

Türkiye's Foreign Policy Relations During the National Security Council Period: The Example of the USA, EEC and Greece

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ABSTRACT

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After the military coups and memorandums that interrupted democratic life in Türkiye in 1960, 1971, and 1980, interim governments ruled the country during the transition back to democratic governance. One such interim government was the 44th Government, established according to the decision of the National Security Council following the September 12, 1980, military coup. The 44th Government of the Republic of Türkiye was led by former Navy Commander Bülent Ulusu, appointed by the National Security Council, and İlker Türkmen was appointed as the Minister of Foreign Affairs. During the tenure of the 44th Government, a priority of Turkish foreign policy was the development of relations with Western entities such as the United States, NATO, and the European Economic Community. Additionally, the Cyprus issue was among the primary matters where the government took initiative and showed determination. Relations with Greece were shaped by many political and diplomatic issues, especially the Cyprus problem. In this article, the foreign policy pursuits and practices of the 44th Government during the interim regime from 1980 to 1983, particularly concerning the USA, EEC, and Greece, are identified and analysed using primary sources such as the minutes of the National Security Council, newspaper collections of the period, and memoirs, as well as various authored research works.

Türkiye'nin Milli Güvenlik Konseyi Döneminde Dış Politik İlişkileri:

ABD, AET ve Yunanistan Örneği

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Türkiye'de demokratik hayatı kesintiye uğratan 1960, 1971 ve 1980 yıllarındaki askeri darbeler ve muhtıraların ardından, ülkenin yeniden demokratik yönetime geçiş sürecinde geçici hükümetler görev yapmıştır. Bu geçici hükümetlerden biri, 12 Eylül 1980 askeri darbesi sonrasında Milli Güvenlik Konseyi kararıyla kurulan 44. Hükümet'tir. 44. Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Hükümeti, Milli Güvenlik Konseyi tarafından atanan eski Deniz Kuvvetleri Komutanı Bülent Ulusu tarafından yönetilmiştir ve Dışişleri Bakanlığı görevine İlker Türkmen atanmıştır. 44. Hükümet'in görev süresi boyunca, Türk dış politikasının önceliklerinden biri, Amerika Birleşik Devletleri, NATO ve Avrupa Ekonomik Topluluğu gibi Batı dünyasıyla ilişkilerin geliştirilmesi olmuştur. Ayrıca, Kıbrıs meselesi, hükümetin girişimde bulunarak kararlılık gösterdiği başlıca konular arasında yer almıştır. Yunanistan ile ilişkiler, özellikle Kıbrıs sorunu başta olmak üzere birçok siyasi ve diplomatik mesele tarafından şekillenmiştir. Bu makalede, 1980-1983 yılları arasında geçici rejim döneminde görev yapan 44. Hükümet'in ABD, AET ve Yunanistan'a yönelik dış politika arayışları ve uygulamaları, Milli Güvenlik Konseyi tutanakları, dönemin gazete koleksiyonları, anılar ve çeşitli araştırma eserleri gibi birincil kaynaklar kullanılarak tespit edilip analiz edilmektedir.

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Introduction

The first military coup that interrupted the Multi-Party Democratic period in the Republic of Türkiye took place on 27 May 1960. After the 1960-1961 Interim Regime period, Türkiye met with Coalition Governments; in an environment of political, social, and economic instability, the military issued a military memorandum to the AP Government on 12 March 1971, and the Demirel Government resigned. After the Interim Regime rule between 1971 and 1973, free elections opened the way for democratic life in Türkiye once again, but in the 1970s, Türkiye became acquainted with the harshest and coldest face of confrontation and cliquism. In the second half of the 1970s, the Nationalist Front Governments, consisting of center-right parties that came together under the leadership of Demirel against the CHP led by Ecevit, undertook the task of preventing the rise and spread of the left in Türkiye rather than finding solutions to fundamental problems such as inflation and anarchy. Prior to the 12 September Military Coup, Türkiye faced many problems that can be summarised as high inflation and cost of living, economic crisis, anarchy and terrorism, right-left conflict, ideological polarisation, and cliquism in the social and public sphere, escalation of the political crisis and social incidents as a result of the sharp discourses of political party leaders, the inability to elect a president, and the tension during the Jerusalem rally in Konya. As a result, the ongoing terrorist atmosphere was considered a harbinger of a coup d'état, and the military seized power on 12 September 1980 and carried out its third coup against the governments in the last twenty years. When the military intervened in the government in 1980, the AP government, which had been established upon the resignation of the CHP-dominated coalition government as a result of the by-elections held in 1979, was in power. Although the new government called for early elections to find a way out of the unstable environment, it could not find the necessary support from the opposition parties.

Laurence, the British Ambassador of the period, who was in Ankara during the coup, wrote that the army was considering a more limited intervention before seizing power, and in such a case, a supra-partisan government would be established. However, he stated that the fact that the supra-partisan government established after the 12 March Memorandum could not bring definite and solid solutions to the problems caused the military to directly take over the government in this process (Coşkun, 2016, p. 533).

The question of whether the leaders of the junta that carried out the military intervention on 12 September or the political leaders of the period were responsible for the formation of the coup can be considered. Even though the political leaders of the period exhibited some attitudes that justified Kenan Evren, the Chief of General Staff, who was the pioneer of the coup, this does not justify questioning what the perpetrators of the coup did during that period or ignoring the fact that they did not do what was necessary. Considering that the seizure of power after the coup was in line with US interests, the role of the US in the process prior to 12 September and its influence on the events become evident automatically (Arcayürek, 2014, p. 337).

In the words of US Secretary of State Alexander Haing, the Turkish military wanted pressure to restore political order. Haing emphasised to US President Carter that if the embargo on Türkiye was not lifted, martial law would be imposed in Türkiye, followed by a military coup. President Carter ignored Haing's suggestion, and indeed martial law was imposed in Türkiye, followed by a military coup. The manner in which Paul Henze, the US National Security Council Officer and CIA chief, informed US President Jimmy Carter that the generals in Türkiye had carried out the coup d'état is quite meaningful: "Our boys did it" (Aslan, 2018, p. 168). Such an expression can be considered important evidence showing the effectiveness of the US in realising the coup.

It has almost become a tradition for the Commander of the Turkish Air Force to visit the USA before the coups, and Tahsin Şahinkaya, the then Commander of the Turkish Air Force, traveled to the

USA just before the coup (Yetkin, 2011, pp. 173-174). Immediately after the 12 September coup d'état, five generals headed by the Chief of the General Staff Kenan Evren called the National Security Council, suspended democratic functioning, shut down the Turkish Grand National Assembly, and detained political party leaders, MPs, and trade union representatives. After these first actions, Bülent Ulusu, former Commander of the Naval Forces, was appointed as the head of the Interim Regime Government and as the Prime Minister. Turgut Özal, the pioneer of the 24 January 1980 Decisions, was appointed as the State Minister and Deputy Prime Minister. Özal's appointment to the cabinet was also perceived as a message to the USA that relations with the IMF and the World Bank and the economic status quo would be preserved. İler Türkmen was appointed as the Minister of Foreign Affairs (Çavdar, 2013, pp. 263-264).

Bülent Ulusu read the 44th Government Programme at the Grand National Assembly of Türkiye on 27 September 1980. In the Programme, Ulusu stated the following about the main objectives and priorities of Turkish Foreign Policy: "In foreign policy, our Government will maintain the traditional peaceful attitude of our Republic, the foundations of which were laid by the Great Atatürk... - Our Government wishes to develop friendly relations and close cooperation with all our neighbours. In this framework, special attention will be paid to the development of friendly relations with the Soviet Union. - Our Government hopes that fair solutions to the bilateral problems between Greece and us, which respect the rights and interests of the parties, will be reached through negotiations. In this framework, the negotiation methods previously agreed with Greece will be continued. Our rights and interests in the Aegean are of vital importance for Türkiye. We demand that the status of the Aegean islands determined by the treaties be respected and that the treaties concerning the rights of our compatriots in Western Thrace be respected. - We want a bi-zonal, bi-communal federal solution to the inter-communal conflict in Cyprus to be found through negotiations within the framework of the previously reached agreement. Our government will support the solutions to be reached between the parties in the ongoing inter-communal talks..." (National Security Council Journal of Minutes [MGKTD], 1980, pp. 88-93).

Furthermore, Bülent Ulusu stated that "all bilateral and multilateral treaties to which Türkiye was a party were valid and that the government would fulfil its obligations arising from all treaties within the framework of the 'principle of reciprocity.' According to him, relations with the NATO alliance and all its members, particularly the USA, were to be maintained and improved. Relations and cooperation with the Council of Europe and other organisations of which democratic countries are members would be inspired by the determination to return to a parliamentary system. In relations with Islamic countries with which Türkiye has deep-rooted historical and traditional ties, efforts will be made to strengthen close friendship and brotherhood in all areas. In addition to these strong ties, relations with the Arab countries, Iran, and Pakistan will be conducted in an understanding that is required by neighbourliness and geographical proximity. Türkiye's approach to the conflicts in the region will be based on principles such as justice and equity, self-determination of each nation, and rejection of territorial annexation by force. Within the framework of these principles, the attitude towards the Middle East problem and the support for the just cause of the Palestinian people will be pursued with determination. The Government of Türkiye wishes to develop friendly relations and close cooperation with all its neighbours. In this framework, special attention will be paid to the development of friendly relations with the Soviet Union. The Government hopes that fair solutions to the bilateral problems with Greece, which respect the rights and interests of the parties, will be reached through negotiations. Rights and interests in the Aegean are of vital importance for Türkiye. It is expected that the status of the Aegean islands determined by the treaties will be respected and that the treaties concerning the rights of the cognates in Western Thrace will be respected. A bi-zonal, bi-communal federal solution to the inter-communal conflict in Cyprus is desired through negotiations within the framework of the previous agreement. The Government will support the solutions to be reached between the parties in the ongoing inter-communal talks" (National

Security Council Journal of Minutes [MGKTD], 1980, pp. 88-93).

The NSC was composed of the President and Chief of General Staff General Kenan Evren, Commander of the Land Forces Nurettin Ersin, Commander of the Air Force Tahsin Şahinkaya, Commander of the Naval Forces Nejat Tümer, and Commander of the Gendarmerie General Sedat Celasun (Aydın & Taşkın, 2015, p. 326).

1. Relations with the USA

In the 1970s, Türkiye had to face various foreign policy problems with the United States on major issues such as the poppy cultivation crisis, the acceleration of left-wing social events, and the Cyprus Peace Operation. However, in the context of security priorities, it preferred to get closer to the US from the very beginning of the 1980s. In this framework, although Turkish-American relations generally followed a positive course during the Interim Regime Period (1980-1983), some issues of disagreement remained. In the US Congress, some criticisms were made against the change of administration in Türkiye after 12 September, and this approach, which affected the US position on military aid, caused some reactions in Türkiye (Bostanoğlu, 2008, p. 383). The US lifted the embargo against Türkiye in September 1978 after the 'poppy cultivation crisis and the Cyprus Peace Operation,' and in 1980, the US carefully monitored the anarchy, terrorism, turmoil, and political instability in Türkiye. The United States expressed its understanding of the intervention on 12 September 1980 and stated that aid to Türkiye would continue. On 13 September, US Ambassador Robert Strausz-Hupe arrived in Ankara as the President's special envoy and spent ten days in Ankara (Çakmak, 2010, p. 116).

Before the coup, the US administration had made requests from Türkiye between 1979 and 1980, such as the use of bases for U-2 flights over the USSR and the deployment of the Agile Force in Türkiye. On the other hand, Greece's endeavour to return to the military wing of NATO was another issue that was on the agenda. Although Türkiye rejected these proposals at the first stage, after 12 September, these proposals were accepted by the Turkish Government except for the 'Placement of the Agile Force in Türkiye' (Gönlübol et al., 1987, p. 605).

At the time of the 12 September coup d'état, the international conjuncture once again revealed the importance of Türkiye in the eyes of the West. Western allies, especially the USA, were more careful and understanding in order not to push the 12 September military regime out of the system. The 12 September regime, which interrupted relations with Europe, gave all the weight to the USA in foreign policy. In this period, security was again prioritised in relations with the USA. Economic relations with the US, which had previously been characterised by a unilateral flow of aid, began to gain momentum in a bilateral manner only after the 1980s. As Türkiye's economy and trade entered the globalisation process in the 1980s, Türkiye expressed its desire to take its classical relationship with the US to a new dimension with the slogan 'trade, not aid.' The main issues that the US focused on during this period were the ratification of the Defence and Economic Cooperation Treaty (DECT) agreed on 29 March 1980 and the Agile Force Project (Oran, 2006, pp. 37-39; Beriş & Gürkan, 2002, p. 7).

After coming to power, the Government of Bülent Ulusu tried to resolve the disagreements with both the USA and NATO.¹ The first step was the appointment of Haydar Saltık as the Secretary General

¹ There were great tensions with the United States of America between 1970-1980. One of the most prominent of these problems was the poppy (opium poppy) cultivation and the other was the Cyprus issue. On 28 March 1970, a major earthquake occurred in the Gediz region of Kütahya in the Aegean Region. Thousands of people lost their lives in the region, which can be considered as the centre of Western Anatolia, where poppy cultivation was also intensively cultivated. The US provided economic aid to Türkiye after the disaster. On 1 April 1970, US Secretary of State William Rogers began his meeting with Turkish Ambassador to Washington Melih Esenbel by expressing his regrets about the earthquake in Türkiye, but the main issue was the ban on poppy cultivation. Poppy cultivation in Türkiye had already been reduced from forty-two provinces to nine and would soon be further restricted. Türkiye

of the National Security Council. Another development was that the Defence and Economic Cooperation Treaty (SEIA) signed with the USA on 29 March 1980 was ratified and put into effect by the Bülent Ulusu Government. In this treaty: “The Parties, recognising the close relationship between economic and defence matters and the fact that a sound defence is based on a sound economy, and in order to assist each other in fulfilling their mutual responsibilities as members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation, shall endeavour to the maximum extent possible to develop economic cooperation between them, including commercial, economic, industrial, scientific and technological relations, as provided for in Article 2 of the North Atlantic Treaty” (Official Gazette, 1981, pp. 1-3). Thus, during the period of Bülent Ulusu’s government, a compromise was reached with the USA on issues related to bases, defence, and economy by approving the SEIA. Thus, the interim regime administration found the opportunity to pay the debts by finding foreign resources, the problem of lack of consumer goods was overcome, raw materials and intermediate goods were supplied to the country, and industrial production started to increase. This situation was effective in increasing the support of the people, who were tired of economic problems, to the interim regime administration (Gözen, 2009, pp. 188-189).

According to the pioneers of 12 September, the military coup was carried out to stop the anarchy in the country and to end the political, social, and economic instability. The 12 September administration tried to take important steps to ensure stability in the Middle East region and to preserve the status quo. The administration opened up to the Middle East due to its close relations with the USA and the export-oriented economic growth model. It was thought that the interests of both countries were in the same direction and Türkiye and the USA should cooperate. In addition to being a Muslim country, Türkiye’s position within the Western system and its direct land and sea borders with the Soviet Union have led Western states, particularly the United States, to prioritise Türkiye in geopolitical terms (Uzgel, 2002, p. 46). On 1 March 1980, the US established a military structure called the Agile Force consisting of two hundred thousand people in Florida to be used against a possible Soviet expansionism and for regional crises. The US tried to make a co-operation agreement with Türkiye on the positioning of this military force in the Middle East and the provision of infrastructure and logistic support (Oran, 2006, p. 46).

Another development that marked this period in Turkish-American relations was the Brzezinski Doctrine and the creation of the Rapid Deployment Joint Task Force. When Reagan assumed the

was eager to resolve the problem, but this desire did not satisfy the United States. Rogers emphasised in the meeting that the US administration could provide whatever Türkiye needed to stop poppy cultivation. Demirel said that such a ban could not be imposed for 1970 and that the Turkish government could not destroy the crop. Demirel stated that such a thing would not be possible, noting that the vote rate had fallen in the regions where poppy cultivation was restricted. This request of the USA was realised during the Nihat Erim Government, which became Prime Minister after the 12 March 1971 Memorandum. The Nihat Erim Government took the decision to ban poppy cultivation in Türkiye on 29 June 1971 and this decision was published in the Official Gazette on 30 June 1971 and entered into force. Following a gradual transition period, cultivation was definitively ended in the autumn of 1972. *1 -The provinces in which poppy cultivation and opium production were notified to be banned as of the autumn of 1972 were determined as the provinces registered in the lists numbered (I) attached, 2 -The provinces in which poppy cultivation and opium production were banned as of the autumn of 1971 were determined as the provinces registered in the lists numbered (II) attached, and the cultivation and production of poppy within the borders of Türkiye were definitively banned as of the autumn of 1972, upon the letter of the Ministry of Agriculture dated 26/6/1971 and numbered 02-16/1-01342, in accordance with Article 18 of the Law No. 3491 amended by the Law No. 7368 and Article 18 of the Law No. 3491 dated 27/12/1966. Article 18 of Law No. 3491 amended by Law No. 7368 and Article 22 of the Convention supplementary to Law No. 812 dated 27/12/1966, was decided by the Council of Ministers on 29/6/1971.* For detailed information, see. **Official Gazette**, 30.06.1971, p. 5. This ban, which started during the Nihat Erim period, was lifted by the Ecevit Government on 1 July 1974 due to increasing public pressure. For detailed information, see. Macide Başlamışlı, According to American Documents, the Poppy Issue on the Road to the 12 March Memorandum, *Journal of Academic History and Thought*. (2018). *Ilkbahar*, 2018, 5(14), 362-363; Dokuyan, S., & Narbahçe, R. (2018). *Bülent Ulusu Government Period in Turkish Foreign Policy (1980-1983)*. *Journal of Human and Social Sciences Research*, 7(4), 2906.

presidency in January 1981, the Islamic regime had taken over in Iran, CENTO had disintegrated, the USSR had invaded Afghanistan, and Papandreou's PASOK had won the elections in Greece with an anti-American election campaign. At the same time, Türkiye, under military rule, appeared to be a stable ally for America. In these circumstances, Brzezinski argued that a new strategy was necessary 'in the face of the growing influence of the USSR in the crisis belt stretching from the Balkans to Pakistan'. This strategy was aimed at consolidating US control in the oil region where the US feared growing Soviet influence. The Agile Force was created to protect the Middle East, particularly the Persian Gulf, in the event of an East-West conflict (Beriş & Gürkan, 2002, p. 8). After Iran, the Eastern Anatolia region of Türkiye, which is the buffer zone between East and West in the Middle East, gained special importance in the Agile Force project. Prof. Albert Wohlstetter, an American military strategist, argued that an attack by the USSR on Eastern Anatolia would be much more grave than an attack on Europe due to the West's dependence on Gulf oil. The task of defending the Middle East and Gulf oil was entrusted to NATO and the geostrategic position of Türkiye, as a NATO member, became even more valuable in comparison with Egypt and Israel (Armaoğlu, 1991, pp. 300-301).

Firstly, there were discussions that this force could also be used in the event of internal instability, which disturbed the countries in the region. Secondly, the command of the Agile Force, which had been excluded from NATO defence plans when it was first established, was transferred from Florida to NATO's Allied Command Europe in January 1981 by the Reagan administration. Thus, the US had taken an important step in including possible out-of-area interventions within the NATO framework, even though it was not accepted by its other allies (Kayar, 2003, p. 144). The USA, which attached great importance to the project, started to make intensive efforts to convince Türkiye with its official and unofficial officials. Many famous US experts came to Türkiye and gave conferences, emphasising Türkiye's role in the region and the importance of the threats arising from the USSR for Türkiye. They even argued that the Armenian terrorism, which increased during this period, was a part of the USSR's efforts to detach Eastern Anatolia from Türkiye. Before 12 September, the Ecevit and Demirel governments did not look favourably upon the US demands regarding the facilities to be provided to the Agile Force and the permissions to use them. After 12 September, the US increased its pressure, but this time the military government refused to allow the direct use of bases in Türkiye by the Agile Force. Kenan Evren stated that if NATO member states took a joint decision to intervene in the Middle East, Türkiye would abide by it, but would not take such a role on its own (Özcan, 1999, p. 23).

Despite these statements, the military administration accepted the acquisition of storage and facilities by the Agile Force under certain conditions, and the matter was settled in the Memorandum of Understanding of 1982. According to the agreement, in addition to the 10 airports to be modernised in Türkiye, two more were to be built in Muş and Batman. With regard to the airports, it was agreed that they would be limited to the obligations arising from the NATO Treaty, that they would not be used for intervention in a Middle Eastern country outside the NATO area of responsibility, and that they would be prohibited from being used outside their obligations and areas. It was also stipulated that the shipment or storage of supplies, weapons, ammunition, and fuel could only be carried out with the approval of Türkiye, and that air operations from these bases had to be approved by both Türkiye and NATO (and therefore by all NATO member states). These facilities were to play an important role in the US First Gulf Operation in 1991 (Bostanoğlu, 2008, p. 383; Uslu, 2000, p. 379). During the period of the Bülent Ulusu Government, the biggest problem between the USA and Türkiye was the Agile Force issue. The Rapid Deployment Force Project was a strategy designed to stop the USSR's advance in the Middle East. The US made great efforts to convince Türkiye of the project and in this context, a CIA director (William J. Casey) visited Türkiye for the first time in October 1982. In addition, Paul Henze, a member of the National Security Council, gave various conferences in Türkiye and talked about Türkiye's importance in the region. Henze also claimed that the reason for the increasing Armenian terrorism

during this period was the USSR's efforts to separate Eastern Anatolia from Türkiye. The US wanted to implement the Agile Force Project in Türkiye, which put Türkiye in a very difficult situation. Since Türkiye did not want to spoil its economic agreements and good relations with Middle Eastern countries, it did not support the US Agile Force project (Gönlübol et al., 1987, p. 589).

The Wohlstetter Doctrine, which was presented to the US Department of Defence in the form of a report at this time, proposed the creation of an Islamic belt from Türkiye to Pakistan in order to prevent the USSR from taking advantage of the crisis in the Gulf, and stated that this belt should be encouraged to develop relations with each other and with China. The US encouraged this initiative and thus Turkish-American relations entered a process of rapprochement and improvement (Beriş & Gürkan, 2002, p. 8). The events during the Cuban Crisis, the fact that the US missiles stationed in Türkiye were the subject of negotiations between the USSR and the USA, and the fact that Türkiye was not informed about this situation, pushed Türkiye to rethink its foreign policy alternatives. Shortly after this development, the Johnson Letter crisis caused Türkiye to resort to the discourse that Türkiye could be part of a new world (Çakmak, 2010, p. 116). After 1973, the main problem of Turkish foreign policy was the Cyprus issue and the main consequence of this issue was the US response with an arms embargo. Imposed from 5 February 1975, the arms embargo was lifted on 26 September 1978. The overthrow of the Shah by Ayatollah Khomeini in Iran at the beginning of 1979 and the opposition movements that started with the occupation of the American Embassy in Tehran, the USSR's entry into Afghanistan on 27 December 1979, and the outbreak of the Iran-Iraq War in September 1980, which would last for 8 years, pushed the US to give more importance to Türkiye due to its position and to soften its attitude. In the assessments made after these developments, Türkiye was defined as a reliable ally for the US in a region in crisis. After losing Iran, a very important ally in the Middle East, the US was in a difficult situation against the USSR and lifted the embargo on Türkiye in September 1978. Moreover, the worrying developments in Afghanistan were also effective in lifting the embargo (Gözen, 2009, pp. 188-189).

2. Relations with Greece

On 14 August 1974, Greece decided to withdraw from the military wing of NATO on the grounds that NATO did not prevent Türkiye during the Second Cyprus Operation. After Greece's withdrawal, the authority of supervision and control over the Aegean passed to Türkiye. In addition, in July 1974, Türkiye became authorised to authorise flights within a 50-mile radius over the Aegean. Greece, on the other hand, started to make various attempts in 1976 to regain the control system it had lost in the Aegean and wanted to return to the military wing of NATO. Türkiye stated that the areas of control in the Aegean should be redefined before Greece came to NATO. On 6 October 1980, the US Ambassador met with Kenan Evren and stated that it would be extremely dangerous for NATO's South-Eastern wing to become divided. On 17 October 1980, General Rogers came to Ankara and stated that elections would be held in six months and that if the socialist party came to power in Greece, this country would be completely lost. General Rogers managed to convince Evren by giving him "the promise of soldiers" (Gönlübol et al., 1987, p. 603). On 20 October 1980, the NATO Defence and Planning Council approved the return of Greece to the military wing with a decision issued rapidly. This decision, which was taken without consulting the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, caused Türkiye to lose its most important trump card against Greece. The agreement made with the Rogers Plan was a "provisional" agreement, made in a "secret" manner and was not binding in terms of international law. The document, which was referred to as the Rogers Plan in the international relations literature and symbolised Greece's return to the military wing of NATO, was first published in Türkiye in the 11 October 1985 issue of Milliyet newspaper (Milliyet, 1985). The document was subsequently accepted by the Turkish and Greek Governments and approved by the NATO Defence Planning Committee, thus marking Greece's return to the military wing of NATO. According to the four-point provisional arrangement and plan, Greece's return to the military wing of NATO was not intended to affect bilateral problems between Türkiye and

Greece. It was emphasised that this plan, which was intended to strengthen the military and defense capability of the Alliance, was only related to NATO's military activities and would not set an example for future bilateral military agreements. It was also stated in the document that Greece accepted NATO's military committee documents and all documents to which it was a party. It was also stated that Greece would decide whether or not to participate in the matters approved by NATO during the period when Greece was not in the alliance, according to its own will. In the document, it was decided that the air defense system and radar data should be provided to the members of the alliance fully and unrestrictedly and that the members should fulfill their responsibilities. It was also decided that in the command arrangement of NATO operations in the Mediterranean and Black Sea, the Commander-in-Chief of the Allied Forces of Southern Europe and the Commander of the Allied Naval Forces of Southern Europe should meet with their NATO commanders and clarify whether the relevant supervision should be transferred to NATO Subordinate Naval Commander (Oran, 2006, p. 106).

With Greece's return to NATO, it was expected that the problem of airspace control in the Aegean would be solved with the Rogers Plan and a period of détente would begin in Turkish-Greek relations. The control of the airspace in the Aegean passed back to Greece. With the Pan-Hellenic Socialist Party (PASOK) coming to power in Greece, a tense period was entered in Turkish-Greek relations. The 12 September Administration's decision to accept Greece's return to NATO with the Rogers Plan can be considered as a move that weakened Türkiye's hand in its foreign policy. Following the Rogers Plan, negotiations on the Aegean command area started on 3 December 1980 in Athens. On 16 March 1981, the Secretaries General of the Turkish and Greek Foreign Ministries met in Ankara. Russos, the head of the Greek delegation, stated: "We have come here not only to talk but also to achieve something," while Kamuran Gürün, the head of the Turkish delegation, said: "I am happy to express our hope for a solution to all the problems between our countries and our conviction that positive steps towards a solution will be taken under your general secretariat" (Çağiran, 2008, pp. 740-741).

After PASOK came to power in Greece, relations between the two countries came to a standstill. Although there was a positive atmosphere with Greece on NATO, the improvement of relations was not as easy as it was thought. The Cyprus problem, the territorial waters in the Aegean, the FIR Line (Flight Information Region), and the demilitarisation of the islands have been difficult issues for the two countries to overcome. Türkiye and Greece came face to face with the Cyprus problem for the first time in the mid-1950s, along with the solution of the problems left over from the Lausanne Peace Treaty. The Cyprus problem has been one of the most important problems between Greece and Türkiye for many years. On 16 August 1960, the establishment of the Republic of Cyprus was accepted with the Treaties of Guarantee and Alliance signed between the parties (Milliyet, 1960, p. 1). Considering the events that took place until 1974, it was observed that the Constitution of the Republic of Cyprus gradually deviated from its main purpose. The Enosis efforts of the Greeks continued unabated and for this reason, the activities of EOKA intensified between 1960-1974 in order to realise Enosis (Oran, 2006., p. 107).

According to the London and Zurich Treaties, the states guaranteeing the independence, territorial integrity, and constitutional order of the Republic of Cyprus were responsible for acting against any attempt to change the status quo and for restoring order. According to the relevant treaties, the guarantor states were Türkiye, Greece, and the United Kingdom. Leaving aside the international law dimension of the issue, the Enosis supporters, who actually acted on the island, started to take actions in line with their ideals of intimidating the Turks and annexing Cyprus to Greece. In the face of increasing pressure and violence against the Turks, the Turkish Government of the period, unable to find the support of the UK for the solution it expected, decided to make two separate landings in 1974 in order to establish peace on the island, and after the operations, the Enosis plan in Cyprus was collapsed and the freedom and right to life of the Turks was ensured (Denктаş, 2000, pp. 387-388). On 13 February 1975, the Turkish Cypriot Federated State of Cyprus (TFFC) was declared and the declaration of the TFFC was

condemned by the UN Security Council resolution and it was foreseen that the two communities would continue negotiations on the basis of equality. In mid-1980, the Cyprus problem was tried to be solved through negotiations by the rulers of the two countries. Türkiye accepted bi-communal and bi-zonal administration in Cyprus. Although Greece accepted bi-communal Cyprus, it did not accept the issue of bi-zonal Cyprus. The Papandreou government claimed that this was an international issue and should be resolved by the UN and not by NATO. 1981 was an election year for the Turkish community living in Cyprus. In the Turkish Federated State of Northern Cyprus (TCFN), the presidency of Rauf Denktaş since 1976 was subjected to many criticisms by his own people. These criticisms are mainly related to the economic dependence of the TCFD on Türkiye and the failure of the Turks sent to Cyprus from Türkiye to adapt to the region. In the June 1981 general elections, no single party in Cyprus was able to win a majority of votes and the opposition parties resorted to a coalition. However, the Turkish Foreign Minister of the period, İlder Türkmen, prevented the formation of the government by stating that Türkiye was against this coalition. On the Greek Cypriot side, Spiros Kyprianus was elected as President in the elections held on 13 February 1983. The Turkish Cypriot community, exercising its right to self-determination, declared the establishment of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC) on 15 November 1983 as a result of the unanimous vote of the KTFD Assembly. Türkiye was the first country to recognise the TRNC; it emphasised that the Turkish Cypriot people had the right to self-determination and that this right could not be abolished in any way (Soysal, 2000, pp. 467-468; Aramoğlu, 2007, p. 843; Sönmezoğlu, 2000, p. 81).

Upon the declaration of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC), President Kenan Evren stated in his speech at the Turkish Grand National Assembly that, “The negative attitude of the Greek Government was effective in the establishment of the TRNC. Although we were unaware of the establishment of the TRNC, Türkiye will not withhold its support to its cognates. Türkiye supports the unification of both sides under the roof of a federation on equal terms. Türkiye appealed to the world to gain the support of the world public opinion and to ensure the legitimacy of the baby homeland. However, the establishment of the TRNC was met with reaction by Greece and the UN. Greek Prime Minister Papandreou stated that this decision was unacceptable and that the Greek Government would not remain unresponsive, while the US wanted this decision to be reversed. In Türkiye, the Council of Ministers decided to recognise the TRNC by the Republic of Türkiye and Foreign Minister İlder Türkmen stated: ‘From now on, we should turn our attention to efforts for a peaceful settlement. We hope that all relevant governments will assist in this endeavour. As always, Türkiye will continue to support the UN Secretary General’s good offices mission. The economic aid we have provided to the CTFD before will continue this time to the TRNC. TRNC is not the only country receiving aid from foreign countries. We wish a happy future to our Cypriot compatriots’” (Cumhuriyet, 1983, p. 1; Son Havadis, 1983, pp. 1-7). The world greeted the independence of Cyprus with great surprise. The USA stated, “We do not recognise it. No one should recognise this administration,” while the UK condemned the decision and stated, “The only legitimate power is the Greek Cypriot administration” (Tayyar Arı, 1995, p. 53).

The issue of territorial waters, which was another problem with Greece, came to the agenda again during the period of the Bülent Ulusu Government. Territorial waters are defined as the sea area surrounding the land territory of the coastal state and over which they exercise sovereign rights. In 1936, Greece increased the width of its territorial waters to 6 miles, without prejudice to the provisions in force which, in some special cases, determine the width of the territorial waters more or less than 6 miles, while Türkiye did not raise a voice (Çoban, 2008, p. 14). This was one reason for the friendly relations between the two countries in the 1930s. On 15 May 1964, when there was a tense atmosphere due to Cyprus, Türkiye increased its territorial waters to 6 miles with the Law No. 476 on Territorial Waters based on the principle of reciprocity. This was also confirmed by the Decree Law No. 187 of 29

September 1973, which recognised that this width could be increased by a Presidential Decree upon the proposal of the Council of Ministers (Ertürk, 2007, p. 107).

Türkiye started to apply 6 miles in the Aegean Sea only after 1964, and Turkish territorial waters had only reached 7.1 percent of the Aegean Sea. Andreas Papandreou, who came to power in 1981, began discussing increasing Greece's territorial waters to 12 miles. Although Greece enjoyed sovereign rights on a 6-mile wide maritime boundary, it started to express its intention to increase its territorial waters to 12 miles as official policy. If Greece increased its territorial waters to 12 miles, it would turn the Aegean, which includes nearly three thousand islands, large and small, extending to the Turkish coast, into a Greek lake. This would increase the area over which Greece could exercise its sovereign rights in the Aegean from 35 percent to 63.9 percent. Consequently, Türkiye's maritime access to the Mediterranean via the Aegean would have to be provided through Greek territorial waters. Türkiye notified Athens that it would not accept this and declared that if Greece increased its territorial waters to 12 miles, Türkiye would consider it an act of war, i.e., "casus belli" (Yücel, 2010, p. 93). Following the signing of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) in 1982, Türkiye, although not a party to UNCLOS, determined its territorial waters as 6 miles with the new Law No. 2674 on Territorial Waters enacted on 20 May 1982. While Turkish territorial waters increased to 12 miles in the Black Sea and the Mediterranean, a width of 6 miles was maintained in the Aegean (Gönlübol, 1987, p. 604).

In September 1983, Greece proposed the establishment of a NATO base on Limni Island. Turkish Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Akıman stated, "The issue of the inclusion of Limni Island in this NATO exercise is currently being examined by the NATO Council. It has not yet been clarified. However, I would like to state that it is unthinkable for us to accept the inclusion of Limni Island in the said exercise due to its non-weaponised status regulated by international agreements (Treaty of Lausanne)" (Çağiran, 2008, pp. 698-700). The issue of demilitarisation of the Aegean islands was another issue during the Uluşu Government. The Treaty of Lausanne stipulated that some islands ceded to Greece should not be armed by this state. Greece did not comply with this rule and sought to arm the islands from the beginning of the 1980s. After the 1974 Cyprus crisis and in the 1980s, Greece started to openly declare and defend the re-armament of Limni and other islands. Papandreou's statements on this matter were supported by the UN Conference on the Law of the Sea in 1982. According to international law, the height of the national airspace over the islands could only be the width of the territorial waters. Therefore, the height of the Greek national airspace over the Aegean Islands could not exceed 6 miles (Son Havadis, 1983, p. 1).

As a result, "the current practice of determining the territorial waters of Türkiye and Greece in the Aegean as 6 nautical miles still continues and Türkiye continues to defend its arguments against the Greek theses on the international platform, but Greece's full membership to the EU indicates that it is unlikely that the problem will remain only between the two countries in the near future" (Sönmezoğlu, 2000, p. 81). Another important problem between Türkiye and Greece was the FIR Line. According to the 1944 Chicago Convention, the boundary of a country's territorial waters and the width of its national airspace must be the same. However, Greece began using the airspace boundary as 10 miles, exceeding the 6-mile limit before the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea. The issue of the FIR Line continued to be an unresolved problem between the two countries. FIR (Flight Information Region) responsibility over the Aegean was agreed upon at an ICAO meeting in 1952, with air traffic west of the Turkish-Greek territorial waters line falling under the jurisdiction of the Athens FIR, and east of this line under the Istanbul FIR. This decision was taken to prevent Greek aircraft flying to the Greek Islands from passing through the Turkish control zone every time. This line continued to be applied until 1974 without causing problems. During the 1974 Cyprus Peace Operation, Türkiye established a new FIR Line for security reasons and announced it to the world with NATOM No. 714 issued on 6 August 1974,

requesting information about aircraft heading towards Türkiye within 50 miles of its shores. Greece responded with NATOM Nos. 1066 and 1252, declaring the Aegean Sea as a dangerous zone and closing the region to flights, declaring the air routes to Türkiye unsafe due to conflicting control and stating it could no longer be responsible for security measures. While negotiations on the issue failed to reach a solution until 1980, Türkiye announced in 1980 that it was terminating NATOM No. 714, Greece withdrew its NATOMs, and the area was reopened to traffic. However, the dispute continues. In particular, the disagreement on whether military aircraft should provide flight information to the centre when travelling to FIR zones led to the decision that all military aircraft within the Athens FIR area of responsibility must submit their flight plans. Türkiye does not provide flight information for military aircraft, arguing it is contrary to international agreements, but reports the flight information of civilian aircraft to Athens. Due to the FIR line arrangement in the Aegean, Greece intercepts flights for which flight information is not given before the exercises. Türkiye maintains that it has as much right as Greece to carry out such procedures (Erdoğan, 1995, p. 32).

Another problem with Greece during this period was the issue of Western Thrace Turks. Türkiye guaranteed the rights of Western Thrace Turks with the Treaty of Lausanne. In the post-1980 period, especially after Papandreou came to power, Greece's pressure on Greek citizens of Turkish origin in Western Thrace increased. With the policies it pursued, Greece committed injustices to the Turks living in the region and forced them to migrate. While Greece's sanctions on this issue continued, in March 1982, about a hundred Muslim-Turks in Western Thrace started a demonstration in Xanthi. The dispute arose from the confiscation of the lands of the Western Thrace Turks by the state following a land issue. As a reaction, Türkiye decided that Greek nationals could not transfer their property in Türkiye, which had been frozen by the 1964 Decree, but this decision was cancelled before it became law (Gönlübol, 1987, p. 604; Toprak, 2013, p. 47; Oran, 2006, p. 106).

3. Relations with the EEC

On 12 September 1980, with the military takeover of the government, Türkiye entered a problematic period in its relations with Europe. In 1980, one of the two important developments that led to radical changes in Türkiye-European Economic Community (EEC) relations was the military coup of 12 September 1980 and the other was the Greek factor. Türkiye-EEC relations were interrupted for a long period with the military coup of 12 September 1980 (Bilici, 2004, pp. 80-81).

Before the 12 September intervention, the minority government of the EP had the intention to revive Türkiye's relations with the EEC and even to apply for early full membership. However, after 12 September, the deterioration of Türkiye's relations with Europe, as seen in the Council of Europe, had an impact on the EEC as well. The EEC countries, which were already worried about being in a difficult situation in case of Türkiye's early application for full membership, were relieved by the stagnation in relations after 12 September. Being aware of the atmosphere in Europe, Türkiye did not take any new initiative on the EEC issue. The imposition of visa requirements for Turkish citizens by some European countries had a negative impact on relations with the EEC. The issue of free movement, which was of great importance for Türkiye and of equal concern for the EEC, became a more difficult problem to solve. On the other hand, the early accession of Greece to the EEC on 1 January 1981 could be considered as a new negative development for Türkiye. Because Greece had gained an advantageous position in terms of the export of agricultural products compared to Türkiye and a strong position in the EEC against Ankara (Toprak, 2013, p. 47).

In countries such as the Netherlands, Belgium, France, Luxembourg, and the Federal Republic of Germany, visas were introduced for Turkish citizens who wanted to go abroad for political asylum, fleeing the practices of the 12 September Administration. On 1 January 1981, when Greece was accepted as a full member of the Community, Türkiye psychologically lagged behind Greece and was left in a

difficult economic and political situation. Türkiye announced at the Association Council meeting held in Brussels on 5 June 1981 that it would apply for full membership after the return to democracy in the country, and the EEC responded positively to this development. However, the EEC's approach towards Türkiye started to harden due to the repression targeting trade unions, political parties, and civil society organisations, which started to intensify in Türkiye as of the second half of 1981. In addition, the hardening of Athens' attitude towards Ankara after PASOK came to power in Greece, the lobbying activities of refugees seeking political asylum from Türkiye to Europe, the 12 September Administration's efforts to have good relations with Arab countries, and the fact that Israel and the Jewish lobby in Europe, which had started to distance themselves from Türkiye due to this effort, did not support Türkiye in different actions of the EEC, further negatively affected the relations between the EEC and Türkiye. The unfavorable atmosphere in the political sphere was also reflected on the economy, and the EEC started to impose restrictions on cotton yarn imports starting from the end of 1981, accusing Türkiye of dumping. In 1982, restrictions on all textile export products of Türkiye were added to these restrictions and new quotas were introduced (Demiriz, 2011, p. 83; Oran, 2021, pp. 83-88).

Generally speaking, after the 12 September intervention, the EEC preferred to follow the developments in Türkiye. Due to the reluctant and slow transition to democracy by the military administration, the repressive atmosphere in the country, the closure of all political parties and the confiscation of their assets, and the rejection of new political parties on the grounds that they were deemed unsuitable by the 12 September Administration, the EEC decided to freeze its relations with Türkiye on 22 January 1982 (Bilici, 2004, pp. 80-81).

Although Sweden, Norway, Denmark, the Netherlands, and France complained to the European Council of Human Rights against Türkiye in July 1982, relations with the EEC continued at a certain level. In fact, the EEC granted various loans to Türkiye during this period and did not cause any difficulties in the postponement of unpaid loans. The Financing Agreement and the Implementation Protocol of the Financing Agreement signed between Türkiye, the EEC, and the European Investment Bank were ratified (Gönlübol, 1987, p. 605; Oran, 2006, p. 195).

On 10 April, the European Parliament adopted a resolution condemning the developments in Türkiye in very strong language. Prime Minister Bülent Ulusu said the following on this issue: "The wings to which the parliamentarians who voted against Türkiye belong are actually representatives of a small group who wish the atmosphere in Türkiye before 12 September to continue and who desire the tensions that will arise from this atmosphere. This intention is clearly evident in the preamble of the resolution, where it is claimed that the regime-sponsored policy of intimidation is continuing in Türkiye, and in the conclusion, where it is stated that the Turkish people's struggle for the restoration of democratic institutions such as parliament, political parties, and trade unions is supported" (Cumhuriyet, 1981, p. 1; Milliyet, 1981, p. 6; Oran, 2006, p. 106).

Starting from 10 April until the end of May, Türkiye remained on the European agenda for a month. The views of the European political and economic institutions towards Türkiye and the expectations of the Turkish administration from Europe were observed during this period. Hans De Koster, President of the Council Assembly, prepared a report on his impressions in Ankara. In the report, De Koster put forward the following views: "It would be wrong to suspend Türkiye's membership of the Council of Europe. This membership should continue. The membership of Turkish parliamentarians in the Council should also continue and a formula for this should be found" (De Koster Report, 1982).

De Koster's 24-page report began with the President of the Assembly describing his contacts in Türkiye. He stated that "a large part of the population is satisfied with the intervention of 12 September. Not because they are in favor of a military dictatorship, but because they see that this intervention was

the only way. The army saved the country from chaos and, above all, built internal security. Kenan Evren, a man of great authority and humility, is extremely popular. Diplomatic observers in Ankara have no doubt that if a presidential election were held, Evren would win a large majority. The Turks are aware of their geopolitical situation and the dangers inherent in the common borders with the Soviet Union and Iran. In fact, the only democratic country with which Türkiye shares a common border is Greece. I must point out that the negotiations between Türkiye and Greece on the Aegean and Cyprus issues since the beginning of 1981 have been characterised by a hopeful situation on both sides. Naturally, the Turks are aware of the importance of their geographical importance for the West. I would not go so far as to say that Europeanisation is fully entrenched in all the territories of the Turks. There is an impression that Kemalism is no more than entrenched among the army and the intelligentsia. European public opinion has always been an important factor in Türkiye. Although democracy is not as it has always been in Türkiye, the Turkish people are used to and committed to democratic methods. If the crisis in the Turkish economy continues, this will not help the return to democracy. If economic aid to Türkiye were to be cut because of the current political situation, this would bring renewed turmoil to the country and lead to a permanent dictatorship and Türkiye's disengagement from Europe. Political parties will not be allowed to engage in political activity until a 'New Law on Parties' is drafted. Whilst this is a matter of concern for the Council of Europe, it is expected that current party leaders will not be excluded from the debate, provided that they speak in private" (De Koster Report, 1982). The report is the most favorable so far for Türkiye. It is particularly significant that De Koster, who is against the expulsion of Türkiye from the Council and in favor of the continuation of Turkish members in the Council, has expressed these views in the form of clear recommendations.

At its meeting on 29 April, the Presidium of the Council of Europe reached a consensus on Türkiye's continued membership and the extension of the mandate of its members (Milliyet, 30 April 1981, p. 6). In his speech to the members of the Council, De Koster stated that he believed that the TAF was not permanent. The Bureau agreed on the continuation of Türkiye's membership of the Council and the extension of the mandate of Turkish parliamentarians and decided to include this view in De Koster's "Annual Report" to the Assembly on 11 May (Milliyet, 16 May 1981, p. 1). According to the resolution adopted by the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe in Strasbourg, Türkiye's membership will continue at least until September. During this period, delegations would again visit Türkiye and reports would be prepared. If the Council of Europe did not find Türkiye's steps towards a return to democracy credible, the issue would be discussed again in September and the question of Türkiye's membership would be raised again (Milliyet, 4 October 1981, p. 9).

At its meeting on 3 October, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe discussed the postponement of the final decision on Türkiye's membership of the Council until January. Steiner presented his report and draft resolution at the meeting. Steiner said that Türkiye's continued membership of the Council of Europe depended on its return to a pluralist democracy. He stated that they would analyse the situation in detail during their visit to Türkiye in December and that a conclusion would be reached in January (Milliyet, 8 December 1981, p. 1).

Responding to a journalist's question "Can you give a date for the transition from the Transition Period to democracy?", Prime Minister Ulusu said, "Before coming to the date of the Transition Period, it is necessary to dwell on the reasons for the current situation. In Türkiye, enough weapons were seized to equip two armies, and these weapons were smuggled into the country from neighboring countries. Today Türkiye is facing an undeclared war in terms of disintegration. This situation is not understood by the Europeans. Because they themselves do not have such a situation, but it may happen to them. Türkiye is explaining these to its European friends. Those who understand will understand, those who do not will not understand. I ask, where did these weapons come from? Which centers managed the operation? After 6 months, let's transition to democracy and let them devour Türkiye? There will be a

transition to a parliamentary system, and this will be because the Turkish people want it. But it will be reinforced in such a way that it will not return to the day of 12 September” (Milliyet, 16 May 1981, p. 1).

The EEC Council had asked Türkiye for a timetable for the transition to democracy. In response to this, Türkiye submitted a plan for return to democracy to the European Parliament in December 1981, which was deemed inadequate. The European Parliament, with the resolution adopted on 22 January 1982, requested the Commission and the Council to suspend relations until the restoration of fundamental freedoms and democracy (Milliyet, 26 January 1982, p. 9). Steiner, who traveled to Türkiye with a 22-member European delegation, said in his report: “Our visit to Türkiye on 8-14 January 1982 was extremely useful and important in every respect. In Türkiye we had contact with government officials, leaders of defunct political parties, trade unionists, lawyers and scientists. The present situation in Türkiye is incompatible with the status of the Council of Europe. The Council of Europe has to take a decision of a political nature. The situation in Türkiye raises concerns on two counts. These are the question of Human Rights and the timetable for the return to democracy. For these reasons, the decision of the Consultative Assembly of the Council of Europe should on the one hand encourage a return to democracy and on the other hand remind Türkiye of its Human Rights. In the return to democracy calendar, the referendum should be held in autumn 1982 and the general elections in autumn 1983 and spring 1984 at the latest. will be done. However, we need to be sure of this. There will be another delegation visit to Türkiye in the autumn” (Ahmet Gökdere, 1989, p. 185).

Türkiye considered the accusatory and condemnatory articles in the Steiner Report as interference in Türkiye's internal affairs. Evren, who had seen the report of the delegation, said: “An adverse decision would lead Türkiye to shift to other blocs or groups.” Evren stated that “Türkiye would return to democracy not because foreign countries wanted it to, but because the Turkish people wanted it to.” Against all objections, the Council of Europe decided not to expel Türkiye from the Council. The motions for Türkiye's expulsion from the Council were rejected, and Karasek, Secretary General of the Council of Europe, said: “If Türkiye tries to withdraw with a sudden nervousness, it would be harmful both for us and for itself” (Milliyet, 26 January 1982, p. 9). The 6 November general elections and the inclusion in the programmes of the participating and non-participating political parties of the principle that “Türkiye should become a full member of the EEC, or at least that relations should be revived and restored to a balanced and normal level” had led to different interpretations among the representatives of the Community members in Ankara. Some of them argued that “it could be realised next year if the new elected government takes the initiative to revitalise relations quickly and well” (Ahmet Gökdere, 1989, p. 185). According to circles and experts close to the Turkish government, “The initiative to give a new impetus to the partnership practices, which have been gradually deteriorating and paralysed since the last 3 years, is mostly in Türkiye's hands. The post-election government should start high-level visits without wasting time” (Milliyet, 26 January 1982, p. 9).

Türkiye applied for membership on 14 April 1987, without waiting for the completion of the periods stipulated in the Ankara Agreement. The Commission issued its opinion on this application on 18 December 1989 and stated that the Community could not accept a new member until it had completed its internal integration. Furthermore, it stated that Türkiye, while being eligible to join the Community, needed to develop in the economic, social, and political fields. Therefore, it was suggested that no date should be set for the opening of membership negotiations and that relations should be developed within the framework of the Association Agreement (Ahmet Gökdere, 1989, p. 185).

Conclusion

Between 1970 and 1980, twelve governments were formed in Türkiye, which did not last long. During this period, Türkiye was in a deadlock on many issues such as political instability, social and

economic crisis, labour strikes, student incidents and terrorism. While Türkiye was dealing with chaos at home, it also had to follow the agenda on issues concerning foreign policy. On 12 September 1980, following the military coup d'état, the 44th government of Türkiye was formed under the prime ministership of Bülent Ulusu. Relations between the US and Türkiye were strained in the 1970s due to the poppy cultivation, the Cyprus issue and the spread of leftist movements in Türkiye. After the 1980 Military Coup, relations normalised under the Ulusu Government. Firstly, a Defence and Cooperation Agreement was signed with the USA in early 1980. Afterwards, it was agreed that the US would use the NATO bases in Türkiye under certain conditions. The US considered Türkiye, one of its most important allies on the south-eastern flank of NATO, as a counterweight to the expansionist tendencies of the USSR. Türkiye was defined as a reliable ally for the US in a crisis region.

The USA demanded the rights to use the bases in Türkiye to carry out U2 flights against the USSR and an agreement was reached to a great extent. Although the USA, which wanted to ensure security against the USSR and from its own perspective in the Middle East, tried to deploy the 'Agile Force' consisting of approximately two hundred thousand people to Türkiye, the 12 September Regime led by the National Security Council in Türkiye did not approve this request. When Türkiye's relations with the EEC were interrupted, Türkiye shifted its foreign policy axis of gravity to the development of relations with the USA and prioritised security in its relations.

The previous unilateral aid policy has been replaced by a bilateral policy and Türkiye has evolved into a trading state rather than a mere recipient of aid from the US. The relations between Türkiye and Greece were among the issues that occupied the agenda the most during this period. The problems between Türkiye and Greece have been continuing since the early years of the Republic. The Cyprus issue, which has been going on for many years, gained a different dimension with the establishment of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus in this period and strained the relations between the two countries. Problems were experienced with Greece in this period not only on the Cyprus issue, but also on many other issues such as the demilitarisation of the Aegean islands, the FIR Line and the inability to determine the length of territorial waters. Greece was able to become a member of NATO's military wing again when the plan determined by the US General Rogers was accepted by the National Security Council (MGK) led by Kenan Evren without the knowledge of the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs in order for Greece, which had left the military wing of the alliance on the grounds that NATO had not prevented the Cyprus Peace Operation, to regain its former status. This development not only enabled Greece to regain the air surveillance authority in the Aegean, which had been given to Türkiye, but also weakened the Turkish government's hand against Greece.

The coup d'état government that ruled the country between 1980-1983 interrupted Türkiye's improving relations with European states. At a time when Türkiye was striving for full membership to the EEC, the military coup of 12 September and the subsequent military regime led by the National Security Council interrupted Türkiye-EEC relations. The restriction of democracy and demilitarisation in Türkiye and the spread of repression in the country hampered the EEC's political and economic support for Türkiye. On the other hand, Greece's accession to the EEC in 1981 paved the way for Greece to gain a political and economic advantage over Türkiye.

During the period of the Ulusu Government, it is observed that in foreign policy, in general, efforts were made to maintain the status quo and to maintain good relations with Western states and organisations. The economic bottleneck in the country was tried to be overcome with the assistance of the USA and European states. On the other hand, Ulusu, who was a statesman with a military background, tried to take an initiative in harmony with the National Security Council while serving as prime minister.

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