Assoc. Prof. Sevilay Z. Aksoy

THE TURKISH STANCE TOWARD THE US REQUESTS FOR THE 2003 IRAQ WAR: A CASE OF NORMS VERSUS INTERESTS?

Abstract

The rejection of the US pleas for the 2003 Iraq War by the Turkish Parliament stands as one of the most controversial, divisive and much-debated foreign policy decisions in the Republican history of Turkey. The pleas of the Bush administration, if fully accepted and executed by Ankara, were of the kind that would make Turkey part of the US-led war coalition. Although the Turkish airspace was opened to the US and British war aircraft and missiles later on, and limited logistical support was provided during the war, the Parliament's decision was a rejection of the US demands, which, though not sufficing to prevent the war itself, disrupted the military plans of the Pentagon, and had significant impact on the relations between Turkey and Iraq as well as between Turkey and the US. The parliament's decision is of paramount importance not only because of its crucial consequences but also because the decision-making process preceding it reveals the intense dilemma that was faced by the Turkish foreign-policy makers vis-à-vis norms versus interests in the implementation, if not formulation, of national interests. The dynamics concerning this dilemma are well represented by the two main logics of action in International Relations (IR): the logic of consequences and the logic of appropriateness. This article examines the Ankara's decision-making process in the run-up to the 2003 Iraq War from the perspectives of those two logics with a particular view to the reasons and circumstances associated with the predominance of either of the logics and the shifts between them.

Sevilay Z. Aksoy

Associate Professor, Faculty of Business, Dept. of International Relations, Dokuz Eylul University

Key words: Logics of action; logic of appropriateness; logic of consequences; 1 March decision; 2003 Iraq War; Turkish foreign policy; Turkey-US relations; Turkey-Iraq relations

ABD'NİN 2003 IRAK SAVAŞI İÇİN İSTEKLERİ KARŞISINDA TÜRKİYE'NİN TUTUMU: NORMLAR-ÇIKARLAR KARŞITLIĞI VAKASI MI?

Öz

2003 Irak Savaşı için ABD'nin taleplerinin Türk Parlamentosu tarafından reddedilmesi Türkiye Cumhuriyet tarihinin en çok tartışmaya yol açmış, ihtilaf çıkarmış ve çok müzakere edilmiş dış politika kararlarından birisidir. Bush yönetiminin talepleri, şayet Ankara tarafından tamamen kabul edilmiş ve uygulanmış olsaydı, Türkiye'yi ABD liderliğindeki savaş koalisyonunun tarafı yapacak nitelikteydi. Türk hava sahası ABD ve Britanya savaş uçaklarına ve füzelerine sonradan açılıp savaş esnasında sınırlı lojistik yardım yapılmış olsa da, Parlamento'nun kararı ABD'nin isteklerinin reddi anlamına geliyordu. Bu karar, savaşı önlemeye yetmese de Pentagon'un askeri planlarını bozdu ve hem Türkiye-ABD ilişkileri hem de Türkiye-Irak ilişkileri üstünde önemli etkisi oldu. Parlamento'nun kararı sadece önemli sonuçlarından ötürü değil aynı zamanda öncesindeki karar-alma sürecinin Türk dış politika yapıcılarının ulusal çıkarların tanımlanmasında olmasa bile uygulanmasında karşılaştıkları norm-çıkar ikilemini ortaya koymasından ötürü de çok önemlidir. Bu ikileme ilişkin dinamikler Uluslararası İlişkiler'in iki ana davranış mantığı tarafından ortaya konmaktadır: sonuç mantığı ve uygunluk mantığı. Bu makale Ankara'nın 2003 Irak Savaşı'na giden dönemde karar-alma mekanizmasını bu iki mantığın bakış açısından, özellikle herhangi birinin ne sebeplerle ve hangi şartlar altında baskın hale geldiği ve yerini diğerine bıraktığı sorularını dikkate alarak incelemektedir.

Anahtar kelimeler: Eylem mantıkları; uygunluk mantığı; sonuç mantığı; 1 Mart kararı; 2003 Irak Savaşı; Türk Dış Politikası; Türkiye-ABD ilişkileri; Türkiye-Irak ilişkileri

الموقـف التركـي تجـاه مطــالب الـولايـات المتحـدة في حـرب العـراق 2003: حــالة من المبــادئ مقـابل المصـالح

ملخص

إن رفض مناشدات الولايات المتحدة لحرب العراق لعام 2003 من قبل البرلمان التركي يمثل واحدة من أكثر قرارات السياسة الخارجية إثارة للجدل والتفرقة والجدل في التاريخ الجمهوري لتركيا. كانت مناشدات إدارة بوش، لو قبلتها أنقرة ونفذتها بالكامل ، من النوع الذي سيجعل تركيا جزءاً من تحالف الحرب الذي تقوده الولايات المتحدة. على الرغم من أن المجال الجوي التركي قد تم فتحه أمام الطائرات الحربية الأمريكية والبريطانية والصواريخ في وقت لاحق، وتم توفير الدعم اللوجستي المحدود خلال الحرب ، إلا أن قرار البرلمان كان رفضًا للمطالب الأمريكية، والتي على الرغم من أنها غير كافية لمنع الحرب نفسها، لكنها تمكنت من تعطيل الخطط العسكرية للبنتاغون ، وكان له تأثير كبير على العلاقات بين تركيا والعراق وكذلك بين تركيا والولايات المتحدة. إن قرار البرلمان له أهمية قصوى ليس فقط بسبب عواقبه الحاسمة، ولكن أيضاً لأن عملية صنع القرار التي سبقته تكشف عن المعضلة الشديدة التي واجهها صانعو السياسة الخارجية الأتراك فيما يتعلق بتقييم المبادىء مقابل المصالح في التنفيذ، وفي تعريف المصالح الوطنية تحديداً. إن ديناميكيات هذه المعضلة ممثلة بشكل جيد من خلال منطقتي العمل الرئيسيتين في العلاقات الدولية (IR): منطق العواقب ومنطق الملائمة. تبحث هذه المقالة في عملية صنع القرار في أنقرة في الفترة التي سبقت حرب العراق عام 2003 من وجهة نظر هذين المنطقتين مع وجهة نظر معينة للأسباب والظروف المرتبطة بهيمنة أي من المنطق والتحولات بينهما.

كلمات مفتاحية: منطق العمل، منطق النتيجة، قرار مؤرخ في 1 مارس، حرب العراق 2003، السياسة الخارجية التركية، العلاقات التركية الأمريكية، العلاقات التركية العراقية

Introduction

In 2002 the US conveyed to Turkey its requests concerning the war it was planning to undertake against Iraq. The requests of the Bush administration, if fully accepted and fulfilled by Ankara, were of the kind that would make Turkey part of the US-led war coalition against the regime in Baghdad. The requests, which were submitted to Ankara as a long detailed list in late 2002, roughly involved the deployment of tens of thousands of US troops on Turkish soil (around 80,000), the opening of several Turkish airports and harbours to US aircraft and navy, the opening of the Turkish airspace to the US warplanes and missiles during the war and other logistics-related requests.[1] Simply put, Turkey's long-standing superpower NATO ally was demanding to open a northern front against Iraq from Turkey by using Turkish land, air and sea territory. For the first time in the Republican history, Turkey was being asked to deploy foreign troops on its territory at an unprecedented scale and for war-making purpose against a neighbouring country. Equally troublesome was the tendency of the Bush administration to intervene in Iraq even in the absence of an authorisation from the Security Council of the United Nations. Ankara eventually found itself in a hard and bitter situation to which it responded by pursuing an active peace diplomacy followed by the conduct of bilateral negotiations with the Americans. At the end of a protracted process that lasted for more than 2 months to the dismay of Washington, the government, accepting most of the US requests, though at a reduced scale, in return of the US acknowledgement and pledge to fulfil Turkey's war-related political, military and economic needs, submitted for approval to the Turkish parliament a bill asking to let the deployment of foreign troops on Turkish territory and to send Turkish troops abroad. However, the Turkish parliament surprised many, particularly the Bush administration, by not approving the government's bill on 1 March 2003. Although the Turkish airspace was opened to the US and British war aircraft and missiles later on, and limited logistical support was provided during the war, the Parliament's decision was a rejection of the US demands, which, though not sufficing to prevent the war itself, disrupted the military plans of the Pentagon and was regarded as having inflicted damage, which some feared would last, on the so-called strategic partnership between the two old NATO allies – any negative rhetoric and/or action towards Turkey from the US for a considerable period of time was blamed by many on the

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[1] For the full list, see Fikret Bilâ, Ankara'da Irak Savaşları: Sivil Darbe Girişimi ve Gizli Belgelerde 1 Mart Tezkeresi (İstanbul: Güncel Yayıncılık, 2007), p. 302.

1 March decision while the Turkish government strove to mend its ties with Washington. The Parliament's rejection of the bill also complicated, among others, the issue of sending Turkish troops to northern Iraq. Although such deployment would be for security-seeking rather than expansionist purposes, the Turkish army quickly lost the support (and thus approval) of Washington for such a move for some time. The Iraq war itself seriously aggravated the issue of security vacuum in northern Iraq in particular and in Iraq in general, complicating Ankara's fight against ethnic separatist terrorism that gained new and complex dimensions over the years. On the other hand, Turkey's overall abstention from the war helped render Ankara an active participant in the economic, and, to a much lesser extent, political reconstruction of post-2003 Iraq, conferring upon it an influence (though not long-lasting in retrospect) which had seemed almost unattainable in the fearsome and stressful atmosphere of March 2003. The abstention also seemed to have facilitated, among others, the development of a new political language and cooperative relations with northern Iraq, which was then hoped that would have an impact on Turkey's relations with its own Kurdish population.

This controversial, divisive and much-debated foreign policy episode of Turkey was subjected to several analyses with a view to explaining and rendering it meaningful from different perspectives: e.g. the conditions and the extent of the influence of Turkish parliament on the historical 1 March decision;[2] the impact of identity politics and historical narratives on the shaping of Turkey's interests on Iraq;[3] the implications of the 1 March decision for Turkish democracy and foreign relations;[4] and the detailed journalistic[5] and bureaucratic[6] accounts of the decision-making process of the Turkey's 2003 policy on Iraq. Implicit in most of those analyses is the emphasis on the dilemma that the Turkish decision-makers found themselves vis-à-vis norms versus interests in the formulation and implementation

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[2] Baris Kesgin and Juliet Kaarbo, "When and How Parliaments Influence Foreign Policy: The Case of Turkey's Iraq Decision", International Studies Perspectives, Vol. 11, No. 1, 2010, pp. 19-36; Zeynep Taydaş and Özgür Özdamar, "A Divided Government, an Ideological Parliament, and an Insecure Leader: Turkey's Indecision about Joining the Iraq War", Social Science Quarterly, Vol. 94, No. 1, 2013, pp. 217-241.

[3] Meliha Benli Altunışık, "Turkey's Iraq Policy: The War and Beyond", Journal of Contemporary European Studies, Vol. 14, No. 2, 2006, pp. 183-196; Şaban Kardaş, "Turkey and the Iraqi Crisis: JDP between Identity and Interest", in M. Hakan Yavuz (ed.), The Emergence of a New Turkey: Democracy and the AK Parti (Salt Lake City: The University of Utah Press, 2006), pp. 306-330.

[4] Christopher Brewin, "Turkey: Democratic Legitimacy", in Alex Danchev and John MacMillan (eds.), The Iraq War and Democratic Politics (London: Routledge, 2005), pp. 93-109.

[5] Bilâ, Ankara'da Irak Savaşları, and Murat Yetkin, Tezkere: Irak Krizinin Gerçek Öyküsü (İstanbul: Remzi Kitabevi, 2004).

[6] Deniz Bölükbaşı, 1 Mart Vakası: Irak Tezkeresi ve Sonrası (İstanbul: Doğan Kitap, 2008).

of their position. From the perspective of International Relations (IR) theory, this dilemma translates into the two predominant and competing logics of action that are often referred to in the discipline to delineate the boundaries of and account for state behaviour, i.e. the logic of (expected) consequences and the logic of appropriateness. The former logic, embodying a utility-maximising approach and associated mainly with the so-called rational theories of IR such as neo-realism, dictates agents to pursue their self-interest by making use of all the available means at their disposal and at the expense of others if that is necessary. The logic of appropriateness, on the other hand, which is often juxtaposed against the instrumental logic and associated with the so-called reflexive theories such as constructivism and normative theory, demands the agent to act in line with the intersubjectively constituted (social, legal or ethical) norms and conventions, and to abstain from the whims of its selfish desires.

The Turkish government's behaviour during the roughly four months period leading up to 1 March 2003 presents an intriguing case study as far as these two logics are concerned. Many inside and outside Turkey, regardless of whether they were critical of or happy with the way the Turkish government handled the US requests, depicted the government's behaviour as hesitant and indeterminate. The government was observed as vacillating between apparently contradicting positions: seeking to prevent the war that it largely regarded illegal and illegitimate while simultaneously leaving the door open to the requests of its NATO ally, and eventually accepting them, though at a reduced scale.[7] The pursuit of an active peace diplomacy in support of the disarmament of Iraq through the UN diplomacy route representing the former position can be read as Turkey's will to protect and uphold the two fundamental and related norms of the international community, namely sovereignty and the norm regulating the use of force. As will be explained below, the Turkish government clung to this policy as long as it could, certainly longer than the Bush administration and the hawkish media wished for. And this policy reflects an ethic of responsibility on the part of decision-makers with a view to protecting the long-term interests of community – a responsibility which the Turkish government felt to owe to several communities (Turkish, Iraqi and other

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[7] Beyond the Turkish perception, there is a broad consensus that the US invasion of Iraq was against both the formal norms of international law and the intersubjective normative understandings of the international community concerning the legitimate use of force. See, e.g., Vaughn P. Shannon and Jonathan W. Keller, "Leadership style and international norm violation: The case of the Iraq war", Foreign Policy Analysis, Vol. 3, No. 1, 2007, pp. 86-88.

regional) emanating from a mix of order- and justice-related concerns. On the other hand, the government increasingly got involved in intense negotiations with the Americans with a view to agreeing upon the terms of collaboration in case the war broke out. As the possibility of preventing the war declined, the protection of the presumed Turkish national interests (primarily the protection of the territorial boundaries of Turkish sovereignty) in the context of a war against Iraq got ascendance, and their defence necessitated bypassing and even violating the international norm regulating the use of force. Thus, during the whole period in question one sees the deployment of a complex combination of international and domestic logics of appropriateness on the one hand and a consequential/instrumental logic on the other by the policy makers. The situation the Turkish foreign policy makers found themselves in before the war can be described as one of a weaker party being forced to cooperate with a superior power resolutely bent on pursuing its national security objectives to the detriment of international law and hence the long-term interests of the international community.[8] The US administration of the time is aptly described by Richard Price as "a regime whose most powerful members would seem to exemplify – hardly uniquely, though prominently – the instrumental monological actor par excellence, impervious to learning and redefining their interests and identities in the light of dialogue and engagement (not to mention evidence), instead constantly deploying every conceivable means at their disposal to reinforce the pursuit of their already decided-upon goals".[9] The Turkish case study is intriguing in as much as it shows, to borrow from Price, the limits *and* possibility of pursuing the logic of appropriateness within the context of a highly unequal power relationship that was also marked by the antinomy of a long-standing alliance with increasingly diverging interests.

The next section of the article further clarifies these two logics of IR. Then a succinct explanation of the political, economic and security aspects of the Turkish environment is given in order to help contextualize the main analysis that follows it. Two periods roughly corresponding to the Turkish foreign-policy making on the

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[8] For a concise explanation of those objectives that were a combination of instrumental interests and ideology, and the extent to which they were advanced by the 2003 Iraq War, see F. Gregory Gause III, "The Iraq War and American National Security Interests in the Middle East", in John S. Duffield and Peter J. Dombrowski (eds.), Balance Sheet: The Iraq War and U.S. National Security (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009), pp. 68-86. For the intra-(neo)conservative debate on the issue, see Gary Rosen (ed.), The Right War? The Conservative Debate on Iraq (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

[9] Richard Price, "Moral limit and possibility in world politics", in Richard M. Price (ed.), Moral Limit and Possibility in World Politics (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), p. 24.

pre-war Iraqi crisis are analyzed in terms of the logics concerned with a view to revealing the reasons and circumstances associated with the predominance of either of the logics and the shifts between them.

The logics of (expected) consequences and appropriateness: interests versus norms

In the IR literature two logics of action, having been originally elaborated by the leading students of the Carnegie School,[10] are generally deployed to render meaningful the behaviour of states: the logics of expected consequences (LoC) and of appropriateness (LoA). These logics "span the entire space of meaningful action" of (imperfectly) rational actors in that "[a]ction without either logic is random and appears senseless..., while action shaped by the logics takes on direction and meaning."[11] While one of the logics predominantly affects the course of action at one time, it may later be replaced by the other, and they often co-exist and characterize the same action.[12] The questions concerning the relationship between them, particularly the shifts between them and within each are amongst the most intriguing in social sciences. The logic of consequences, also known as the logic of instrumentality, involves "deliberate consideration of alternatives, assessment of their outcomes and preference-driven choices. Its key feature is the presence of calculated choice between alternatives", and hence its association with analysis-based action.[13] Actors are assumed to act by taking into account the probable consequences of their action with a view to maximising their interests (defined a priori) and minimising harms. Acting as such confers upon them 'rational' status, though inevitably a bounded one as the information-processing required for that analysis and the resulting analysis are bound to be limited and thus imperfect.[14] Although, as rightly pointed out by Snidal, rationality as a meta-theory does not specify the content of interests, goals and values, and is neutral on the identity of actors,[15] its entry into IR through materialist theories such as neo-realism and neo-liberalism

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[10] Most notably the works of Herbert Simon and James G. March on bounded rationality and decision-making. For a list of those works, please see Martin Schulz, "Logic of Consequences and Logic of Appropriateness", in Mie Augier and David J. Teece (eds.), The Palgrave Encyclopedia of Strategic Management (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), p. 7.

[11] Ibid., p. 2.

[12] Ibid.

[13] Ibid.

[14] Ibid.

[15] Duncan Snidal, "Rational Choice and International Relations" in Walter Carlsnaes, Thomas Risse and Beth A. Simmons (eds.), Handbook of International Relations (London: Sage, 2007), pp. 74-75.

rendered the two almost identical.[16] In terms of those theories, the dominant rational actor is the state, and its interests are of material nature defined mainly in terms of power (usually the triad of military, economic and political power). While pursuing its interests defined as such, the state acts upon the widely accepted motto of 'the ends justify the means'. It is obvious that the selfish pursuit of material interests bears the potential of bringing into conflict of similarly motivated actors in the absence of a higher coordinating, mediating and sanctioning authority. Actually, according to the realist argument, it is the absence of a hierarchical order in the international arena that obliges states to act selfishly. The feelings of fear and suspicion as to the intentions of others compel states to be vigilant and to prepare not to face the worst (annihilation or conquest) by exploiting the opportunities for power reinforcement.

This is, of course, a broad and quite a simplistic picture of the logic of consequences or instrumentality in IR. The realist tradition generally characterized by the LoC is far from a monolithic body, embodying the thoughts of a rich array of philosophers, scholars and statesmen who do not necessarily agree, for instance, on the goals of agent (seeking power as a means or as an end) or on the causes of self-help behaviour (the inherently bad nature of human being or the anarchical nature of international structure). Similarly, they disagree, though not fundamentally, on the role of law and morality in international politics. While the structural variants of realism do not even engage with this subject while explaining state behaviour,[17] the prominent figures of classical realism diverge on the scope, feasibility, effectiveness or desirability of norms and morals in the conduct of foreign policy.[18] However, what underlies more or less all at minimum is the assumption of a self-caring agent (an empire, a kingdom or a state) – an agent who must (or at any rate does) care for its own needs first and foremost by the means it deems fit.

Juxtaposed to this world of selfish pursuit of material interests is "a community of rule followers and role players with distinctive sociocultural ties, cultural connections, intersubjective understandings, and senses of belonging".[19] In the latter

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[16] James Fearon and Alexander Wendt, "Rationalism v. Constructivism: A Skeptical View", in Carlsnaes, Risse and Simmons (eds.), Handbook of International Relations, pp. 58-59.

[17] See, e.g., Kenneth N. Waltz, "Realist Thought and Neorealist Theory", Journal of International Affairs, Vol. 44, No. 1, 1990, pp. 21-37.

[18] See, e.g., Duncan Bell (ed.), Political Thought and International Relations: Variations on a Realist Theme (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), particularly pp. 1-104.

[19] James G. March and Johan P. Olsen, "The Institutional Dynamics and International Political Orders", International Organization, Vol. 52, No. 4, 1998, p. 952.

world, where the predominant logic of behaviour is the LoA, "actions are seen as rule-based".[20] "Actors recognize a situation and connect it to appropriate action consistent with relevant rules." Rules, being "relatively fixed responses to defined situations", has a broad spectrum ranging from roles, habits and experiences to bureaucratic rules, norms, laws and institutions. Accordingly, "automatically following a familiar routine,... conforming to a norm, generously fulfilling an obligation" or "blindly following an order" by actors are all regarded as instances of rule-guided behaviour.[21] As those instances imply, there is far less information-processing in the LoA when compared to the LoC; no or little information processing is used to analyze the consequences, for instance, of membership obligations of an alliance/ partnership or an institution, e.g. no extensive studies are made on the costs and benefits of that alliance or institution. However, when the obligations under consideration are questioned, adjusted, replaced, abandoned, or cautiously fulfilled, then one moves more to a mode that is closer to LoC.[22]

The question of to what extent the different positions represented by these two logics account for practices of foreign policy has been explored with regard to different cases. A number of scholars tend to argue (and agree) that the relationship between the two logics does not need to be conceived of in absolutely exclusivist terms. March and Olsen, for instance, perceiving any political action as "probably involv[ing] elements of each", claim that "[p]olitical actors are constituted both by their interests... and by the rules embedded in their identities and political institutions."[23] Finding out which logic dominates in what kind of situation is the task of researcher. Similarly, in their attempt to bridge the positions of rationalists and constructivists, Wendt and Fearon argue that this is an issue that can be settled by empirical analysis only. For instance, on the issue of motivation for norm-compliance, realists generally argue that states, when they comply with the norms of international law, do so mainly for selfish reasons (i.e. self-interest or coercion), while the constructivist response is that the compliance is out of a belief in their legitimacy.[24] The realist position points to an instrumental reasoning, while the

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[20] Ibid., p. 951. Although its association with rule-based action seem to make LoA sound more virtuous than LoC, March and Olsen later concluded that LoA "may reflect learning of some sort from history, but it does not guarantee technical efficiency or moral acceptability."

[21] Schulz, "Logic of Consequences and Logic of Appropriateness", p. 2.

[22] Martin Schulz, personal communication, April-August 2016.

[23] March and Olsen, "The Institutional Dynamics and International Political Orders", p. 952.

[24] Fearon and Wendt, "Rationalism v. Constructivism", pp. 61-62.

constructivist argument defends (the possibility of) a deeper internalisation of the norms on the part of states who "identify with or make them part of their conception of the self, and as such make the group's interest in upholding norms their own individual interest as well".[25] Wendt and Fearon argue that the compliance is sometimes because of a belief in the legitimacy of norms, and sometimes it is out of self-interest, with the two being affected by a host of factors. Weak third-party enforcement, for instance, they say, may demotivate even the otherwise enthusiastic rule-followers.[26] And sometimes it is the particular nature of an international norm, e.g. its vague terms and broad parameters, that facilitate its violation by the already willing (and powerful) actors.[27] Hinnebusch, on the other hand, looking at the matter from a different perspective and analyzing the operation of those logics within the complex environment of the Arab Middle East, argues that there actually needs to be "a relative congruence" between the normative and the material for "a stable social order" to exist. Seeing also that actors are motivated by both logics, he defends that any espoused norm and identity need to be supplemented by a corresponding material structure to be viable in the first place. Otherwise, he claims, "[norms] lack the material anchor to endure [while power structures] lack the legitimacy to survive without the continual application of coercive power".[28]

The pre-war Turkish context, national interests, and key foreign policy actors

The war plans of the US against Iraq caught Turkey at a particularly vulnerable period in its history. Turkey was trying to recuperate from a number of acute political, economic and security problems and had seriously embarked on the process of EU membership, regarded as a panacea for many of those ills, when the US knocked on its door for help to wage war against its southeastern neighbour. The collaboration with the US, apart from other considerations, bore the significant potential of wreaking havoc on this recuperation process.

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[25] Ibid., p. 61.

[26] Ibid., p. 62. On the issue of motivation see also, Jon Elster, "Social norms and economic theory", Journal of Economic Perspectives, Vol. 3, No. 4, 1989, pp. 99-117.

[27] Vaughn P. Shannon, "Norms are what states make of them: the political psychology of norm violation", International Studies Quarterly, Vol. 44, No. 2, 2000, pp. 293-316.

[28] Raymond Hinnebusch, "Explaining international politics in the Middle East: The struggle of regional identity and systemic structure", in Gerd Nonneman (ed.), Analyzing Middle East Foreign Policies and the Relationship with Europe (London: Routledge, 2005), p.244.

When Turkey first learnt about the military intentions of the US against Iraq in 2002, an ideologically heterogeneous coalition government was in power (the difficult combination of the centre-left, centre-right and far-right (nationalist)), that was struggling hard to recover from the economic recession, and to make and implement the necessary liberal reforms for the EU membership, and, while doing all these, not to disintegrate. The recession that had hit in 2001 was unprecedented, marked with significant devaluation of the Turkish lira, a minus growth rate and increasing unemployment. The economy had been saved from an Indonesian-style collapse by a multi-billion US dollars bailout from the IMF and the bold structural financial reforms that followed. On the political front, the most pressing issue was to proceed with the requirements for being an official candidate of the EU, which had been granted after many years of strained relations with Brussels. Ankara had pledged to make a long list of political, legal, administrative and economic reforms with a view to fulfilling the membership (Copenhagen) criteria of the EU.[29] Among those were also some sensitive issues such as giving greater cultural (mainly linguistic) rights to Turkish citizens of ethnically non-Turkish origin, the abolishment of capital punishment, and broadening the scope of freedom of expression. Difficult compromises had to be reached within the coalition or, where they failed, support from the other parties in the parliament had to be obtained in order to proceed on all these fronts. The abatement of ethnic separatist terrorism since the capture of the head of the PKK, no doubt, significantly facilitated those reforms by bringing about a more conducive political atmosphere. However, notwithstanding that the government had managed to accomplish significant political and economic progress by the autumn of 2002, it was forced to call for early general elections. That decision has been the subject of wild speculations since then, including the one that related it to Washington's desire to see a stable, easy-to-cooperate government in Ankara during the Iraqi crisis. Although the government and the prime minister, Bülent Ecevit, had been largely cooperative towards the US during the Afghanistan phase of the war on terror,[30] the well-known opposition of the left-wing Ecevit to a war against Iraq was claimed to be, alongside his ill health, one of the major reasons in the accelerated destabilisation of the government.[31]

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[29] The details of those pledged reforms embodied in the first Turkish National Programme for the Adoption of the Aquis, which was issued in March 2001 in response to adoption of the first Turkey-EU Accession Partnership by the EU Council of Ministers, can be found at https://www.ab.gov.tr/195_en.html (August 14, 2018).

[30] Nursin Atesoglu Guney, "The New Security Environment and Turkey's ISAF Experience", in Nursin Atesoglu Guney (ed.), Contentious Issues of Security and the Future of Turkey (Hampshire: Ashgate, 2007), pp. 177-189.

[31] Fikret Bilâ, Ankara'da Irak Savaşları, pp. 101-103.

As a matter of fact, the parameters of Turkey's foreign policy towards Iraq, being also embraced by the military and the majority of political parties, had been set as a state policy. The latter, being inherently hostile to the further destabilisation of Iraq, was unlikely to let a sympathetic approach to the US war plans regardless of which government was in power in Ankara. Those parameters as they appeared in the documents of Foreign Ministry were Turkey's commitment to the national unity and territorial integrity of Iraq; treating as a *casus belli* the establishment of a Kurdish state in northern Iraq; the fair distribution of Iraq's national income from its natural resources among its citizens regardless of their ethnic and sectarian origins; and the commitment to political representation of and the protection of cultural rights of Iraq's Turkmen citizens. Most of those principles, in turn, had been formulated in response to three issues, which had become chronic after the 1991 Gulf War: Turkey's own Kurdish question, the issue of the PKK terrorism and the *de facto* division of Iraq into three pieces. Or, put differently, Turkey's Iraq policy had been taken hostage by those intractable problems. Turkey perceived the division of Iraq as threatening for the other two issues,[32] particularly the Kurdish question, since it long believed that the establishment of a Kurdish state in northern Iraq incorporating the oil-rich regions of Mosul and Kirkuk would be enticing for the Kurdish populations of the whole region, including the Kurds of Turkey, Iran and Syria, with dire implications for the territorial integrity of the host countries. The emphasis upon Iraq's territorial integrity as the centrepiece of Turkey's Iraq policy was criticized as a contradiction given the *de facto* division of Iraq and the role played by Turkey in this respect through its cross-border anti-terrorism military operations and the permission given to the Operation Provide Comfort

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[32] Ironically, the de facto division of Iraq, which seemed to threaten Turkey's national survival, had first come into being with the initiative of the Turkish president, Turgut Özal, after the 1991 Gulf War in response to the refugee crisis that had been triggered by the suppression of the Kurdish (and Shiite) uprisings by the Saddam regime in March 1991. Although a division of that sort, which came to be enforced by the military forces of the US, Britain and France, had not been explicitly authorized by the UN resolution 688 (one of the pioneers of which was Özal), the fact that the division literally protected the Kurds and Shiites from the maltreatment of the Saddam regime and created a permissive environment for Turkey's cross-border operations into northern Iraq to fight the PKK in the 1990s, forced an otherwise reluctant Ankara to accept the situation. The Turkish parliament renewed several times (from the end of 1991 till 2003) the mandate of Operation Provide Comfort (and the renamed Operation Northern Watch), made up of the warplanes of the coalition forces that were deployed in Turkey to enforce the imposed no-fly zones in Iraq. On the unilateral imposition of the no-fly zones in Iraq see, for instance, James Cockayne and David Malone, "Creeping Unilateralism: How Operation Provide Comfort and the No-Fly Zones in 1991 and 1992 Paved the Way for the Iraq Crisis of 2003", Security Dialogue, Vol. 37, No. 1, 2006, pp. 123-141, and Baskın Oran, "Kalkık Horoz": Çekiç Güç ve Kürt Devleti (Ankara: Bilgi Yayınevi, 1998). Oran also explains in detail the difficulties and dilemmas that were faced by the Turkish policy-makers concerning the deployment of Operation Provide Comfort in Turkey.

to enforce the no-fly zones in Iraq instituted after the 1991 Gulf War.[33] However, this emphasis had to be read instead as Ankara's commitment to avoid the transformation of that situation into a *de jure* one. Both the Ecevit government[34] and the JDP (Justice and Development Party, *Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi*) government[35] that replaced it in late 2002 reiterated that Turkey, while being warm to the ideas of autonomous zones or an administrative federation in Iraq, was absolutely opposed to the disintegration of Iraq and the establishment of independent states, including a Kurdish state, in its stead. The latter state of affairs, it was believed, would have catastrophic effects on the domestic orders of Iraq and Iraq's neighbours, and destroy the whole regional order. As for the PKK problem, Baghdad's loss of authority over northern Iraq since the Gulf War had also created a safe haven for the PKK, whose increased attacks in the 1990s met a stern response from the Turkish armed forces. The human and material cost of that military campaign against the separatist terrorism had been prohibitively expensive for Turkey, having retarded political, social and economic development in many ways. Insisting upon the different natures of the PKK issue and the Kurdish question, and trying to tackle the matter predominantly through military means during the last two decades, Turkey's wish was to see a strong central government in Baghdad that would not let authority vacuums of the kind that existed in northern Iraq. Ankara did not officially express a particular preference for the identity of government in Baghdad, but it was no secret that Saddam Hussein's removal from power would not upset anyone in Turkey. The totalitarian and brutal nature of Saddam's regime had led to numerous conflicts at the domestic, regional and international levels, and also prompted or at least given the excuse for the US and its allies to increasingly engage in the Gulf region from 1990 onwards, whose agendas or designs for the region did not always coincide with those of the regional powers. As Ecevit explicitly stated, Ankara did not perceive Saddam Hussein as a direct or immediate threat to Turkey but it did not specifically care about him either; the concern was rather with the consequences of his aftermath.[36]

Before proceeding with the analysis of the Iraq policy of the JDP government, some explanatory remarks also need to be made on the key actors and mechanisms

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[33] Åsa Lundgren, The Unwelcome Neighbour: Turkey's Kurdish Policy (London: I.B. Tauris, 2007), pp. 73-97. See also the previous note.

[34] Fikret Bilâ, "Amerika'ya Irak mesajı", Milliyet, 14 Jan. 2002.

[35] Yasemin Çongar, "Saddam sonrasını konuşanlar", Milliyet, 27 Jan. 2003.

[36] Fikret Bilâ, Ankara'da Irak Savaşları, pp. 51-52.

of foreign policy making in Turkey as was constitutionally valid during that period.[37] The foreign policy executive in Turkey was then made up of the government, the Foreign Ministry bureaucracy and the military, backed up by the National Intelligence Institution (MIT). The president, though being the head of the state and presiding over the National Security Council, was devoid of any political accountability and thus could not generally take any authoritative decisions on foreign policy issues. However, this did not necessarily prevent him from exerting considerable influence on foreign policy if he wished. Particularly, if the president happened to be closely related to (e.g. former politician) or in sympathy with the government or had a charismatic personality, he was able to influence foreign policy decisions to varying degrees through his stance and rhetoric as was the case, for instance, with Turgut Özal's presidency during the 1991 Gulf War.[38] During the 2003 Iraqi crisis, Turkey's president, Ahmet Necdet Sezer, happened to be a person with strong legal background, i.e. the former chairman of the Constitutional Court. His identity as such at least hinted that the legality of the war would underlie his views, posing a normative constraint on the government.

Leaving aside this *ad hoc* presidential influence, the parameters of foreign policy in Turkey were broadly determined by the government working in close cooperation with the Foreign Ministry bureaucracy. However, depending on the nature of the issue, the government could be constrained by a plethora of actors, including the military, the parliament, the affected constituencies or interest groups, and the media. Following the establishment of the National Security Council (NSC) after the 1960 military coup d'état and its reinforcement after another coup (1980), domestic and foreign policy issues deemed to be falling under the category of 'national security' were discussed under this body bringing together the top rank staff of the military, prime minister and some cabinet ministers under the chairmanship of president. Till the amendment of the related articles of the 1982 Constitution regulating the composition and the scope of authority of this semi-military body in line with the requirements of the EU membership in 2001, the government was under obligation to 'give priority consideration' to the decisions given by the NSC on matters relating to national security, which easily covered a broad spectrum of foreign policy issues. After the constitutional amendment in question, the NSC

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[37] For a succinct explanation in English supplemented with examples from the period of 1960-1999, see Philip Robins, Suits and Uniforms: Turkish Foreign Policy since the Cold War (London: Hurst and Company, 2003), pp. 68-92.

[38] William Hale, Turkish Foreign Policy 1774-2000 (London: Frank Cass, 2002), pp. 220-224.

decisions lost, at least in theory, their authoritativeness and assumed 'advisory' character.[39] However, the Iraqi crisis involving stark security issues inevitably rendered the military one of the influential actors on the matter.

The parliament's contribution to foreign policy making, on the other hand, was generally confined to being a forum facilitating the expression of different political views and holding the government accountable on foreign policy matters. However, it could be authoritative in certain occasions such as the ratification of international treaties and agreements, and the declaration of war. Concerning the latter, the government constitutionally needed the approval of the parliament to send troops abroad and/or accept foreign troops to the country.[40] Since the Iraqi crisis called into duty both the parliament's public forum function and its permission concerning the US pleas, the parliament was bound to play a decisive role in the execution of Iraq policy, potentially constituting an effective political and normative constraint on the government.

As for the role of interest groups and political constituencies in foreign policy, this was generally issue-bound and dependent on the political will (and democratic credentials) of the government in Turkey. The looming Iraqi crisis had signalled that the scope of Turkish stakeholders likely to be affected by a war would be wide, including not just the big industrialists but also a number of businesses ranging from transportation to tourism, which, in turn, meant that economic considerations too were to play a significant role in the government's policy.

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[39] Article 118 of the Constitution read as: "...The National Security Council shall submit to the Council of Ministers its views on taking decisions and ensuring necessary co-ordination with regard to the formulation, establishment, and implementation of the national security policy of the State. The Council of Ministers shall give priority consideration to the decisions of the National Security Council concerning the measures that it deems necessary for the preservation of the existence and independence of the State, the integrity and indivisibility of the country, and the peace and security of society...."

The same Article (as amended on October 17, 2001) reads as: "...The National Security Council shall submit to the Council of the Ministers its views on the advisory decisions that are taken and ensuring the necessary co-ordination with regard to the formulation, establishment, and implementation of the national security policy of the state. The Council of Ministers shall evaluate decisions of the National Security Council concerning the measures that it deems necessary for the preservation of the existence and independence of the state, the integrity and indivisibility of the country and the peace and security of society..."

[40] Article 92 of the Constitution reads as: "The Power to authorise the declaration of a state of war in cases deemed legitimate by international law and except where required by international treaties to which Turkey is a party or by the rules of international courtesy to send Turkish Armed Forces to foreign countries and to allow foreign armed forces to be stationed in Turkey, is vested in the Turkish Grand National Assembly.

If the country is subjected, while the Turkish Grand National Assembly is adjourned or in recess, to sudden armed aggression and it thus becomes imperative to decide immediately on the deployment of the armed forces, the President of the Republic can decide on the mobilization of the Turkish Armed Forces."

And, lastly but not the least, beyond material interests, the Iraqi crisis bore the potential of pitting the government against the public in general and its firmly devout constituencies in particular on ethical grounds. The largely anti-war sentiments combined with the Muslim sensitivities of the public, along with the neo-Islamist/conservative character of the government, signalled that the government's calculus and policy-making would not be able to escape the influence of ethical norms. That normative aspect in particular would be the litmus test of the possibility of the pursuit of an ethical foreign policy on the Iraqi issue.

Such were the domestic and foreign policy contexts with their attendant logics of appropriateness and consequences when the JDP, a new political party with roots in political Islam, took over the government in November 2002 with a majority in the parliament. Washington, though initially being anxious about the Islamist character of the party, was generally pleased to see a one-party government, which offered the prospects of stability for the improvement of the Turkish economy and of taking more easily and boldly the necessary foreign policy decisions on the EU, Cyprus and Iraq than the previous coalition government. The liberal pledges of the leading cadres of the JDP on political and economy matters, and their rhetoric of commitment to Turkey's Western vocation and secularism led Washington at least to give the benefit of doubt to this new party which also described itself as conservative-democratic rather than Islamist. On the Iraq issue, the US did not see a particular reason for concern since such was its belief that the decision on its pleas would be largely shaped by the Turkish military in any case and the JDP government would be obliged to respect it even if it happened to think differently.[41] This stance, apart from revealing the hypocrisy of the US concerning its desire to see democratic government in Turkey (and elsewhere in the Middle East), was harbinger of the authoritative and commanding monologue that Ankara would increasingly experience during the period leading up to the Iraq War.

The encounter of the JDP government with the US on the Iraq issue till the start of the war in late March 2003 can be divided roughly into two periods in terms of the logics of behaviour. The first period that lasted from November 2002 till February 2003 is the time when the behaviour of the Turkish government can be depicted as acting with a sense of responsibility towards several communities, not just the Turkish, and thus, not readily or automatically submitting to the de-

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[41] Yasemin Çongar, "AKP iktidarına ABD'den bakışlar", Milliyet, 4 Nov. 2002.

mands of its long-standing ally. In that period the government sought to strike a balance between two competing logics to the best of its ability given the structural constraints at various levels of analysis. The second period lasting from February 2003 till the start of the war, though embodying elements of both logics, increasingly involved an emphasis upon Turkish national interests, and thus is predominantly characterized by the logic of consequences.

Stage I

Soon after the new government was voted in, the most urgent item on its agenda quickly became the Iraqi crisis. This was mainly for two reasons: the significant role ascribed to Turkey as a staging post in the US war plans against Iraq and the serious implications of the aftermath of that war for Turkey and beyond. Just before the general elections Washington had submitted a long list of its pleas to Ankara, which included, among others, the deployment of 80, 000 American military personnel and 250 military aircraft in Turkey; the access to 14 airports and 5 harbours scattered around the country, along with access to all the roads, railways and waterways connecting them; and permission to use Turkish territory during the war against Iraq.[42] Washington, both through this list and its bilateral contacts with the Turkish civilian and military officials, made it clear that it was determined to wage war against Iraq regardless of the ongoing UN procedures and the fierce anti-war positions of other great power members of the Security Council, and that Turkey's role would be critical in this regard. The US insisted upon Turkey's support since it is only through opening a northern front from Turkey that, it argued, the war would more easily reach its objectives and end more quickly with lesser US military (and Iraqi) casualties.[43] And to start military planning for the war Washington hoped to get a response from Ankara in the shortest time possible. Acting under an intense time pressure the US expected Ankara to keep pace with Washington's timetable and organize its policy-making on the issue accordingly.

Ankara was not being asked what it thought of the pros and cons of a war against its southeastern neighbour or whether it agreed with the proclaimed objectives of that war or about its input into post-war planning. The US was acting with already decided goals and means, and Ankara was only being asked whether

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[42] See fn. 1.
[43] Michael R. Gordon, "U.S. is pressing for Turks' help in move on Iraq", New York Times, 28 Nov. 2002.

it wanted to contribute to its project. In other words, the US was expecting Turkey to approach its demands not with a calculating mind but in line with a logic of appropriateness, i.e. to fulfil them without much questioning and hesitation. Having said that, the situation was not as if Turkey could give a decision of its own free will and simply say yes or no without having to worry about the aftermath of that response. The prime minister, Abdullah Gül, and the JDP's then politically banned leader, R. Tayyip Erdoğan, told on several occasions that Turkey did not have the luxury of Germany, France or Belgium to adopt an exclusively independent position on the issue. As already explained, the Turkish economy had only recently started to come out of a deep recession with the help of a number of major bailout packages from the IMF,[44] which had been clearly given with the good will of Washington. There was still a dire need for the latter if the economy was to continue to produce and grow. Around the time the American and Turkish officials were having talks on the Iraq issue, Turkish ministers and bureaucrats were coming together with the IMF officials to discuss the conditions of release of a credit slice worth of US\$1.6 billion. Although the two issues were technically different, the growing perception in Turkey, particularly in the Istanbul Stock Market, was to see the two somehow related,[45] posing a (at least psychological) barrier for the government to adopt a relatively autonomous stance on the Iraq issue. Added to that was the concern of the government and an array of economic sectors about the likely cost of a war on the fragile economy. The tendency of particularly the big industrialists, represented by the powerful Turkish Industrialists and Businessmen Association (TÜSİAD), was to seek compensation from the US for Turkey's war-related economic losses in return for Turkey's accepting (some of) the US pleas.[46] Although many believed that the US had to compensate Turkey in any case as the primary responsible actor for the estimated losses, there was scant belief that any compensation, regardless of its amount, would be given in return for no help. Thus, contrary to the expectations of Washington, there was much hesitation, calculation and mistrust on the part of its NATO ally. Ankara, instead of approaching its strategic ally with the logic of appropriateness and proving to be a reliable partner, increasingly calculated the costs of its action and inaction vis-à-vis the US pleas.

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[44] For details of the IMF assistance, see Yılmaz Akyüz and Korkut Boratav, "The making of the Turkish financial crisis", World Development, Vol. 31, No. 9, 2003.

[45] See, for instance, Songül Hatısaru, "Irak hem risk hem fırsat", Milliyet, 12 Jan. 2003; Songül Hatısaru, "Bütçe de IMF ile anlaşma da netleşmedi", Milliyet, 17 Feb. 2003.

[46] "Totaliter bir rejimin yanında yer almayın", Milliyet, 14 Jan. 2003.

An equal and perhaps more important constraint on Turkey's stance was Ankara's Iraq policy. The latter, as explained, was deeply hostile to any intervention that had the potential to dismember Iraq by inducing (further) destabilization and decentralization. And the core Turkish foreign policy executive, the government, the Foreign Ministry and the military, all agreed that there were just too many uncertainties associated with the US war plans concerning the future of Iraq, necessitating Turkey's cooperation with the US. Only through a cooperation which would inevitably amount to saying yes to some, if not all, of the US pleas, it was argued, Ankara would be let to deploy its army in northern Iraq against *faits accomplis* such as the announcement of a Kurdish state and/or the incorporation of the oil-rich districts of Mosul and Kirkuk into that new state, and later to have a say in the reconstruction of post-war Iraq. There was also a growing concern that the Iraq question was only a part of a greater hegemonic design relating to the whole Middle East that possibly involved changes in maps as well as regimes. Ankara's particular concern was to lose its communication with and thus its influence on Washington when its Middle Eastern neighbourhood would be subjected to quite a radical transformation with possible dire implications on Turkish national interests.

Another factor that complicated the government's decision-making was related to its own legitimacy problem emanating from Turkey's infamous Islamist-secularist divide. Only five years ago the coalition government led by the Welfare Party (Refah Partisi), the party out of whose ranks the JDP was born, had been forced out of power by a post-modern style military intervention, inflicting damage on the trust relations primarily between state and political institutions as well as between state and society. Having drawn its part of the lessons from this bitter past, the JDP's election platform[47] as well as its predominant rhetoric and policies after the election all focused on restoring that lost confidence. And the main vehicle the post-Islamist party deployed to prove its democratic and secular credentials to its internal and external critics turned out to be foreign relations. The JDP quickly embraced Turkey's historical European vocation deemed to be the reflection of the Republic's commitment to modernization. The party's leading cadres, including its politically banned leader, Erdoğan, paid their first official visits to the European capitals (and Washington) with a view to both getting a date for the start of mem-

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[47] The JDP's 2002 election platform can be found at
https://acikerisim.tbmm.gov.tr/xmlui/bitstream/handle/11543/954/200304063.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y
(28 August 2018).

bership negotiations with the EU and proving their loyalty to Turkey's long-standing western ties. In the run-up to the 2002 Copenhagen European Council Summit where the decision on the start of membership negotiations would be taken, the Bush administration, along with Britain, put an unprecedented pressure on the European capitals, even to the extent of causing dismay in some, in favour of Turkey's membership.[48] Although Washington's support as such was not unrelated to its expectations from Turkey on Iraq,[49] at a time when the JDP was seeking to buy domestic legitimacy through external recognition, friendly relations with the West, including the US, considerably mattered – another instrumental calculation on the part of government.

At this point, the government faced the further dilemma of whether it would be possible to have good relations simultaneously with Washington and the EU within the post-Cold War environment where the former unity of the West seemed to be shattered by the divergence of interests and approaches on a number of geopolitical issues, including Iraq. Particularly during the early 2003 when increasingly tense and conflictual relations seemed to reign between the 'old Europe' and the US over the disarmament of Iraq, Turkey's active support for either side might have been easily interpreted in zero-sum terms: rapprochement with the anti-war stance of France and Germany as having come at the expense of strategic partnership with the US or saying yes to the US pleas implying Turkey's drifting away from its European vocation. The latter prospect, in particular, bothered the JDP government, since its party programme, prioritizing further democratization and civilianization seemed to be more realizable with Turkey's further integration with Europe rather than by getting bogged down with the US in Iraq, which threatened to reverse those processes with its inescapable emphasis on security and the associated potential of reinforcing the military's influence in politics.[50]

Having its hands tied considerably by Turkey's long-standing economic and political vulnerabilities as well as its own legitimacy problem, the new JDP government found itself in a very uneasy position vis-à-vis the unrelenting superpower's otherwise unacceptable unilateral demands. A number of leading Turkish journalists wrote at the time that the question was not whether the government would

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[48] Philip Webster and Rory Watson, "Bush angers Europe as Ankara is rebuffed", The Times, 14 Dec. 2002.

[49] Michael R. Gordon, "U.S. presses Turkey's case on Europe and Cyprus", New York Times, 3 Dec. 2002.

[50] See, e.g., Ahmet Sever, Abdullah Gül ile 12 Yıl: Yaşadım, Gördüm, Yazdım (İstanbul: Doğan Kitap, 2015), pp. 41-43, for personal views and sentiments of Gül on the issue.

cooperate with the US but rather concerned the scope of that cooperation. Striking a balance between the US pleas and Turkish national interests, a balance that would manage to keep Turkey out of the war while simultaneously protecting national interests in northern Iraq during and after the war, and maintaining strategic relations with the US, was put forth as the optimal option before the government, which then had to work out how to put it into practice.[51] However, the government, instead of immediately giving a response to Washington, organized its policy-making in tandem with the ongoing UN procedures on Iraq and stated its priority as preventing the war. Both the prime minister, Gül, and the JDP's banned leader, Erdoğan, told their US counterparts and Turkish public on several occasions that they were in favour of the resolution of the Iraqi crisis through peaceful means and opposed to a war that lacked international legitimacy and legality. Regarding the 1441 UN Resolution on Iraq as providing not a sufficient ground for military sanctions, they made it clear that the US had to wait for the interim report of the arms inspectors that would be submitted in late January 2003, and, if that indicated Baghdad's non-compliance, then a second UN resolution explicitly sanctioning a military attack had to be sought for.[52] Emboldened also by the growing anti-war positions of some of Turkey's EU associates and of the world public opinion in general, Gül embarked on an active peace diplomacy involving five key regional actors, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Iran, Jordan and Syria, which all seemed to share his perspective. Gül and his main foreign policy advisor, Ahmet Davutoğlu, emphasized that neither Turkey nor those five states (and many other regional states), notwithstanding their common perception of the Baghdad regime as a threat, supported a war that would radically destabilize not only Iraq but the region as a whole. Davutoğlu argued that treating Iraq issue as part of the global war on terror could have dramatic consequences leading to a regional chaos from which no one would benefit, particularly the regional states, and he defended the government's peace diplomacy as a serious initiative committed to avoiding that chaos.[53] Gül was particularly concerned about the prospect of 'Lebanonisation' of post-war Iraq: the country's engulfment by long-lasting bloody ethnic and sectarian conflicts, and their spread

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[51] See, e.g., Sami Kohen, "Mesele sadece Irak değil…", Milliyet, 26 Dec. 2002; Mehmet Ali Birand, "Irak olayı düzeni değiştirecek", Posta, 9 Jan. 2003; Taha Akyol, "Strateji", Milliyet, 16 Jan. 2003.

[52] See, e.g., "Erdoğan: Ölümün pazarlığı olmaz", Milliyet, 28 Dec. 2002; and Taha Akyol, "Başbakan Gül'ün penceresinden", Milliyet, 28 Dec. 2002; and Abdullah Karakuş, "'Operasyon bir yıl sonraya ertelenmeli'", Milliyet, 16 Jan. 2003.

[53] See the interview made with Ahmet Davutoğlu by Derya Sazak, "Yabancı asker kabulü radikal bir değişimdir", Milliyet, 13 Jan. 2003.

to the neighbouring states.[54] Hence was his strong belief that all the diplomatic and political options had to be exhausted for the disarmament (and then the democratization) of Iraq before one could seriously embark on the option of war. The regional diplomacy led by Ankara directly targeted Baghdad rather than Washington, seeking to persuade Saddam Hussein and his cabinet to fully cooperate with the UN arms inspectors in line with the UN Resolution 1441 and be fully transparent concerning Iraq's assumed stock of weapons of mass destruction so as not to leave an excuse for the US to attack. This was also the message Ankara increasingly gave to Baghdad in several bilateral open and secret missions sent to or received by this country.[55]

The neo-Islamist/conservative character of the government and the JDP, the strong anti-war stance of the public, the legal constraint imposed by the constitution and its fierce advocacy by the president all encouraged the already willing premier Gül to test the limits of an ethical foreign policy for some time at least. Gül's hand was also strengthened by the fact that the government's peace diplomacy was not an isolated policy being pursued despite the military or the Foreign Ministry. To the contrary, it was backed by the declaration of the National Security Council that met in late December 2002, supporting the continuation of the efforts for the peaceful resolution of the conflict on the basis of international consensus and related UN resolutions.[56] Although during that meeting it was also emphasized that if those efforts came to nothing and the war broke out, Turkey might be obliged to take independent steps to protect its national interests, the first priority of the state and political establishment was the prevention of the war; the logic of appropriateness had the upper hand then. One of the leading advocates of this position was the president, Ahmet Necdet Sezer, former chairman of the Constitutional Court, who adopted a strict legalistic stance that laid more emphasis on the legality aspect of the Iraqi crisis than others, often referring to Article 92 of the Turkish Constitution on the matter.[57] Although his stance was not authoritative in legal terms, his statements on the issue were readily embraced and referred to

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[54] Fikret Bilâ, "6 Müslüman ülkenin sözcüsü olacağız…", Milliyet, 15 Jan. 2003.

[55] See, e.g., Önder Yılmaz, "Tüzmen'den Bağdat'a 'Genç Osman' çıkarması", Milliyet, 11 Jan. 2003; Fikret Bilâ, "Müslüman liderleri İstanbul'a bekliyor", Milliyet, 17 Jan. 2003; Taha Akyol, "Gül'ün umudu ve üç hedefi", Milliyet, 21 Jan. 2003; and Fikret Bilâ, "Taha Yasin'in gizli ziyareti", Milliyet, 7 Feb. 2003.

[56] "MGK, Irak'ı masaya yatırdı: Esnek harekat kararı", Milliyet, 28 Aralık 2002.

[57] See, e.g., "Sezer: Yeni BM kararı şart", Evrensel, 18 Feb. 2003, https://www.evrensel.net/haber/138982/sezer-yeni-bm-karari-sart (25 Dec. 2009).

by all those who did not want to get involved in the looming war on ethical and/or instrumental grounds. Resul Tosun, an influential JDP MP, for instance, told the Turkish parliament in early January that Turkey's participation in or support for a war that lacked international legitimacy was totally unacceptable. He asked "how can we do that when thousands of people will die, thousands of children will become orphans, thousands of women will become widows and the war will leave behind also thousands of captives, and thousands of handicapped?" He then went on enumerating national grounds to support his anti-war stance.[58]

However, it was remarkable that the humanitarian and the associated legitimacy aspects of the looming war were given broad coverage in the parliamentary and press statements of the JDP MPs and ministers, even to the extent of creating concern particularly in the US that Gül and Erdoğan were "doing nothing to prepare the public for the necessity of deposing Saddam."[59] Washington was particularly worried that even if the government would finally resign and send a bill to the Turkish parliament in the coming weeks in support of the US pleas, then it would find it difficult to get the bill accepted given the fierce anti-war positions of the JDP and the main opposition party, the RPP (Republican People's Party, *Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi*). However, it seemed that the government found it difficult to persuade the MPs and public opinion on a matter on which it was not itself persuaded. Therefore, Ankara, despite being under unprecedented pressure from Washington, pursued largely a foot-dragging policy, preferring to wait for the final verdict of the UN on the Iraqi disarmament and exploiting this protracted process for not conveying its final response to the US and instead conducting open-ended bilateral military and economic negotiations with the Americans with a view to protecting Turkish national interests in case the war erupted.

However, neither the regional diplomacy nor the UN process produced the kind of results expected by Turkey. Although Baghdad seemed to accelerate its cooperation and be more transparent in its relations with the inspectors from both the UN Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission (UNMOVIC) and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), Washington (and London) tended to accentuate the negative aspects of the commission reports submitted to the UN

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[58] TBMM Tutanak Dergisi (Minutes of the TGNA Debates), 15 Jan. 2003.

[59] William Safire, "The Northern Front", New York Times, 16 Jan. 2003. See also Morton Abramowitz, "Turkey and Iraq, Act II", Wall Street Journal, 16 Jan. 2003.

on 27 January 2003,[60] treating them as a *casus belli*.[61] Increasingly defiant and bellicose rhetoric of Washington combined with the simultaneous increase in the deployment of US warships in the Gulf and the Mediterranean signalled to Ankara that the time had arrived to pay more serious attention to the possibility of war and to focus on the protection of national interests within the context of war. The statement of the National Security Council that met on 31 January 2003, unlike that of the December meeting, while still advising to keep an eye on the peace diplomacy and the UN route, explicitly called on the government to start making preparations with a view to getting the permission of the parliament to implement the military measures deemed necessary to protect national interests.[62] That statement was soon followed by the public statements of Gül and Erdoğan to the effect that Turkey from then on would be in close cooperation with the US over the Iraq issue. Erdoğan, in a calculated move to start preparing the public for the war, said "[t]he decisions we make for war are not because we want war, but so we can contribute to peace as soon as possible, at a point when it is not possible to prevent war. *Our moral priority is peace, but our political priority is our dear Turkey.*" And pointing to the concerns emanating from Turkey's Iraq policy and historical responsibility, he told his party, "[i]f one is left out of the equation at the start of the operation, it may not be possible to be in a position to control developments at the end of the operation."[63] "Either you will remain outside the process and accept the consequences that follow or you will play an active role in the rewriting of history", he warned. He also resorted to the metaphor of 'fire' to differentiate the position of Turkey from other anti-war European powers and to justify its involvement in the war. "If, despite all our best efforts, fire breaks out in our neighbour", he said, "we cannot simply say 'it is none of our business'".[64]

Stage II

With a view to setting up the parameters of Turkey's collaboration with the US in a possible war, the government (and the military) initiated formal talks with the

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[60] Ewan MacAskill, et al., "Is Saddam hiding something? Blix gives his verdict on Iraqi weapons", The Guardian, 28 Jan. 2003.

[61] Julian Borger, et al., "Another step towards war", The Guardian, 28 Jan. 2003.

[62] https://www.mgk.gov.tr/index.php/2003-yili-ocak-ayi-toplantisi (9 August 2018).

[63] Dexter Filkins, "Top politician indicates Turkey may join U.S. effort against Iraq", New York Times, 5 Feb. 2003. Italics are mine.

[64] "Savaş yaklaşıyor, dışında kalamayız", Yeni Şafak, 5 Feb. 2003; "ABD'ye açık mesaj", Yeni Şafak, 19 Feb. 2003. See also the interview Erdoğan gave to the columnists of Yeni Şafak, "Belge olmadan asla", Yeni Şafak, 20 Feb. 2003.

US diplomats in Ankara at the beginning of February 2003. The negotiations that lasted for a month were multifaceted, covering Turkey's war-related political, military and economic needs as well as the US pleas. The Turks had reluctantly sat around the table after their attempts to realize their optimal choice of preventing the war had almost come to nothing. They had been convinced neither of the existence of the weapons of mass destruction in Iraq nor about the rightness of the choice to use force to tackle the perceived threat. However, given the immanency of the threat of war, they got preoccupied with reducing the harmful effects of the looming war on different aspects of Turkish national interests and, thus, extracting as much guarantee and compensation as possible from the American side. Since both sides were adamant about the rightness and necessity of their Iraq policies and were persistent in their pleas to each other, the talks between the two old NATO allies assumed more of a strategic behaviour involving bargaining based on a stick-and-carrot policy rather than of a dialogue based on persuasion and/or learning.[65] The Turks, though facing a superpower, acted with a belief that the war would be immensely difficult and troublesome for the US if they used their stick and did not allow the deployment of US ground troops in Turkey. The Americans, on the other hand, being well aware of Ankara's sensitivities vis-à-vis Iraq as well as political and economic vulnerabilities, did not hide their intention, above all, of keeping Turkey politically and militarily out of Iraq if Turkey were to prove unaccommodating with regard to their demands. The first carrot that was extended by Ankara to Washington was the permission given to the US military personnel to upgrade and modernize the facilities at a number of Turkish airbases and harbours with a view to preparing them for a war against Iraq.[66] Although Gül reminded the public and Washington that such permission did not necessarily condition or hijack the government's subsequent steps,[67] it was indeed difficult for the Americans not to perceive this as a sign of encouragement or as a bargaining tool to induce concessions from them. Although the required upgrading did not start immediately and was delayed till the Turkish Parliament gave its permission on the deployment of foreign troops,[68] the increasing arrival of the US warships carrying military and

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[65] For a succinct but useful explanation of the characteristics of different types of communication, including strategic action, mutual communication, and discourse ethics, see Neta C. Crawford, "Homo Politicus and Argument (Nearly) All the Way Down: Persuasion in Politics", Perspectives on Politics, Vol. 7, No. 1, 2009.

[66] Suna Erdem, "Ankara vote clears way for U.S. to use military bases", The Times, 7 Feb. 2003.

[67] Gerald MacLean, Abdullah Gül and the Making of the New Turkey, (London: Oneworld Publications, 2014), p. 234.

[68] Barkın Şık, "Fenerbahçeliler tezkere bekliyor", Milliyet, 18 Feb. 2003.

construction equipment to the Turkish ports on the Mediterranean coast reflected the US perception.

Notwithstanding the economic aspects of the talks being highlighted by the US press (even sometimes in a manner deemed insulting or denigrating by the Turks), the most critical issues over which the Turkish delegation (chaired by a senior Foreign Ministry bureaucrat, Deniz Bölükbaşı) fought diplomatic battles with the US diplomats concerned the political future of Iraq and the parameters of Turkey's military presence during the war. On the surface the ultimate objective of a democratic Iraq maintaining its territorial integrity and national unity was shared by both sides, and the US officials gave repeated assurances to the anxious Turkish side that they would not let Iraq disintegrate after the war. However, the silence or unsatisfactory explanations of the Americans concerning the post-war political construction of Iraq and how they were planning to accomplish this enormously difficult task fed the already existing suspicions and fears in Ankara. Theoretically speaking, a united and democratic Iraq could have been created through different state types, and it was Ankara's firm belief that certain types of arrangements such as an ethnic-based federation were more likely to lead to the dismemberment of the already fragile country in the long-term, if not sooner. What not only extended the diplomatic talks in Ankara but also hardened the already negative image of the Bush administration before the Turkish public and its representatives, was the indeterminacy of the Americans over this issue along with their increasing political and military reliance on the Kurds in northern Iraq as potential partners in the war; the continuing ambiguity over the future status of the oil rich Mosul and Kirkuk regions; their foot-dragging over the Turkish demand concerning the status of Turkmens in the future Iraq government; and their reluctance and uneasiness as to the Turkish military presence in northern Iraq during wartime.[69] The press leakage of the diplomatic wrangling on minor issues such as the insistence of the Americans to get the identity cards of the US soldiers be paid by Ankara as well as major issues such as the reluctance of Washington to disarm the Kurdish peshmerga after the war certainly did not help this negative atmosphere.[70]

On the economic front, on the other hand, Ankara was seeking what it considered to be 'war compensation' from its superpower ally. The aftermath of the 1991

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[69] Bölükbaşı, 1 Mart Vakası, pp. 36-50.
[70] "Sinir geren pazarlık", Milliyet, 20 Feb. 2003; Sami Kohen, "Kuzey Irak'ta yeni tehlike", Milliyet, 25 Feb. 2003.

Gulf War, the Turkish officials claimed, had cost Turkey dearly in many respects, from the losses amounting to US$100 billion from the closure of the Ceyhan-Kirkuk oil pipeline to the multifaceted costs accruing from the fight against the PKK, which had consolidated its position in the authority vacuum of northern Iraq. Determined not to repeat similar experiences and to protect the already fragile economy, the Turkish government held parallel talks with Washington, seeking economic aid in addition to the IMF credits. Although those talks had started earlier in January 2003, with the failure to agree on several issues, such as the amount, duration and conditions of the aid, they dragged into February.[71] By the end of February both sides seemed to agree on an aid package of US$25-30 billion[72] as well as on a number of critical political and military issues.[73] Apparently, the divergent interests of Ankara and Washington vis-à-vis Iraq had been finally reconciled more or less to the satisfaction of both. Washington agreed, though reluctantly, to turn the shared points into written documents to be signed pending the final permission of the parliament.

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[71] "ABD'yle kesintisiz pazarlık", Milliyet, 8 Feb. 2003.

[72] In terms of the agreement, the US would give Turkey a grant of US$6 billion, the 2 billion of which would be used to clear off some of the military debts of Turkey, and Ankara would have the option of turning the remaining US$4 billion into a long-term credit of around US$24 billion with a low interest rate, "ABD kredisinin kontrolü 2004'e kadar IMF'de olsun", Milliyet, 27 Feb. 2003.

[73] Among the agreed points, the most significant ones were the consensus to establish a democratic Iraq based on an administrative type of federation with a government representing all major ethnic groups; Turkmens, alongside Arabs and Kurds, were to be considered as 'constituting' elements of the Iraq nation; all districts of Iraq, including the oil-rich regions of Mosul and Kirkuk, would not be allowed to be 'owned' by a particular faction or group; the income from the oil reserves, considered as the asset of the Iraqi nation only, was to be distributed fairly to the whole population; a Turkish military force of around 31,000 soldiers (with another 31,000 soldiers providing logistical support) would enter northern Iraq under the Turkish command following the entry of a US force of around 24,000 soldiers (with another around 38,000 soldiers providing logistical services from within Turkey), with the former being deployed along an axis with a nearly 20 kilometres depth from the Turkish border; the US and Turkish military forces would act in a coordinated manner in northern Iraq with a view to avoiding undesirable developments such as the occupation of Mosul and Kirkuk by any of the opposition groups in the region; the Turkish military forces would be able to resort to force to render ineffective the PKK forces but would not fight any of the Iraqi forces; the Kurdish peshmerga, while being armed with light weapons during the war, would be disarmed by the Americans after the war with a view to setting up a united Iraqi army. For further details of the final documents, known as 'Memorandum of Understanding' (Mutabakat Zaptı), see Bölükbaşı, 1 Mart Tezkeresi, p. 44-74, and Bilâ, Ankara'da Irak Savaşları, pp. 313-328. However, the exact content of that Memorandum, especially the section covering the operational freedom to be granted to the Turkish military in northern Iraq has remained a matter of controversy up till now. While some, such as the ex-US ambassador and the RPP MP, Şükrü Elekdağ, argued that the text did not let the Turkish military to deal with the PKK except in cases of self-defense, the Turkish head of the negotiating team, ex-ambassador Deniz Bölükbaşı, argued otherwise claiming that the Turkish military had been granted the authority it had demanded from the Americans. See, for instance, the respective interviews made with each many years later: Uğur Dündar, "1 Mart Tezkeresi TSK'nın PKK'ya operasyon yapmasını yasaklamıştı!..", Sözcü, 4 March 2016, http://www.sozcu.com.tr/2016/yazarlar/ugur-dundar/1-mart-tezkeresi-tsknin-pkkya-operasyon-yapmasini-yasaklamisti-1120174/ (27 May 2016) and İpek Özbey, "Hâlâ 1 Mart tezkeresinin bedelini ödüyoruz", Hürriyet, 10 Oct. 2017.

With the completion of the negotiations with an agreement and the government's subsequent preparation of the long-awaited bill, it was as if the government trusted that a large number of uncertainties associated with the approaching war had been cleared and the necessary means to safeguard the national interests had been adopted. However, conflicting signals coming from within and outside the government, combined with those from northern Iraq, heralded that the passage of the bill in the parliament would not be a smooth process. Although with the start of the talks in February the government had given up insistently asking the US to legalize the war through an explicitly-worded UN resolution authorizing the use of force, a few cabinet ministers, the RPP, the president and the chairman of the parliament started to voice more frequently and loudly their concerns that the bill, unless brought to the Parliament in tandem with such a UN resolution, would be devoid of constitutionality. Although many were aware that legality and legitimacy were not the same things and that legality obtained through a UN resolution did not always ensure legitimacy, they increasingly brought up the issue of constitutional constraint to obstruct the government's (and the US's) plans.

Although the president's stance might be described as purely legalistic given his legal background, the chairman of the parliament, Bülent Arınç, an outspoken and influential JDP MP seemed to believe that the constitutional constraint was the only barrier that could have helped stop an otherwise illegitimate war or at least Turkey's participation in it.[74] He and several MPs defended that it was all wrong to seek protecting Turkey's national interests by contributing to or participating in an illegitimate war against a neighbour with which Turkey shared historical, religious and social affinities, and which would continue to remain Turkey's neighbour after the warring parties left. Their deeply emotional and strong-worded rhetoric no doubt both shaped and reflected the feeling and opinion already rampant among the public and within the parliament.

The stance of the main opposition party, the RPP, on the other hand, was a bit more complicated than that of either the president or Arınç in that they insisted upon a new UN resolution to accept US troops to Turkey but not to send Turkish troops to Iraq. Regarding Turkey's planned military presence in Iraq as an act of self-defence against the perceived threats delineated in Ankara's Iraq policy, they interpreted the constitutional constraint largely from a political perspective. Ac-

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[74] "Meşruiyet olmadan tezkere göndermeyin", Yeni Şafak, 25 Feb. 2003.

cordingly, they defended the division and separate voting of the government's bill in the parliament, warning that they would reject the bill if it was submitted undivided.[75] During the parliamentary debates, the final stance adopted by the government concerning the constitutionality of the bill was such that, given the controversial nature of the procedural legitimacy of the UN Security Council resolutions, it was wrong to treat the Security Council as the final legitimizing authority at all times. Since the government, like the RPP, perceived the planned Turkish deployment in northern Iraq as not an act of aggression as defined under the UN Charter but one of self-defense, but, unlike the RPP, considered the exercise of such deployment as too difficult, if not impossible, in the absence of cooperation with Washington, it opined that the Turkish parliament, not the Security Council, held the final legitimising stamp on the issue.[76]

A number of developments started to unfold in northern Iraq as the negotiations in Ankara were drawing to a close, prompting question marks even in the minds of pragmatic actors, and rendering the government hesitant again. Among them were the mass protests organized in several towns against the Turkish military deployment in northern Iraq, reinforced by the decision of the Kurdish parliament to the same effect;[77] the reported repressive measures of the Kurdish Democratic Party (KDP), one of the two powerful Kurdish groups that control the region, against the members of the Iraqi Turkmen Front, the main Turkmen political party;[78] the rumours that the US was planning to heavily arm the Kurdish peshmerga contrary to its pledges in Ankara;[79] and the exclusion of Turkmens from the leadership of the committee that was being envisioned by the Iraqi opposition groups to play a role in the transition to democracy.[80] All these increasingly raised questions as to what extent the US could be trusted to comply with the terms of the agreement that was about to be reached in Ankara, since it was perceived as already acting against them, probably out of an agenda that conflicted with Turkey's. The feeling of mistrust increasingly overshadowed the relationship of the two allies.

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[75] Bilal Çetin and Sami Gökçe, "Meclis'ten iki ayrı yetki istenecek", Yeni Şafak, 2 Feb. 2003.

[76] See, for instance, Burhan Kuzu's (JDP), chairman of the Constitution Commission of the parliament, speech to the parliament on the day of the discussion and voting of the bill before the session was closed to the public, TBMM Tutanak Dergisi (Minutes of the TGNA Debates), 1 March 2003.

[77] Stephen Kinzer, "Forget Hussein. Iraq's Kurds are free already", New York Times, 2 March 2003; Anthony Loyd and Suna Erdem, "Kurds urge U.S. to deter Turks", The Times, 26 Feb. 2003.

[78] Fikret Bilâ, "Ankara Barzani'den rahatsız", Milliyet, 21 Feb. 2003.

[79] Fikret Bilâ, "Uçaksavarlar kime?", Milliyet, 26 Feb. 2003.

[80] Fikret Bilâ, "Ankara'nın iki kuşkusu", Milliyet, 1 March 2003.

It was in this tense atmosphere created by a combination of normative and instrumental concerns that the bill was opened to signature within the government and then brought before the Parliament for approval. The government was already divided during the stage of signature and the opposing ministers agreed to sign the bill only not to block the decision-making process, publicly announcing that they would vote against it in the parliament.[81] Gül and Erdoğan, however, despite the signs that there was also normative and/or instrumental opposition to the bill from within their own party, which was likely to further rise in the face of increasing pressure from the public and their own devout constituencies,[82] seemed publicly confident that the majority of the JDP MPs, excepting some 50 at most, would support the government on an issue which concerned crucial national interests. After an almost five hours-closed briefing that informed the JDP MPs about the details of the agreement reached with the US, Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), Gül told the press that "our friends now understood the difference between being responsible and irresponsible."[83] Such confidence, along with their conviction that it was wrong to dictate the conscience of their MPs,[84] led them not to take a binding group decision before the voting. Since the RPP had declared beforehand that they had taken a group decision to vote against,[85] the direction of the votes of the JDP MPs, who held 363 seats in the parliament, became even more critical in obtaining the necessary simple majority. However, the decision of the government to delay the voting for one more day to wait for the statement of the NSC holding its regular monthly meeting signalled that, despite public appearances, the government was unsure of the decision of its party group and thus needed the final support of the military to persuade the undecided and the opposed. The government, however, could not obtain the expected support as the NSC, in its extraordinarily short statement, did not make any endorsing reference to the bill.[86]

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[81] "Bakanlar imzaladı söz artık Meclis'in", Milliyet, 25 Feb. 2003; "Yalçınbayır direndi, Gül imza istedi", Milliyet, 25 Feb. 2003.

[82] According to the press reports, among the religious groups that had overwhelmingly voted for the JDP in 2002 general elections, the Nakşibendi group as a whole and at least half of the Süleymancılar were vehemently opposed to the bill while the Nurcu group adopted more or less a pragmatic line, Serhat Oğuz, "Tarikat AKP'den sağduyu istedi", Milliyet, 28 Feb. 2003. On the other hand, the Felicity Party, the predecessor of the Welfare Party out of which the top cadres of the JDP came, was also opposed to the bill, asking the JDP MPs to reject the bill in line with their reason and conscience, not the directives of their party leaders, "Tezkereye 'hayır' çağrısı", Yeni Şafak, 27 Feb. 2003.

[83] "İkna için 3 uyarı", Hürriyet, 26 Feb. 2003, http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/gundem/ikna-icin-3-uyari-130336 (10 Dec. 2009).

[84] "'Grup kararı almayacağız'", Milliyet, 24 Feb. 2003.

[85] "CHP, tezkereye 'ret' oyu verecek. Baykal: 81 yıl sonra yabancı ordu geliyor", 27 Feb. 2003, http://www.tgrthaber.com.tr/dunya/-105328.html (10 Dec. 2009).

[86] Barkın Şık and Önder Yılmaz, "Sezer: Karar artık Meclis'in", Milliyet, 1 March 2003.

Although the military wing of the NSC had apparently acted so mainly out of the democratic leanings of the Chief of Staff, Hilmi Özkök (i.e. not to influence the free will of the parliament and to confer the entire political responsibility to the government),[87] it was most likely that many MPs, accustomed to the public statements of the NSC, perceived that as the uneasiness of the military with the terms of MoU and/or the US behaviour.

The government's bill, long-awaited by Washington, asking for the permission of the parliament for the deployment of US troops in Turkey and the sending of Turkish troops to northern Iraq was turned down by the parliament at one of its historical sessions on 1 March 2003. Although the number of 'yes' votes (264) exceeded that of 'no' votes (250) with limited abstention (19), the bill was regarded rejected for having failed to get the support of the simple majority of the voting MPs (267), thoroughly disappointing Washington and the Turkish supporters of the bill. Following the rejection, the government, though initially asking everyone, including Washington, to respect the result as the democratic decision of the parliament,[88] could not itself hold to that principle in the face of the continuing expectations of the Turkish military and the Pentagon to resubmit the bill to the parliament. Given the continuing defiance of the UN by Washington and its plan to open a northern front in Iraq through non-Turkish routes,[89] the genuine Turkish hope that the parliament's decision might deter the war quickly faded away. The Chief of Staff, Hilmi Özkök, in one of his rare public statements, expressed their concern that the unilateral measures Turkey could be obliged to take for self-defence in case of the eruption of war might leave them facing the coalition forces. Turkey, with a view to avoiding the latter situation and obtaining war compensation, he advised bluntly, had to "choose the lesser evil" and help the US.[90]

The government responded positively to Özkök's concerns, looking into the matter from an exclusively national/instrumentalist perspective. Although the new government, formed in mid-March under Erdoğan's premiership following the lifting off of his political ban, could not seem to keep pace with the pressing war timetable of the Pentagon,[91] Ankara gave every sign to Washington that it intended

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[87] "'Savaşanlara yardımcı olmalıyız'", Milliyet, 6 March 2003. Those views were corroborated by Hilmi Özkök himself years later, Fikret Bilâ, "Tezkerenin geçmemesi bir anayasal kazadır", Milliyet, 1 Oct. 2007.

[88] Dexter Filkins, "Turkish deputies refuse to accept American troops", New York Times, 2 March 2003.

[89] Ibid.

[90] "'Savaşanlara yardımcı olmalıyız'", Milliyet, 6 March 2003.

[91] Veli Toprak, "Bush sıkıştı", Yeni Şafak, 14 March 2003.

to help in one way or another, seeking to maintain the MoU reached previously. Even the otherwise norm-bent president gave its support to that now mostly one-sided bargaining process, seeing that the unilateralist super power closed off all the doors of legitimating its efforts to disarm Iraq before the international community. However, at a time when the foreign policy executive in Ankara was seriously considering resubmitting the bill to the parliament, Washington's announcement that the MoU was no longer on the table led the government to prepare a new bill involving only the opening of the airspace to the warplanes of the coalition powers and the deployment of the Turkish military forces in northern Iraq.[92] The government clarified in its bill that as the UN route for the peaceful resolution of the conflict had been exhausted, it was seeking the permission of the parliament on the former out of Turkey's long-standing alliance relationship with the US and on the latter mainly for deterrence, not offensive, purposes with a view to implementing the parameters of Turkey's Iraq policy.[93] The bill was accepted by the parliament in another closed session by 332 votes against 202 with 1 abstention on 20 March 2003. Considering that the US and British warplanes used the Turkish airspace intensely to bomb several Iraqi targets in the following weeks and months[94] and to open a relatively lightly-armed northern front in Iraq in collaboration with the Kurdish peshmerga, the 20 March bill, along with the subsequent logistical support provided by Turkey,[95] met most of the US's need for Turkey to wage war. The government, which had sought hard a few months ago to prevent the war on both normative and instrumental grounds, ended up making Turkey, though indirectly, part of the US-led coalition for instrumental ends. The deployment of the Turkish army in northern Iraq, regarded generally as the most effective means by the state and political establishment to accomplish some of those ends, could not be realized, despite the permission of the parliament, in the face of the American (and Kurdish) opposition.

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[92] Elçin Ergün and Önder Yılmaz, "Tezkere daraldı", Milliyet, 19 March 2003; Yasemin Çongar, "'Tam tezkere olmazsa, para da gelmez'", Milliyet, 19 March 2003.

[93] TBMM Tutanak Dergisi (Minutes of the TGNA Debates), 20 March 2003.

[94] The Turkish Defence Minister, Vecdi Gönül told the parliament in December 2007 that the US airforce had used the Turkish airspace around 4300 times to fly into Iraq from the start of the war, TBMM Tutanak Dergisi (Minutes of the TGNA Debates), 11 Dec. 2007.

[95] Steven R. Weisman, "Powell patches things up, as Turkey consents to help", New York Times, 3 April 2003.

Concluding Remarks

In the run-up to the 2003 Iraq War, the behaviour of the Turkish government was informed by norms as well as interests. However, the government failed to adopt consistently either a principled stance or a pragmatic one vis-à-vis the pleas of its long-standing super power ally. Just as there were strong reasons and supportive conditions to be principled and to stay out of the looming war against its neighbour (i.e. parallel domestic and international norms regulating the use of force, and their advocacy by some state and political elites as well as the majority of the public), there were also many uncertainties associated with that war, the consequences of which seemed to closely concern, among others, Turkey's political future and security. The fear of the elites was that those consequences, if left unattended by distancing oneself from the US, might have exacerbated Turkey's long-standing critical insecurities concerning its national identity and territorial integrity as well as the fragile economy. Those combined with the regional and international insecurities such as the overall dependence and weakness of many Middle Eastern governments, the absence of any effective regional conflict-resolution mechanisms in the region, and the ineffectiveness of the outdated UN mechanisms to tackle the challenges of a unipolar world, made it too difficult for the government to consistently pursue a normative course of action, one that is solely based on international law.

The government, out of a sense of multi-level responsibility and of an (Islamic) identity-based and humanitarian impulse to be other- as well as self-regarding, clung to the normative path as long as it believed that such a course of action could have deterred the war and served the long-term interests of the domestic, Iraqi, regional and international communities. Such belief, in turn, was based on the genuine (but, in retrospect, naïve) reasoning that the Turkish support was essential to the US's war-making and that without such support the US would have found it too costly and too difficult to wage a war against Iraq. It seems that the Turkish policy-makers largely misread the US intentions (and determinacy!) on the Iraq issue. However, once such misreading was corrected by the subsequent US rhetoric and war-planning, the government, unaided by the material and institutional realities, increasingly found itself obliged to adopt an instrumental logic and act with a view to fulfilling the material and ideational interests of its domestic audience only. In this sense, the Turkish case supports the argument by Hinnebusch that any espoused norm or identity needs the support of a corresponding material structure for it to be viable. When the international legal norms of sovereignty and

the legitimate use of force were being challenged by the hegemonic power itself in the absence of a firm and coherent counter-hegemonic bloc at the international and/or regional levels, the Turkish policy-makers, for the reasons already explained, simply found it too difficult to comply with those norms. Within the context of a hegemonic challenge, the compliance as such increasingly seemed to the government as well as other elites in Ankara as turning a blind eye to the war-related national interests. Perhaps what relieved the government's conscience to a certain extent was that the looming war was not of Turkey's making, and that the government at least forced the limits of peacefully resolving the conflict at the regional level before starting negotiating with the Americans. Also, some of the items at the negotiation table were not all self-regarding. The Turkish insistence on the territorial integrity of Iraq and the national character of its oil-rich regions embodied other-regarding elements as well. However, from the perspective of logic of appropriateness, the Turkish behaviour turned problematic once the government proved unable to stand behind the historical decision of the Turkish parliament rejecting Turkey's support and participation in the war, and eventually found itself violating the international (and domestic) norms by aiding the illegal and illegitimate US war effort in certain ways. However, those norms were violated not because they were deemed vague and hence open to multiple interpretations, but because Ankara simply perceived them as lacking the necessary material and institutional support required for their viability. At a time when the otherwise more powerful opponents of the war (the European bloc led by France and Germany) too opened their airspace to the war aircraft of 'the coalition of the willing', Turkey did not feel secure and strong enough to hold onto the principles of international law alone. The logic of consequences prevailed in the absence of material and institutional structures upholding those legal principles.

Acknowledgement

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