and Recommendation

The paper has attempted to respond to the questions of why Turkey needs cooperation with the entire African continent and how Turkey would benefit from this development. It is well known that Turkey's international relations concentrate more on her relations with the European Union, Caucasians, the Balkans, the Middle East and the USA. Turkey's opening up to Africa today is a new development in her international relations. However, as indicated above such relations had already existed between Turkey and some African states during the time of the Ottoman Empire, eparticulaly with north Africa.

47 Ibid.

Turkish academics, universities and media have not yet grasped the importance of Africa in the academic sense and as such none of them has a center on African research. Likewise, the African academics, universities and media. Other than communications between Turkey and African countries, and related institutions on the subject matter, it is not possible to talk about Significant data on Turkey and African relations. The relations between Turkey and Africa were on individual African country's basis. However, with the recent development in the world today known as "globalization", Turkey is trying to improve her political and economic relations with the entire African continent. Of course, there are really important reasons which urge Turkey to develop such relations with all the African countries. It is possible that globalization urges Turkey to establish relations with the Africa continent. However, with the recent developments, we have seen that there are high level visits between Turkey and the African countries. Furthermore, trade relations between Turkey and African countries are in progress but as indicated above, Turkey's target is to increase trade volume with the Africa countries to US$25 billion by the end of 2010 while there is little or limited number of investments in Africa. This paper argues that African countries need investments than trade. Furthermore, based on Turkish foreign policy analysis, the paper claims that despite globalization forces, Turkish foreign policy towards African countries is nationally driven, guided by historical legacies and domestic political factors. That the continuity and change of Turkish relations with African countries, has since its initiation developed varied adaptive policy responses. Taking the continuity and change of Turkish relations with African countries seriously, the paper concludes that successive Turkish governments have been facing with great challenges of joinning the European Union (EU). It considers the recent relations as an alternative to those challenges.

Recommendation

a) The Turkish Republic needs to increase the number of her representative offices in Africa, not only in those African countries that are linked with its historical past but with other African countries

b) It is known that Turkey is not introduced in African countries properly and African countries are not introduced in Turkey properly. Institutional projects on this issue should be initiated by both Turkey and the African countries.

c) The establishment of cooperation between African and Turkish Universities is vital. Turkey and the African countries should take strong measures for mutual cooperation between Turkish and African Universities. Many African students study at Turkish Universities, but it would be valuable to see Turkish students studying at African Universities in order to cement Turkish-African relations.

d) Joint cooperation in science and technology should be encouraged between Turkey and the African countries. Research centers should be opened both in Turkey and in Africa.

e) Investments in Turkey and Africa should be considered useful.

f) Military and security cooperations should be encouraged between Turkey and the African countries.

g) The introduction of Turkish goods to African market and vice versa is vital for the partnership to become reality.

h) Sister city relationships between different cities in Africa and Turkish cities should be a good approach to the partnership.

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