Chapter 13

The Kurdish Question and Turkish Foreign Policy

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The end of the Cold War and the collapse of the Soviet Union and former Yugoslavia brought to light the challenge of multi-ethnic and multicultural demands facing nation-states. The violence that surrounded Iraq's repression of the Kurdish rebellion at the end of the Gulf War in 1991 and the many ethnic conflicts in the Balkans and the Caucasus have been the more brutal manifestations of the difficulties associated with the failure of governments to adjust to what political scientist Crawford Young called "the rising tide of cultural pluralism" and "the disuniting of the nation."[1] During the 1990s, Turkey also faced an ever intensifying questioning of its national identity and unity, particularly from its Kurdish population. The failure to accommodate Kurdish ethnicity and culture has been an important factor that has led to the deaths of thousands of civilians and the displacement of masses of people, as well as severe human rights violations.[2] This failure has also caused many governments and international political actors to be drawn into the conflict between Turkey and the Kurds. As a result, the Kurdish question became internationalized and came to dominate a significant proportion of Turkey's foreign policy. Issues ranging from Turkey's membership of the European Union (EU) to getting the international community to choose to transport Caspian and Central Asian oil through Turkey became linked to this question.

The extent to which the Kurdish problem came to dominate Turkish foreign policy was probably best exemplified by the saga concerning the capture of the leader of the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), Abdullah Öcalan, by Turkish authorities in Kenya in February 1999.[3] The saga started in October 1998, the very month that the seventy-fifth anniversary

of the foundation of the Turkish Republic was being celebrated. Syria expelled Öcalan, subsequent to a Turkish threat of military intervention. In November, matters reached a climax when Öcalan was arrested in Italy on his way from Russia, where his initial demand for asylum had not been granted. A legal and diplomatic battle occurred between Turkey and Italy over the extradition of Öcalan to face trial in Turkey. A wide assortment of political actors participated in this battle. They ranged from those calling for the extradition of Öcalan to Turkey, such as the U.S. government, to former Italian communist parties seeking to grant him asylum. There were also many non-governmental organizations (NGOs) involved in this battle, for example, the Helsinki Watch, a prominent U.S.-based human rights organization, which called for Öcalan's trial for crimes against humanity in an international tribunal. Eventually, Öcalan was forced to slip out of Italy (in January 1999) and for days flew the skies of Europe in an unsuccessful attempt to find refuge until he was captured in Kenya.

Öcalan was tried and sentenced to death in June 1999. However, during and after his trial, he substantially moderated his views. He advocated greater democratization and pluralism in Turkey as a solution to the Kurdish problem, rather than secessionism or a federal solution.[4] In August, he even called for an end to the use of violence by the PKK and urged his militants to turn themselves in to the Turkish authorities as a gesture of good will. This was followed by general moderation on the part of Kurds in Turkey. Relations with the West took an unprecedented turn for the better, resulting in a major improvement in Turkey's relations with the EU and the United States. This new trend culminated in the visit of President Clinton to Turkey in November and the EU's decision in December to accept Turkey as a candidate for membership. Subsequently, the EU required Turkey to meet a minimum set of democratic criteria for accession negotiations to start. These developments were accompanied by a growing commitment on the part of the Turkish government and political leaders to support greater democratization and reforms in Turkey. In October 2001 the Turkish parliament adopted a series of critical amendments to the Turkish constitution and in August 2002 was able to adopt the necessary legislation to give effect to these amendments, as a result of which broadcasting and education in Kurdish became legal for the first time in the history of the Turkish Republic. This was accompanied by a decision abolishing capital punishment, enabling Öcalan's death sentence to be commuted to life imprisonment in October 2002. These reforms have been recognized as a sign of the Turkish government's commitment to join the EU as well as a manifestation of the EU's ability to instigate political transformation in a candidate country.

The Kurdish question in Turkey had been a function of the state's failure to reconsider the definition of its national identity in a manner that would allow Kurds to express and live their ethnic and cultural identity in public. The problem was also aggravated by the PKK's armed struggle to set up a separate Kurdish state. Turkish security forces fought to prevent the PKK from achieving its goal. Traditionally, there were two approaches to the Kurdish question in Turkey.[5] The dominant and hard-line approach had seen the problem as externally driven and has pursued what is basically a military way of dealing with it. The more moderate and liberal approach has seen the problem mostly as a denial of Kurdish cultural and ethnic identity, and has advocated political reforms in support of greater democracy and pluralism in Turkey, and economic reforms aimed at achieving greater development in the east and southeast of Turkey, where traditionally most Kurds have lived. The hard-line approach long dominated governmental decision-making in Turkey, regarding both domestic and foreign policymaking. However, after the capture of Öcalan, the gap between moderates and hard-liners diminished. A number of factors have played a role in this development, most importantly the improvement of relations with the West. The prospects of EU membership strengthened the commitment to introduce political reforms. At the same time, many Kurdish politicians and leaders expressed a desire to work within the political system to find a solution to the Kurdish problem. This clearly made it much easier to raise and debate reforms in respect to the Kurdish problem, without risking the wrath of hard-liners.

The focus of this chapter is Turkey's relations with its neighbors, as well as with Europe and the United States. The manner in which Turkish foreign policy and Turkey's relations with the external world have been affected by the Kurdish problem is also analyzed. The chapter argues that the conspicuous improvement in Turkey's relations with the West, and especially the EU's decision to open the way to Turkish membership, has created an environment conducive to solving the Kurdish problem. Those who have long argued that the West, and particularly the EU, could play a critical role in helping to improve and consolidate democratic pluralism in Turkey may actually be proved right. It is also in such a climate that the liberal and hard-line views on the Kurdish problem may stand the best chance of being reconciled. This reconciliation is much more likely to occur and to be consolidated if the EU remains engaged in efforts to bring about Turkey's membership. A concrete manifestation of this would be the offer by the EU of a date for starting accession negotiations.

Turkey and the Kurdish Problem

The founders of the Turkish Republic led by Atatürk aimed to transform the decrepit Ottoman Empire into a modern and secular republic. In this respect emphasis was given to developing a sense of nationhood based on the Turkish language. In the context of the 1920s, this was an important step in transforming a traditional society where identities were local and often religiously defined. In the Ottoman Empire, particularly, ethnic identities among the Muslim population did not carry much significance beyond the cultural and the linguistic. The common bond was Islam. This emphasis remained an important driving force behind the national resistance and liberation struggle from 1919 to 1922. Kurdish tribal leaders held important positions in this struggle, as well as in the first national assembly formed in April 1920. Interestingly, during this period, of the 23 rebellions that occurred, only three were Kurdish. The most important of the three was the Alevi Koçgiri rebellion in 1921, to which Sunni Kurdish tribes refused to lend support.[6]

However, with the declaration of the Republic in 1923 and the abolition of the caliphate in 1924, accompanied by a series of social and political reforms, the newly born state took an increasingly modernist and secularist character. This process included a redefinition of the national identity, with an emphasis on territoriality rather than religion. For the founders of the Turkish Republic, the European, and in particular, the French, experience of the past century was central to their project.[7] The 1924 constitution defined a "Turk" as anyone living within the boundaries of Turkey and attached to Turkey by bonds of citizenship. Legally, the state would be indifferent to a citizen's religious or ethnic identity. Yet, right from the very start it was clear that, in practice, matters would evolve differently. The indication of this divergence came during the assembly debate on citizenship, when a member of the assembly, with striking frankness, remarked that the legal definition was fine, but that the "real" citizens of Turkey were Hanafi Muslims who spoke Turkish.[8] Such an approach risked leaving not only Kurds, who mostly did not speak Turkish and belonged to the Shafi branch of Sunni Islam, outside the definition of "real" citizenship in the new Turkish Republic, but also Arabs and Alevis.

Building a modern, secular, and national state was not an easy task. Considerable resistance was encountered from many quarters, but the most persistent was that which came from Kurdish-populated areas of the country. Of the 18 rebellions that broke out against the government between 1924 and 1938, 17 were in eastern Anatolia, and 16 of them involved Kurds.[9] Interestingly, none of these rebellions included Kurdish

Alevi tribes. Clearly, a secular state, in which the bias against the Alevis had not yet made itself evident, seemed preferable to the Ottoman state that had traditionally discriminated against them. The Alevi Koçgiri tribe, which had rebelled earlier, refused to join the infamous Shaykh Said rebellion of 1925 led by Sunni Kurds.[10] The Kurdish rebellions were fueled partly by a local elite, who resented the centralized power of the modernist state, and partly by a sense of Kurdish political consciousness. By 1939, all such insurrections had been suppressed, and the authority of the central state stood unchallenged.

In the first decades of the republican era, policies aiming to mold a diverse mosaic of ethnic and cultural identities into a Turkish national identity were also undertaken. Emphasis was put on the Turkish language, as well as Turkish culture and history, as interpreted by the Turkish Language and History Societies.[11] The efforts of these two societies were focused on developing and disseminating arguments to mobilize the public behind a homogenous identity characterized by the Turkish language and the idea that all persons living in Turkey were Turks who were descendants of a people who migrated out of Central Asia, as bearers of civilization. The government also introduced immigration and resettlement policies to assimilate diverse ethnic and cultural identities into a Turkish identity. A conscious effort was made to settle Turkish-speaking immigrants from the Balkans among the Kurds, while resettling some of the more rebellious tribes in western parts of Turkey.[12]

The mid-1930s coincided with government efforts to deny the very existence of a separate ethnic Kurdish identity and instead advocate the notion that Kurds were "mountain Turks." By the 1950s, it seemed that this approach had achieved reasonable success, as many Kurds and other ethnic groups in Turkey melted into a Turkish national identity. But by the late 1960s, a number of leftist groups began to raise the Kurdish question as an issue. The government met the challenge by adopting policies ranging from co-option to repression and continued to deny the existence of a separate Kurdish identity. The Kurdish problem became aggravated in the mid-1980s, as the PKK emerged as an organization seeking secession and began to attack civilian as well as military targets. This violence and the human rights violations resulting from the operations of the security forces against the PKK, together with the activities of Kurdish organizations, helped to raise consciousness among Turkish citizens of Kurdish origin.[13]

This growing sense of ethnic and cultural consciousness among many Kurds engendered two main and competing approaches toward the problem on the part of policymakers. Each approach defines the prob-

lem differently, and the policies it propounds reflect its particular bias in analysis.

The hard-line approach, very briefly, is the one that argues that there is no Kurdish problem, but a problem of terror, aggravated by the economic and social problems of southeastern Turkey and the support given to the PKK by the international community. This way of thinking was for a long time supported by the military as well as the government. This approach had the upper hand beginning in 1993, when Tansu Çiller formed the government, following the death of President Turgut Özal and the ascent of former Prime Minister Süleyman Demirel to the presidency. One reason why the strictly military response prevailed was the fact that in 1993, the PKK seemed to be on the verge of leading a popular uprising. At that time, the PKK could almost run "liberated zones" and impose its own law and order (extorting taxes, preventing political parties from operating, banning the Turkish media, and punishing "collaborators" from these areas). Once the policy was adopted, the PKK was substantially weakened by a long series of security operations in southeastern and eastern Turkey and in northern Iraq.[14]

The advocates of this hard-line approach have argued that once terrorism is eradicated, then economic and social programs associated with the Southeastern Anatolia Project (GAP) would resolve the problems of the region.[15] Immediately after Öcalan's capture, this position was reinforced. Süleyman Demirel, in an interview with the Turkish daily *Milliyet*, dismissed the possibility of any language reforms for Kurds, arguing that Turkey had one official language. He went on to say that in Turkey there were many ethnic groups with their own languages, and that the only way to protect the unity of the country was with one language; he added that he was against broadcasting in Kurdish.[16] His remarks were accompanied by Prime Minister Bülent Ecevit's announcement in March 1999 of a special financial package to boost the economy of the Kurdish-populated provinces of southeastern Turkey. There was also a promise of a repentance law for PKK members who turned themselves in. Ecevit's package did not make any reference to a Kurdish problem, even when he went to the most Kurdish of cities in Turkey, Diyarbakir, to launch it.[17] In the national elections of April 1999, this hard-line approach appeared to receive public endorsement. Ecevit's Demokratik Sol Parti (Democratic Left Party, DSP) received the highest percentage of the votes, followed by the right-wing Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi (Nationalist Action Party, MHP)—long a supporter of the hard-line approach.

However, soon after the formation of a coalition government led by Ecevit's DSP and including the MHP and the Ana Vatan Partisi (Motherland Party, ANAP), this hard-line approach began to erode. One impor-

tant factor was the discourse that Öcalan adopted during his trial throughout May and June. In his defense statements, he repented the death and destruction caused by the PKK and promised that he would be willing to serve Turkey, if his life were spared. His advocacy of greater democracy and pluralism coincided with the new government's aim of a more liberal democracy and an improvement in Turkey's human rights record. Ecevit played a critical role in this respect, and in a personal letter to the newly elected social democrat chancellor of Germany, Gerard Schröder, just before the EU's June summit in Cologne, he expressed his government's determination to meet the Copenhagen criteria of the EU.[18] According to these criteria, prospects of membership require that a candidate country achieve stability of institutions guaranteeing democracy, the rule of law, human rights, and respect for and protection of minorities. This was the turning point at which the political process was set in motion that led to the EU's formal acceptance of Turkey's candidacy. In June, the government also succeeded in pushing through parliament a constitutional amendment removing the military judge who was to hear Öcalan's case from the state security courts. This reform had been demanded earlier by a decision of the European Court of Human Rights and was considered in Europe to be an important step toward ensuring a fair trial for Öcalan.

During the course of 1999, a series of unprecedented developments occurred. After the August 1999 earthquake disaster in Turkey, the government took a relatively constructive attitude in the face of a massive amount of public criticism. This was manifested in a willingness to work with the international community in disaster relief but, more importantly, also demonstrated a new readiness to work with Turkish civilian groups. In October 1999, the minister responsible for human rights in Turkey, Mehmet Ali Irtemçelik, held a conference with human rights organizations and other NGOs and expressed a willingness to work more closely with them.[19] Just before the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) summit held in Istanbul, the government allowed the pre-summit gathering of NGOs to take place without any interference, thus reflecting a major change in attitude compared to the treatment that many NGOs had received during the UN Habitat II summit held in Istanbul in June 1996. During this summit some events organized by NGOs were interrupted by the police or prevented from taking place. Furthermore, during the OSCE summit, government officials, including the president, made statements about the need to improve Turkey's democracy and human rights. Most striking was, of course, the occasion when President Demirel, during his meeting with President Clinton, publicly ac-

knowledged that Turkey had a problem concerning the use of torture and that the government was determined to address it.[20]

Another critical development weakening the hard-line position on the Kurdish problem was the shift in position of the PKK and the increase in the number of moderate Kurdish views. Kurdish opinion throughout the 1990s was largely dominated by the PKK. Few Kurdish public figures dared to deviate from this position, and those who did, did not find a very receptive environment for their views, so far as the Turkish government was concerned. Many remained silent, and some simply advocated the government line. The PKK's decision to drop its armed struggle and its secessionist agenda in support of democratization and pluralism helped to generate a lively debate in Kurdish circles. A number of political movements supportive of a moderate Kurdish agenda emerged. This was very much reflected in an interview given by the mayor of Diyarbakir, Ferridun Çelik, a member of the pro-Kurdish Halkin Demokrasi Partisi (People's Democracy Party, HADEP). He argued that the violence and separatist agenda of the Kurdish movement had not helped solve the Kurdish problem in Turkey and maintained that his party was committed to seeking a solution to the problem through democratization and pluralism in Turkey.[21] This approach probably explains why, compared to previous years, the relationship between HADEP and the Turkish state was much more positive, or at least much less confrontational. Earlier in 1999, attempts by state prosecutors to have the party closed down on the grounds of its advocacy of separatism were overruled by the constitutional court. HADEP participated in the elections of April 1999. Although it was unable to win seats at the parliament during the national elections, it won mayoral positions in 37 districts, mostly in Kurdish-populated parts of the country. The central government appears to have learned to live with HADEP-led local governments.

Lastly, the decision to dissolve the "Kurdish parliament in exile," mostly dominated by the PKK, at its session in Brussels in September 1999, also helped to improve the political climate.[22] This parliament had long been a source of serious tension between Turkey and the many European countries where it held its sessions.

The effects of moderation became visible among the military too. Early in September 1999, the chief of general staff pointed out that there was in Turkey *de facto* broadcasting in Kurdish. In December he also declared that the military did not want to become involved in the decision as to whether or not the execution of Öcalan should be carried out. That decision, he argued, lay with the government.[23] At its end-of-year meeting, the National Security Council (NSC) discussed the possibility of lift-

ing the emergency rule, which severely restricted civil rights and gave the authorities overarching security powers over a number of Kurdish-populated areas.[24] This rule had been in place since 1987 and was frequently blamed as the cause of human rights violations. Its termination has long been called for by moderates, and all political parties represented in the parliament gave their support to this change.[25] In parallel with efforts to adopt EU-related reforms, the number of Kurdish provinces under emergency rule was progressively reduced and the rule in the last two remaining provinces of Diyarbakir and Sirnak was extended for the final time in June 2002.

In spite of these developments, it should be noted that the hard-liners in Turkey argue that reforms granting cultural rights to Kurds constitute a threat to the unity and territorial integrity of Turkey. Members of the parliament belonging to MHP voted against these reforms as well as the lifting of the capital punishment. They accused other members of the parliament of wanting to save the life of Öcalan for the sake of pleasing the EU rather than giving priority to Turkey's national interest.[26] But the MHP was decisively defeated in the November 2002 elections and left with no seats in the parliament. This has weakened the ability of the hard-liners to obstruct the adoption and implementation of political reforms directly addressing the Kurdish problem.

The second, more liberal, approach starts with the premise that in essence, the Kurdish problem is a product of increasing demands by Kurds to express their cultural and ethnic identity and the inability of Turkey to adjust to these demands. After a decades-old policy of denial, this new approach first officially surfaced in the late 1980s under Turgut Özal's presidency. He made it known that he was partly of Kurdish descent and initiated contacts with the Kurdish leadership in northern Iraq, just before the refugee crisis of April 1991. He also played a critical role in seeing through the adoption of legislation that rescinded the law that had banned the public use of the Kurdish language. Following the 1991 national elections, Süleyman Demirel, the new prime minister and leader of the Dogru Yol Partisi (True Path Party, DYP), in the company of his coalition partner, Erdal İnönü, made what at the time was considered to be a historic speech. He argued that Turkey had to recognize the Kurdish reality and could not continue to pretend that Kurds were Turks who had originally come from Central Asia.[27] The speech and the program of the newly formed coalition seemed to be offering the possibility of introducing measures that would eventually enable the Kurds in Turkey to maintain their Kurdish ethnic and cultural identity as Turkish citizens.

This was a period when society debated the Kurdish problem at length, but it was also a period marred by violence, coinciding as it did

with the saga of Halkin Emek Partisi (People's Labor Party, HEP) and its successor, Demokrasi Partisi (Democracy Party, DEP). The radical nationalist rhetoric adopted by the leaderships of these two Kurdish nationalist parties provoked the hard-liners in the parliament into action. Both parties were shut down, and this action was followed by the sentencing of DEP members of parliament to varying lengths of prison terms for advocating separatism and supporting the PKK. This development signaled the fall of the more liberal approach from favor.[28] Subsequently, many intellectuals (members of the civil society), as well as some politicians and members of government, continued to express support for this approach, but rather meekly and intermittently. To all intents and purposes, the liberal approach remained very much in the background until recently.

This situation began to change significantly by the summer of 1999. The expression of liberal views and opinions concerning the Kurdish problem became much more common, even popular, both within and outside government circles. One of the first striking expressions of such views came from Sükrü Elekdag, a former influential ambassador previously associated with hard-line views on the Kurdish problem.[29] In a set of articles, Elekdag argued that Turkey did not need to fear anything in allowing broadcasting in Kurdish and added that, in effect, this was already taking place. He also supported the idea that there should be some possibility of education in Kurdish.[30] Similar ideas had for a long time been put forward by many columnists, especially in liberal newspapers, but that a former high level bureaucrat should become their proponent showed the shift in opinion regarding the Kurdish problem. The liberal approach received a significant boost when the chief judge of the High Court of Appeals (Yargitay), Sami Selçuk, made a historic speech in which he stated that the current constitution had lost its legitimacy. He advocated a constitution and legal system that would open the way to a truly democratic and pluralist society with complete freedom of expression. Although he did not refer to the Kurdish problem directly, he did not leave any room for doubt as to where he thought the ideal solution lay when he maintained that individuals should be able to express their cultural identity freely.[31]

The chief judge's speech marks the beginning of a period during which an increasing number of politicians and members of the government energetically called for political reforms in support of greater democracy. However, until after the adoption of the constitutional amendments of October 2001 few politicians expressed support for reforms regarding the Kurdish populated provinces. The exceptions in government were Deputy Prime Minister Mesut Yilmaz, the leader of ANAP, and Foreign Minister Ismail Cem. Yilmaz had, on a number of occasions,

supported the idea of political reforms to allow for broadcasting and education in Kurdish. In December 1999, he paid a visit to Diyarbakir, the largest Kurdish-populated city in Turkey and a city whose population has been most directly affected by the violence and repression resulting from the confrontation between the PKK and security forces. There, he implied that Turkey's membership in the EU was linked to an improvement in the political and economic lot of the Kurds. Cem, by the same token, suggested during an interview that it might be possible to allow education in Kurdish.[32] Both Yilmaz and Cem met considerable criticism from hard-liners. Yilmaz was bitterly criticized by members of the MHP, including Deputy Prime Minister Devlet Bahçeli. An MHP member of the cabinet even went as far as accusing Yilmaz of "speaking like the PKK," adding that Turkey was a unitary state with one flag and one language.[33] In the case of Cem, there were calls that he should actually be prosecuted and tried for expressing such divisive views.[34]

The constitutional reforms of October 2001 ushered in a new era in Turkish politics. In particular an amendment to Article 26 of the constitution opened the way to the possibility of the public use of languages other than Turkish.[35] Subsequently, a massive debate on broadcasting and education in Kurdish started that at times became very acrimonious. Ultimately, the moderate approach prevailed and the parliament adopted a series of specific reforms in August to meet the requirements to respect cultural rights of minorities in an attempt to meet the Copenhagen criteria of the EU. The parliament was also able to rise above the populist calls of the MHP to prevent the lifting of the death penalty. Undoubtedly, Turkey's aspirations to become a member of the EU and the pressing need to start negotiations for accession played a critical role in the political transformation of the Kurdish problem in Turkey that helped the moderate approach to prevail over the hard-line one. Nevertheless, the U.S. intervention against Saddam Hussein in March 2003 and the ensuing instability in Iraq have revived hard-liners' fears that a Kurdish state in northern Iraq could emerge and threaten Turkey's national unity and territorial integrity.

Turkish Foreign Policy and the Kurdish Question

In the late 1990s, Turkish foreign policy had been characterized by a conspicuous assertiveness. This can to a large extent be seen as an outcome of the hard-line policy adopted toward the PKK and the Kurdish problem during the 1990s. By 1995, the military was already confident that it had seriously weakened the PKK's presence in Turkey. In a series of military operations in the mountainous areas of southeastern Turkey, the PKK

was driven mostly into northern Iraq.[36] As a part of Turkey's denial of the existence of a Kurdish problem, the PKK had always been portrayed as an externally-supported organization whose aim was to weaken and divide Turkey. Such a portrayal is very much part of what in Turkey is commonly referred to as the "Sèvres syndrome," a concept popular among nationalist, as well as bureaucratic and military circles. It is based on the belief in a conspiracy and embodies the fear that the Treaty of Sèvres will be revived. (This was the treaty drawn up by the victorious powers at the end of the First World War that carved up the remaining Anatolian regions of the Ottoman Empire into small states and occupation zones.) Turkey is seen as surrounded by enemies who are efficient and can act in unison. The PKK is depicted as a tool of such a conspiracy. The conspirators are most of Turkey's neighbors and the West, including the United States.[37]

The immediate focus of attention became northern Iraq, where the PKK had succeeded in establishing a series of military bases from where they were able to mount attacks on Turkey. The infighting between the two opposing Kurdish groups in northern Iraq, the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK), had created an environment conducive for the PKK to consolidate itself there.[38] In March 1995, Turkey mounted a massive military operation involving 35,000 troops and lasting six weeks.[39] This was an operation very different from the frequent previous incursions mounted in pursuit of the PKK. It signaled the beginning of a new strategy that aimed to deny northern Iraq to the PKK.

Turkey had played a leading role in the adoption of Security Council Resolution 688, and then the establishment of a safe haven north of the 36th parallel, in an effort to ensure the repatriation of almost half a million mostly Kurdish refugees who had fled from the Iraqi military.[40] The task of managing the return of these refugees and then ensuring their safety fell to Operation Provide Comfort (OPC), composed of mostly U.S. and British military personnel. Once the repatriation was completed, the military wing was withdrawn to a NATO base in southern Turkey, from where they have continued to operate on six-month mandates granted by the Turkish parliament. From its earliest days, OPC was highly controversial in Turkey, and many suspected that it was helping the PKK as well as assisting the establishment of a Kurdish state in northern Iraq.[41] The presence of a large number of NGOs, together with a forward military office of OPC in Zakho, known as the Military Coordination Command (MCC), remained a continuous source of friction between Turkey and the United States. The problem was also aggravated by U.S. policies

aimed at organizing Iraqi opposition to the regime of Saddam Hussein, using as cover the NGOs operating in the area.

In the fall of 1994, in an attempt to address the problem, Foreign Minister Mümtaz Soysal introduced new, more stringent rules to regulate the entry of NGOs into northern Iraq from Turkey.[42] However, the security problem in northern Iraq from Turkey's perspective was not resolved until 1996. First, in May 1996, yet another Turkish massive military operation into northern Iraq took place after the PKK forced out villagers from KDP-controlled areas near the border.[43] The operation uprooted the PKK from the area, with the cooperation of the KDP, and then left behind significant units to support the KDP in patrolling the area. Second, in August 1996, the KDP mounted an attack on PUK-held territory, with the support of the Iraqi military. This led to panic among NGO workers and the locally hired personnel, culminating in a U.S. decision to evacuate. The closure of the MCC office and the departure of Americans significantly strengthened the hand of Turkey and that of its local ally, the KDP, in continuing to confront the PKK. Last, in November of the same year, the KDP and the PUK signed a cease-fire. From the Turkish military's point of view, this was a significant development that increased the possibility that the KDP would confront the PKK. A diplomatic effort that became known as the "Ankara process" was launched, with the aim of consolidating both the cease-fire and Turkey's influence in northern Iraq. Both parties were reminded of their economic and security dependence on Turkey. Turkey was northern Iraq's only major access to the external world and was also the host of OPC, policing the safety zone against the Iraqi military. By 1997, there had already been a significant fall in the PKK's ability to operate in northern Iraq and attack Turkey from there. In 1998, another major blow was inflicted on the PKK, when one of its leading commanders, Semdin Sakik, after having broken ranks with the PKK leadership, was apprehended and brought for trial to Turkey.[44] Since Öcalan's call for an end to the armed struggle, most PKK militants have left Turkey and retreated into northern Iraq. At its Seventh Congress meeting in January 2000 in northern Iraq, the PKK leadership endorsed Öcalan as their leader and approved his decision to end the armed struggle. The congress also decided to reorganize various branches of the PKK to wage a political rather than an armed struggle.[45] Furthermore, Turkey has continued to maintain a small but effective military presence in northern Iraq as well as considerable influence over KDP and PUK leadership to preempt remaining PKK militants from contemplating any attacks on Turkey. The September 11, 2001, attacks on the twin towers in New York and the Pentagon and the subsequent war on terrorism also facilitated Turkey's efforts to keep the PKK subdued. Nevertheless, Turkey

continues to be concerned about the prospects of a "Kurdish state" emerging in northern Iraq, particularly in the aftermath of the U.S. military intervention against Saddam Hussein's regime.[46] This concern was expressed in a very forceful manner immediately after the reconvening of the Kurdish parliament in Erbil in October 2002.

A greater assertiveness in foreign policy was also reflected in Turkey's relations with Iran and Syria. After the revolution in Iran, relations between it and Turkey have frequently suffered a downturn. Turkey often accused Iran of supporting Islamic fundamentalist groups operating in Turkey. Yet, in spite of these crises, the two countries by and large managed to maintain a working relationship. However, as the military operations against the PKK in Turkey and in northern Iraq intensified, Turkey increasingly accused Iran of harboring the PKK and providing it with logistical support. Iran has always rejected these accusations, but continued PKK attacks in areas adjacent to the Iranian border increased the tension between the two countries.[47] It has even been rumored that a frustrated Turkish government considered a military attack on PKK bases in Iran in May 1995.[48] In April 1996, a major crisis occurred when the two countries exchanged accusations of espionage and support for terrorism. Yet another crisis erupted in July 1996, when the PKK mounted an attack on a Turkish military post on the Iranian border. The president visited the border and criticized Iran bitterly.[49]

During his premiership from July 1996 to June 1997, Necmettin Erbakan, the leader of the Islamist Refah (Welfare Party, WP) made visible efforts and expressed great enthusiasm to improve relations with Iran, but soon encountered bureaucratic and public objections. In August 1996, he was loudly censured for visiting a country considered to be supporting anti-Turkish terrorism. Similarly, in December 1996, during the visit by Iranian President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, Erbakan's desire to reach a defense cooperation agreement with Iran was vetoed by General Staff and Defense Minister Turhan Tayan of the DYP. The following month, the Turkish foreign ministry accused Iran of supplying the PKK with heavy weapons, including Katyusha rockets. Relations with Iran deteriorated further when the Iranian ambassador in Ankara became embroiled in an Islamic fundamentalist gathering in a suburb of Ankara in February 1997, which eventually, under heavy military pressure, triggered the dissolution of the WP-led coalition government.[50] This led to a recall of ambassadors, and in December 1997, President Demirel found himself leaving the Islamic Conference Organization's summit in Tehran early, when his Iranian hosts tried to censure Turkey for its relations with Israel. Subsequent relations with Iran appear to have improved somewhat, partly through the launching by Foreign Minister Cem, in February

1998, of the "Neighborhood Forum," which aims to improve relations with neighboring Middle Eastern countries. The improvement of relations has become relatively easier since the PKK stopped mounting armed operations out of Iran. During the visit of Iranian Foreign Minister Kamal Harrazi, his Turkish counterpart insisted that a difference in style of regimes should not constitute an obstacle to friendly and cooperative relations. Harrazi in his turn announced that his government was opposed to the PKK and did not support its activities.[51] But Prime Minister Bülent Ecevit had argued, only a month earlier, that the new sponsor of the PKK was Iran.[52] Against the pragmatism of the foreign ministry, the Turkish military also continues to believe that Iran supports terrorism in Turkey. This belief was reinforced and led to bitter accusations against Iran when, in February 2000, a series of gruesome graves of victims of Turkish Hezbollah violence were unearthed and the culprits apprehended by the police. With Iran's national elections during the Spring of 2000 producing a parliament dominated by reformists and Iran's conscious efforts to distance itself from terrorism since the September 11, 2001, attacks there has also been a marked improvement in Iranian-Turkish relations. The improvement was marked by the Turkish president's visit to Iran in June 2002. The visit itself and the support for Turkey's membership of the EU expressed by his counterpart Mohammed Khatami, as well as the latter's recognition of Turkey's Western and indirectly secular vocation, were regarded as an important signs of reconciliation.[53] These may be indications that the bitterness resulting from Turkish accusations of Iranian support for the PKK may have been left in the past.

Turkey had long maintained that Syria was harboring Öcalan in Damascus, but this was denied by Syria on every occasion. Erbakan had argued, in a major break from well-established practice, just before forming his coalition government, and in an effort to improve relations with Syria, that Syria was not supporting the PKK.[54] In late 1997 and early 1998, a number of meetings took place between Syrian and Turkish foreign ministry officials. However, before these meetings could produce any positive results, relations soured when, during a radio program, the Syrian ambassador to the United States raised the sensitive issue of the province of Hatay.[55] Turkish authorities protested at what they considered to be an irredentist claim from Syria directed at Turkey's territorial integrity. The situation worsened in September 1998. Chief of General Staff Hüseyin Kivrikoglu argued that, because of Syrian support for the PKK, there actually was an undeclared war going on between Turkey and Syria. The Turkish government called on Syria to stop its support for Öcalan, while the Turkish military began to mass on the border. Prime Minister Mesut Yilmaz argued that Turkey was determined to end Syrian support for

Öcalan. Since the PKK had been defeated, Syria had to stop supporting Öcalan in order to end the threat posed by the PKK.[56] The crisis was resolved without violence when the Egyptian president's mediation paid off, and Syria eventually expelled Öcalan. The hard-liners had clearly achieved a major victory. The PKK had been weakened substantially, first within Turkey, then in northern Iraq, and now the actual leader of the PKK had been forced out of Syria. Since then, bilateral relations have started to improve. A symbolic expression of this occurred during the Muslim holidays in January 2000 at the end of Ramadan, when the two governments allowed local people living in the region of the border town of Ceylanpinar to visit their friends and families.[57] For decades the border had been closed for such visits. Societal interactions as well as trade between the two countries have significantly increased.

The elite of Turkey, loyal to the concept of a modern and secular Turkey, always considered membership in the EU and integration with Europe to be their ultimate goal. As Süleyman Demirel put it, "one of the main thrusts of Turkish foreign policy is to realize Turkey's perennial drive to integrate fully with Europe."[58] The long relationship that had begun in the early 1960s was always expected to evolve naturally into membership in the EU.[59] In 1989, when the European Commission finally turned down a Turkish application for membership, many in Turkey considered it a temporary setback. The general belief was that further democratization and the consolidation of the liberalization of the Turkish economy would eventually create the circumstances for membership.[60] But relations between Turkey and the EU began to deteriorate in 1993, as the Kurdish problem in Turkey became aggravated and the PKK in Europe became increasingly successful in mobilizing the Kurdish diaspora and leading campaigns against Turkey. This was reflected in a growing barrage of criticisms directed against Turkey for violating the human rights of Kurds. As a result of such public censure, some governments imposed arms embargoes on Turkey, and the European Parliament (EP) suspended financial assistance to Turkey.

One important factor that has influenced Western European attitudes toward Turkey is the presence of an active Kurdish community. There are no reliable statistics on the number of Kurds living in Europe. The director of the Kurdish Institute in Paris, Kendal Nazan, puts their number at 850,000 and estimates 10 percent to be supporters of the PKK.[61] The majority reside in Germany, and most of them arrived as part of a massive labor migration from Turkey to Germany during the 1960s and, to a lesser extent, in the 1970s. In the 1980s, after the military coup in Turkey, a growing number of Kurds, often supporters or activists of the PKK, sought asylum in Germany and some of the other European countries.[62]

Many of the asylum seekers came to constitute the cadre of PKK front organizations in Europe. These organizations are involved in numerous activities, ranging from running nationalist publications to raising, often through extortion and drug trafficking, large sums of money for the PKK. The PKK also runs MED-TV, a television station broadcasting across Europe. It founded the Kurdish parliament-in-exile in April 1995. Because of PKK dominance in this parliament, a number of Kurdish organizations, for example, the Kurdish Socialist Party, led by the veteran and moderate Kemal Burkay, as well as the KDP and PUK, declined to join it.[63] Before its dissolution in September 1999, the parliament met in a number of capitals around Europe and developed extensive contacts with representatives from various European political parties. This enabled the PKK to mobilize considerable support among politicians and public figures in Europe. The activities of the PKK across Europe and among the Kurdish diaspora played a central and critical role in raising awareness of Kurdish national identity.[64] The success of the PKK was very much reflected by the large number of Kurds it mobilized across Europe to protest the capture of Öcalan. At the same time, however, the PKK to a great extent also stifled alternative voices among the Kurds in Europe. One important consequence of this was that many among the European public and politicians came to consider the PKK as representing the Kurds in Turkey.[65]

This situation is possibly best demonstrated in a resolution adopted by the EP in December 1998, following the crisis between Turkey and Italy over the extradition of Öcalan to Turkey. The resolution bitterly criticized Turkey and called for an international conference to find a political solution to the Kurdish problem in Turkey. What was particularly striking was that the resolution referred to "terrorist activities of certain Kurdish organizations" but did not mention the PKK by name. This vividly demonstrates the legitimization that the PKK appears to have received in the EP. In 1992, for example, Jas Gawronski had resisted efforts by some left-wing members of the parliament to introduce amendments to his EP report recognizing the "Kurdish people's right to self-determination including independence." Instead the report had called the PKK a terrorist organization and had acknowledged Turkey's right to defend itself against terrorism.[66] However, the fact that the Kurds were referred to as a minority[67] was enough for the Turkish government to distance itself from the report and the EP. Nevertheless, this report was clearly much more balanced and less partisan than the December 1998 resolution of the EP. A retired ambassador, Gündüz Aktan, in a general study of EP resolutions on Turkey, considers the December 1998 resolution a violation of Turkey's sovereignty.[68]

The difference between the 1992 report and the December 1998 resolution is indicative of the extent to which relations between Turkey and the EP deteriorated, as a result of the Kurdish question. The shutdown of the DEP, a Kurdish nationalist party, and the removal of its members' immunity in the Turkish parliament in March 1994, followed by their being sentenced to prison in December, provoked adverse reactions from the EP. As a result, the EU found itself having to postpone the signing of the Customs Union (CU) treaty with Turkey until March 1995. The EP held up the ratification of the treaty until after Turkey amended the constitution and other laws to introduce greater freedom of expression and association.[69]

The ratification was also the product of considerable lobbying and pressuring emanating from the larger members of the EU and the European Commission. An important argument used was that closer economic relations with Turkey would give the EU considerable leverage on human rights issues and greater democratization.[70] The EP did eventually yield to this pressure, but soon after ratifying the treaty it flexed its muscles against Turkey. During the budget discussions in October 1996, the EP decided to suspend some of the financial aid package agreed upon in the context of the CU, on the grounds of continuing violations of human rights in Turkey.[71] The resignation of Erbakan's coalition government in June 1997, under pressure from the military, and the subsequent closure of the Islamic WP worsened relations between Turkey and the EP and provoked strong criticisms of Turkish democracy and the military. The wave of Kurdish asylum seekers that arrived on the shores of Italy in November 1997 became another source of conflict between Turkey and the EP. During this period, Turkey refused to maintain any relations or dialogue with the EP. This was part of the government decision to suspend political relations with the EU in protest at the decision taken at the EU Luxembourg Summit not to include Turkey among the next group of countries eligible for accession to the EU. This, in many ways, neutralized any leverage that the EP could have enjoyed over Turkey. One concrete manifestation of this was the refusal by the Turkish government to allow a group of members of the EP to visit Öcalan in prison.[72]

The negative impact of the Kurdish question on Turkey's relations with the European Commission and the major members of the EU has been more limited.[73] Turkey is a major trading partner of the EU, and leading EU countries such as Germany, France, and Italy have large investments in Turkey. These interests, together with a preference for a policy of engagement, rather than the confrontation adopted by the EP, have led the EU to follow a more finely tuned policy toward Turkey. However, this does not mean that relations between the EU and Turkey have al-

ways been smooth. Germany, for example, imposed arms embargoes on Turkey, albeit temporarily. Leading members of the EU have on a number of occasions found themselves being critical of the military approach adopted by Turkey and suggested the need to seek a political solution to the Kurdish problem in Turkey. Calls for a political solution for the Kurdish problem coming from Europe were often evaluated through the perspective of the "Sèvres syndrome" and engendered strong reactions in Turkey. For example, in 1995, Süleyman Demirel reacted in an unusually forceful way when he interpreted remarks made by French Minister of Foreign Affairs Alain Juppé that Turkey should find a political solution to the Kurdish problem. Demirel argued that Juppé's statement was unequivocal evidence of Western intentions to create a Kurdish state in Turkey.[74]

A similar reaction was evoked by the report on Turkey that was prepared by the European Commission in November 1998. The report aimed to assess Turkey's progress toward accession to the EU on the basis of the political criteria adopted at the Copenhagen Summit in June 1993. The report found Turkey wanting in all of these criteria. Regarding the Kurdish problem, the report noted that "Turkey will have to find a political and non-military solution to the problem."[75] The references to minority rights and the need for a political solution provoked criticisms and even led to accusations of European aspiration to undermine Turkey's territorial integrity.[76] During an interview, President Demirel also expressed his discomfort over the need to meet the Copenhagen criteria on minority rights because of Turkey's genuine fear of separatism. He argued that such criteria imposed on Turkey could complicate its prospects of membership of the EU.[77]

Clearly, the Kurdish question is among one of the most important obstacles in the way of Turkey's membership in the EU. However, the stance that the EU took toward Turkey's membership also aggravated the prospects of Turkish democratization and liberalization, and in turn complicated the possibility of resolving the Kurdish conflict peacefully. This became very apparent in the light of significant political changes that occurred in Turkey after the EU opened the way to possible eventual Turkish membership, which had been preceded by the failure of the EU meeting in Vienna in December 1998 to endorse the European Commission's November 1998 report. The Turkish ambassador to the EU, Nihat Akyol, criticized the meeting for failing to respond positively to the new approach adopted by the European Commission and considered the meeting to have been a missed opportunity to improve relations between Turkey and the EU.[78]

Europe's earlier exclusion of Turkey caused the EU to lose its leverage over Turkey in terms of encouraging greater democratization and moderation on the Kurdish question. "The mixed messages coming from the EU unfortunately undermine its legitimacy, thereby decreasing Turkish trust and weakening the pro-European and pro-democratic arguments of the modernizing, Western oriented forces in Turkey."[79] This in turn played into the hands of hard-liners. As a journalist noted, as a result of the snub "most Turks no longer care what the EP has to say and the Turkish military feels less compunction about intervening assertively in political matters."[80] This was illustrated by the policies adopted toward the Kurdish question during the course of 1998. Once hard-liners felt Turkey did not have anything to lose, the way was open to carry the hard-line approach to the Kurdish problem to the external world and take greater risks in order to defeat the PKK outside the country. Turkey not only remained deaf to European criticism of Turkey's threat to use force against Syria, but around the same time rigorously confronted Italy for allowing the Kurdish parliament-in-exile to hold a session at the Italian parliament. The Kurdish parliament-in-exile had met previously in a number of European cities and attracted protests from Turkey, but none had been this intense. This turned out to be relatively mild compared to what was to come when Öcalan was found to be in Rome. Turkey entered into a bitter diplomatic and legal confrontation of the kind that had never been seen between Turkey and a Western European country, let alone a member of the NATO alliance. The Turkish public boycotted Italian products, and many big businesses canceled their contracts with Italian companies. This pressure has been cited as one of the important reasons why the Italian government forced Öcalan to leave the country, even before his asylum request had actually been decided upon.

The role that political and economic pressure played in the Italian decision to expel Öcalan and the consequent reluctance of any European government to accept him on their territory did not go unnoticed by the hard-liners. This must have emboldened the Turkish authorities to contemplate apprehending Öcalan and then to actually succeed in doing it. One other important development that strengthened the determination of the hard-liners to push their pursuit of Öcalan to its limit was the German decision not to seek the extradition of Öcalan to Germany to face trial for crimes committed there by the PKK under his instructions. Originally, Öcalan had been arrested under a German warrant. Germany had put political considerations ahead of legal ones when the newly formed coalition government led by Gerhard Schröder feared that putting Öcalan on trial could lead to unrest among the large Kurdish and Turkish communities in Germany. From the hard-line point of view, try-

ing Öcalan in Turkey seemed to entail the least risk. It meant that they could be in control of the process and domestically enjoy the political capital that would come with the trial of the person whom the majority of the Turkish population considered to be guilty of more than a decade's violence, sacrifice, and suffering.

At least domestically, this strategy paid off. Two political parties, the DSP and the MHP, most closely associated with hard-line policies toward the EU and the Kurdish question emerged triumphant from the national election in April 1999. In 1995, the MHP had failed to win votes above the 10 percent national threshold required to enter parliament. Commentators attributed the performance of the MHP partly to the general public's frustration with the treatment of Turkey by the EU and partly to its uncompromising stance against the PKK and moderate approaches to addressing the Kurdish question in Turkey.[81] The leaders of both parties were known for their reluctance toward fostering better relations with the EU. Bülent Ecevit, the leader of the DSP, had long been an advocate of the notion of developing much closer ties with countries from surrounding regions, in place of aggressively pursuing membership in the EU.[82] The MHP, on the other hand, traditionally has been apprehensive of membership in the EU on grounds of devolution of Turkish sovereignty, and instead favored much more intimate relations with Turkic states, as well as some of the states of the region, such as Israel, Jordan, Egypt, Georgia, and others.[83]

Nevertheless, relations between Turkey and the EU improved steadily after the formation of the new coalition government in June 1999 by Bülent Ecevit. The new climate even led Prime Minister Ecevit to change his previous views about the EU and become a vocal advocate of joining the EU and making the necessary reforms. His commitment to political reforms in support of greater democracy in Turkey, and the EU's positive response, brought the two sides much closer to each other, especially after the EU's decision to accept Turkey's candidacy for membership in December 1999. The pressures for political reforms in Turkey increased following the presentation to Turkey of the Accession Partnership document by the EU in November 2000. The document laid down a long list of economic, legal, and political reforms Turkey needed to introduce to be able to meet the Copenhagen criteria for starting accession negotiations. These included the adoption of cultural rights for minorities in Turkey. However, in a marked departure from the past and the progress report of 1998 mentioned above, the document shied from using the term 'minority," the use of which on many occasions had marred EU-Turkish relations. Instead, the EU, in this document and the new discourse it adopted, chose to use a much more subtle, inoffensive, and nuanced lan-

guage. It called for lifting of restrictions that deny Turkish citizens the possibility of broadcasting in their mother tongues as well as the need to assist cultural diversity and secure the cultural rights, including education in the mother tongue, of all Turkish citizens irrespective of their origin. The wording chosen not only manifested a conscious effort to avoid the use of "minority" but also emphasized cultural rather than minority rights. This situation gave the moderates in Turkey the opportunity to disarm the arguments of hard-liners in Turkey. The absence of references to minority rights and political solutions specially referring to Kurds meant that hard-liners could not argue their classic case centered on the notion of the Sèvres syndrome. Furthermore, it also became much more difficult to accuse moderates of being traitors. Undoubtedly, these developments were very significant in opening the way to the adoption of critical reforms in October 2001 and August 2002 that have helped to defuse the Kurdish problem to an important extent in Turkey. However, this should not mean that the problem has completely been resolved. In its most recent report in October 2002 the European Commission welcomed the reforms but pointed out that their implementation remained problematic. As a result, to the dismay of the Turkish government and public, the report failed to recommend the beginning of negotiations for membership.[84]

Then in a historic parliamentary election in November 2002 the Turkish electorate swept out of power the political parties that had made up the coalition that had governed since 1999. A critical member of this coalition, the right-wing nationalist MHP that had long bee associated with hard-line views on the Kurdish question was decisively defeated. Instead the Adalet ve Kalkinma Partisi (Justice and Development Party, AKP) won an absolute majority of the seats enabling it to form a government on its own. The Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi (Peoples' Republican Party, CHP) became the only opposition party in parliament. The AKP leadership and the government came out in a forceful and unequivocal manner in support of Turkey's membership of the EU as well as of a program of political reforms to meet the Copenhagen criteria. In an effort to mobilize support for setting a date for the beginning of accession negotiations with the EU, the government embarked on an intense campaign to lobby EU member governments during the run-up to the European Council Summit in Copenhagen of December 12–13, 2002. However, the government failed to obtain a clear date for the start of negotiations. Instead, Turkey was given December 2004 as a deadline for reviewing its progress in meeting the criteria for membership; depending on the progress achieved, an actual date for negotiations to start could be given for 2005. Many factors played a role in this decision. One of them clearly con-

cerned the EU's desire to see whether the new government would actually see through the implementation of political reforms adopted in August 2002 that promised education and broadcasting in Kurdish. On numerous subsequent occasions the government has expressed its commitment to implementing reforms. However, at the same time the government continues to meet resistance from various quarters within the Turkish state apparatus with regard to the implementation of these reforms. Paradoxically, many in Turkey have also argued that the EU indecisiveness in offering a date for Turkey has complicated the hand of the government against the hard-liners.

Compared to Europe, U.S. relations with Turkey on the Kurdish question were more ambiguous. The United States made an unequivocal distinction between the PKK and the Kurdish question. On the one hand, it did not hesitate to criticize Turkey bitterly on its human rights violations, and on the other, was unambiguously critical of the PKK and supported Turkey's struggle against the PKK. The United States for a long time listed the PKK among the terrorist groups monitored and covered by the *Global Terrorism Report.* For Turkish hard-liners, the U.S. position on the PKK was always in stark contrast to the ambiguous position toward the PKK taken in Europe. When Turkey's confrontation with Syria occurred, it was generally recognized that the United States brought pressure on Syria in favor of Öcalan's expulsion. Similarly, Öcalan's inability to stay on in Russia for very long before traveling to Italy was also attributed to U.S. influence behind the scenes. During the crisis between Italy and Turkey, the United States called for Öcalan's extradition to Turkey and took a stand against his being granted asylum, engendering considerable resentment from Italian Prime Minister Massimo D'Alema, who was known for his sympathetic feeling toward Kurds.[85] Lastly, the U.S. extended critical assistance to Turkey to enable Öcalan's capture in Kenya.[86] Hence, it was not surprising that Prime Minister Ecevit, soon after the capture of Öcalan, praised U.S. understanding and support for Turkey against the PKK.[87]

Yet, at the same time, the U.S. government, particularly the Congress, was deeply critical of human rights violations in Turkey. Turkey was regularly condemned in reports issued by the State Department. In 1995, one such report, prepared under instructions from the Congress, suggested that Turkey was using U.S. weapons against Kurdish civilians.[88] This led to reluctance on the part of the State Department to issue export licenses for a Turkish order of Super Cobra helicopters. These helicopters were particularly valued by the Turkish military because they were effective against the PKK in rugged and inaccessible mountainous terrain.[89] The importance attached to them prompted President Demirel, during his

March 1996 visit to the United States, to bring up the issue personally with President Clinton. This had little effect, and the Turkish general staff, receiving a letter from President Clinton critical of Turkey's human rights record, decided to cancel the order.[90]

A speech by U.S. Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbott in October 1998, in memory of the late Turgut Özal, provides another example of how the Kurdish question could sour relations between the two allies. Talbott noted that, as much as the importance of the strategic location of Turkey, what provided the driving force behind the friendship between the two countries was values central to the United States. In this regard, he was censorious of Turkey's human rights record and its failure to protect freedom of expression. While asserting that the United States was firmly behind Turkey's right to fight terrorism and defend its territorial integrity, he also noted that there could not be a solely military solution to the problems plaguing the southeast.[91] The speech was not particularly well received by hard-liners. A journalist who was present and known for holding views close to those of the government called the speech an "unexpected attack" and a "betrayal." He accused the United States of holding Turkey to double standards.[92]

Nevertheless, such criticisms and setbacks did not significantly undermine relations between Turkey and the United States. One important reason was the interdependence between the two countries on a number of strategically important issues. The United States was concerned about maintaining Turkey's Western orientation and energetically supported Turkey's membership in the EU. It attached great importance to Turkey's close cooperation with Israel and saw Turkey as a key player in its dual-containment policy toward Iran and Iraq. Also significant was Turkey's role in the Caucasus and Central Asia. In turn, Turkish decision- makers recognized the advantages of maintaining good relations with the United States—the last superpower. They also greatly valued U.S. support for Turkish membership in the EU, as well as for the construction of a pipeline from Baku to Ceyhan to carry oil from the Caspian region to the Mediterranean Sea. Turkish decision-makers were very aware, too, of U.S. policy analysts' assessment of Turkey's role in world politics as a pivotal state.[93] Finally, as a U.S. expert on relations with Turkey noted: "United States policy toward Turkey attempts to balance support for Turkey as a strategic ally facing terrorism with advocacy of improvements in human rights. Most of the time the former appears to get greater emphasis from policy makers."[94]

The balance in favor of strategic considerations benefited the hard-liners in Turkey and created a climate conducive to pragmatic cooperation between the decision-makers of both countries. This pragmatism

was best captured with regard to northern Iraq. The United States was keen to see the two Kurdish groups in northern Iraq cooperate and effectively administer the Kurdish-controlled enclave in northern Iraq. But Turkish policy on Iraq is significantly different from that of the United States. Turkey is extremely sensitive to Iraq's territorial integrity and fears the development of a Kurdish state in northern Iraq. Thus, relations between the United States and Turkey do occasionally reach a crisis point over U.S. involvement in Kurdish affairs in northern Iraq.

Turkish authorities became particularly upset when, in September 1998, the United States succeeded in bringing the representatives of two Kurdish groups to Washington, D.C. to sign an agreement.[95] The agreement aimed to revive the Kurdish parliament and administration that had originally been set up in 1992, but had quickly lost effectiveness when the two Kurdish groups fell into a violent conflict. The agreement was a critical step in the implementation of the new U.S. policy of actively organizing and supporting opposition forces against Saddam Hussein. Turkish decision-makers immediately objected to certain aspects of this agreement. In November, they very assertively brought the leaders of the two groups to Ankara to refine the agreement in a way that addressed Turkish interests.[96] Most important was the need to ensure that Turkey could continue to operate in northern Iraq militarily to prevent the PKK from using the area. Turkey also needed to receive assurances that references to the term "federation" in the Washington agreement would not undermine Iraqi territorial and political integrity. The United States did not seem to object to these revisions. The whole episode is very telling in terms of the differing interests of the United States and Turkey in northern Iraq, accompanied by a Turkish governmental desire to assert itself.[97]

Turkish concerns about developments in northern Iraq and the prospects of the establishment of a Kurdish state became a contentious issue between the United States and Turkey in the context of the war against terrorism launched by the Bush administration after the September 11, 2001, attacks. Turkey has cooperated extensively with the United States against the Taliban and al Qaeda in Afghanistan. Turkey contributed to the International Stability Force in Afghanistan and also took over its command for six months in June 2002. However, Turkey has expressed major differences in respect to U.S. policy towards Saddam Hussein and Iraq. In this respect Turkey's major concern has been that a U.S. military intervention could precipitate the disintegration of Iraq and the emergence of an independent Kurdish state in the north. The visit of the assistant secretary of defense Paul Wolfowitz in July 2002 and his reassurances that the United States was against such a state and recognized that such

an eventuality would be a source of instability for the region did not allay Turkish public and official concerns. Instead, U.S. efforts to reconcile warring Kurdish factions and support given to the reopening of the Kurdish parliament in October 2002 refueled Turkish fears that there is a fundamental conflict between the two countries over northern Iraq. In the meantime, during the run-up to the U.S. intervention in Iraq, Turkish officials repeatedly stated that they would intervene militarily if a Kurdish state were to emerge. If it does and Turkey does intervene militarily in northern Iraq this could clearly set back many of the gains achieved through the recent political reforms and reignite the Kurdish problem in Turkey.

In contrast, after the trial of Öcalan was completed and the new government expressed a conspicuous commitment to introduce political reforms and improve Turkey's human rights record, there was a marked warming in U.S.-Turkish relations. This was reflected in President Clinton's close interest in Turkey's relations with the EU and Turkey's acceptance as a candidate. More importantly, the U.S. administration played a vital part in ensuring the holding of the OSCE summit in Istanbul. In the Congress, the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) had long been objecting to this summit on the grounds that Turkey did not deserve such prestige, given its negative human rights record. The CSCE had also demanded that the U.S. administration do its best to have the venue of the summit changed. However, the administration argued in support of a policy of engagement, putting forward the view that such a summit would benefit democracy and civil society in Turkey.[98] The administration succeeded in getting the congressional opposition withdrawn and President Clinton actually led the U.S. delegation to the summit, the first visit of its kind since President George Bush's visit in 1991. The president addressed the Turkish parliament and argued that Turkey had a very important role to play in ensuring security and stability in the region, but also urged Turkey to introduce political reforms. He received a standing ovation from the members of parliament and much praise in the Turkish media.[99] After this visit, and especially with the arrival of the Bush administration, the Kurdish problem was minimized in U.S.-Turkish relations. The attacks of September 11, 2001, reinforced Turkey's strategic importance to the United States due to the war on terrorism. U.S. officials frequently referred to Turkey as a model to the Muslim world.

The new government that came to power during January and February 2003 experienced intense pressure from the United States to support a military intervention against Saddam Hussein by allowing U.S. troops to travel through Kurdish-populated southeastern Turkey to enter Iraq and

open up a northern front. Long and tedious negotiations between U.S. and Turkish officials failed to secure an agreement and the parliament, somewhat to the surprise of the AKP leadership, on March 1, 2003, refused to support the decision to allow U.S. troops through Turkey. Relations between the United States and Turkey became strained. The deal that the government had reached would have provided Turkey with a generous financial compensation package and would also have placated Turkish fears about the emergence of a Kurdish state in northern Iraq by allowing a Turkish military presence there. Massive public opposition against the war in Turkey and also the reluctance of many Kurdish members of parliament from the AKP to support the government resolution left the government defeated.

Once the U.S. military intervention started without Turkey, the fear especially among hard-liners that the U.S. would now help to support the establishment of a Kurdish state in northern Iraq became aggravated. There was considerable agitation in Turkey in support of a Turkish military intervention in northern Iraq. However, intense negotiations with the Kurdish leadership in northern Iraq, accompanied by U.S. and EU pressure not to intervene, led the Turkish chief of general staff to shelve the plans of intervention in early April, leaving Turkey in a precarious position. Will the United States be able to bring stability to Iraq and keep Iraq from disintegrating? Will the United States be able to convince the Kurds in northern Iraq to be sensitive to Turkey's interests? Will they be able to prevent the PKK, now KADEK, from becoming active again? The answers to these questions will invariably have important implications in terms of what happens to U.S. and Turkish relations as well as what happens to the implementation of the political reforms concerning Kurds in Turkey.

Curiously, there is one area where Turkish foreign policy appears to have been much more subdued than might be expected, if it were not for the Kurdish problem's tying the hands of decision-makers. One important consequence of the eruption of ethnic conflicts in the Balkans and the Caucasus after the end of the Cold War, was that Turkey became much more sensitive toward the well-being of Muslim ethnic groups. These groups range from Albanians, Bosnians, and Turks in the Balkans, to Abkhazians, Azeris, Chechens, and a multitude of other ethnic groups in the northern Caucasus. Turkey adopted a very active foreign policy during the conflict in the former Yugoslavia and pressed for military intervention against the Serbs to protect the Bosnians.[100] In the case of the conflict in Chechnya, by contrast, despite loud public support for Chechens, the government followed a policy that shied away from alienating Russia. Clearly, there was a fear that Russia could use the "Kurdish

card" against Turkey if Turkey were to follow an assertive policy in support of the Chechens.[101] Recognizing the parallels to the Kurdish question in Turkey, Turkish decision-makers considered the Chechen problem an internal one to Russia.[102] This was stated in a most conspicuous manner when, just before an official visit to Moscow in November 1999, the Turkish prime minister referred to Chechnya as a problem internal to Russia. In many ways this was an acknowledgement of the Russian government's decision not to grant political asylum to Öcalan after the latter fled to Russia from Syria in 1998. The Russian parliament had actually called on the government to grant him refugee status. Since then Russia and Turkey appear to have avoided each other's ethnic problems, and relations, especially in the area of trade and economics, have grown extensively.

Similarly, after the violence in Kosovo erupted early in 1998, Turkey was much less active and assertive than it had been in the case of Bosnia. Both Prime Minister Yilmaz and Foreign Minister Cem conferred with Slobodan Milosevic personally and assured him that they supported a solution to the Kosovo problem that respected Serbian territorial integrity.[103] The uncomfortable similarity between the problems of the Kosovo region of Serbia and the Kurdish-populated southeastern region of Turkey is an important factor.[104] Italian Prime Minister Massimo D'Alema made a point, during his visit to the United States in March 1999, of drawing this parallel. He said, "If we defend the rights of the Albanians in Kosovo, and rightly so, then I think we have to also defend the rights of the Kurdish minority."[105] However, after the massive refugee exodus and NATO operations against Serbia started in March 1999, the Turkish government became supportive of a more interventionist policy. Subsequently, Turkey lent active support to NATO's operation and sent a Turkish military unit to assist in humanitarian work and peacekeeping. Nevertheless, the alarming parallels go a long way in explaining why, in the case of Kosovo and Chechnya, Turkish decision-makers tended to argue that these were internal problems needing to be resolved in a manner that paid heed to the territorial integrity of Russia and Serbia.

Conclusion

Since the capture of Öcalan in February 1999 and his decision to repent and order the PKK to end armed struggle, Turkey has entered a new era. His capture can be seen as the outcome of a process that started in 1993. This was when the hard-liners' argument that Turkey was facing a grave threat from terrorism to its security and territorial integrity prevailed, and the military approach to the Kurdish problem was adopted. Öcalan's

capture was received with great jubilation by the overwhelming majority of the population, and President Demirel identified it as the most important event in the history of the Turkish Republic.[106] This success has been attributed to the resolution and determination of the policies advocated by the hard-liners. Ironically, this new era has eroded the influence of hard-liners on policymaking while the liberal approach gained the upper hand in addressing the Kurdish problem. This is likely to be a long process, but one that would have been unthinkable at the time of Öcalan's capture.

In February 1999, Turkey was at odds with the external world, especially several of its neighbors and the EU. The Kurdish problem was central to this state of affairs. Turkey had almost gone to war with Syria in October 1998 in an effort to stop Syrian support for the PKK. Its relations with members of the EU were at a low ebb, especially after the Luxembourg Summit in December 1997, when Turkey was excluded from a new list of candidates. Criticism of Turkish treatment of Kurds and Turkish unwillingness to introduce political reforms played an important role in this decision. Relations with the United States, although not as bad, were also going through ups and downs. But with the capture of Öcalan, relations began to improve. A new government in Turkey that was determined to improve democracy, accompanied by the changing attitude in Europe, marked the beginnings of the new phase. Undoubtedly, the EU decision to engage Turkey positively and open the way to eventual membership was a critical factor that reinforced the emergence of a will to introduce political reform toward greater democracy and liberalism. Whether or not the political reforms adopted during the course of 2001 and 2002 actually gain root and Turkey emerges as a liberal and pluralist democracy with room for cultural rights for minorities will depend very much on how Turkey's relations with the EU evolves. Positive relations, especially with the EU, whereby Turkey slowly but surely becomes integrated with the EU, will not only strengthen the hand of liberals, but also allay the concerns and fears of hard-liners for Turkey's stability and territorial integrity. This would be the most promising outcome in terms of the resolution of the Kurdish problem.

Since the capture of Öcalan, Turkey's relations with Iran and Syria have steadily improved. Turkey still has major conflicts with Syria, especially over the waters of the Euphrates, and with Iran because of deep mutual distrust. However, with Öcalan and the PKK removed from the equation, it might be possible to make progress on the other outstanding issues between Turkey and its Middle Eastern neighbors. Clearly, such progress would go a long way in alleviating the concerns of hard-liners about threats to Turkey's security originating from these countries. It is

ironic that if the regimes of these three countries were to become more democratic, open, and liberal, hard-liners in Turkey might feel more at ease. However, in the meantime, the aftermath of the U.S. intervention in Iraq has fueled concerns particularly of hard-liners in Turkey. They fear and suspect that the current unstable situation in Iraq could lead to the emergence of an independent Kurdish state and to the re-emergence of a threat to Turkish national security. Furthermore, the U.S. intervention in Iraq has left U.S.-Turkish relations soured. This come after a decades-old strategic relationship that had been further strengthened by Turkey's close cooperation with the United States in its war against terrorism since the September 11, 2001, attacks. Turkey had also cooperated very closely with the United States in efforts to bring security and stability to the Balkans. The U.S. commitment to Turkey's membership to the EU and the U.S. assistance to Turkey in capturing the PKK had contributed to facilitate democratization in Turkey. Over the last few years, violation of human rights of Kurds in Turkey had not been on the agenda of U.S.-Turkish relations. Yet, ironically, there is also a concern that the U.S. intervention against Saddam Hussein could still create a situation that could reverse the positive developments in Turkey with regard to the Kurdish problem.

Ultimately, of course, what happens regarding the Kurdish problem will depend on developments within Turkey. Much rests on how the present government fares in introducing and pushing through their package of political reforms. In turn, these developments will also very much depend on what Öcalan, the PKK, and leading Kurdish politicians in Turkey choose to do. Since the beginning of this new era, many Kurds once associated with radical and nationalist views have significantly moderated their opinions. There are no more calls for secession, federalism, or even autonomy. Instead, the emphasis is on playing the game of democracy and pluralism and emphasizing the rights of Kurds as individual Turkish citizens, rather than group or minority rights. Furthermore, the change in the PKK's position has also enabled moderate Kurds who feared the wrath of the PKK and nationalists to come forward. These developments will definitely strengthen the force of the liberal approach and, more importantly, relieve the concerns of hard-liners about Turkish unity. Nevertheless, the process of addressing the Kurdish problem in this new era will be very long and difficult. Keeping hard-liners on both sides from making a common cause to bring the new era to an end will be a challenge in itself.

Much rests on how successful the new AK Party is in implementing political reforms already adopted and pushing forward with new reforms. This will likely deepen EU-Turkish relations. A clear prospect of

EU membership would inject a major boost to both the Turkish economy and politics. In return this would clearly benefit the consolidation of the cultural rights of Kurds. If the AK Party is not successful and EU-Turkish relations are weakened, and if the situation in Iraq following the U.S. intervention does not stabilize, Turkey's democratization might be put at risk, especially if this leads to the return of hard-liners on the Turkish side and of Kurdish nationalists with a secessionist agenda. Such an outcome would not bode well for Turkey, for the region, the EU, or the United States.

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1. Crawford Young, "The Dialectics of Cultural Pluralism: Concept and Reality," in Crawford Young, ed., *The Rising Tide of Cultural Pluralism: The Nation-State at Bay<D (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1993).*

2. There is a very large body of literature examining the Kurdish problem in Turkey. Among these publications are Robert W. Olson, ed., *The Kurdish Nationalist Movement in the 1990s: Its Impact on Turkey and the Middle East* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1996); Michael M. Gunter, *The Kurds and the Future of Turkey* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997); Kemal Kirişci and Gareth M. Winrow, *The Kurdish Question and Turkey* (London: Frank Cass, 1997); Henri J. Barkey and Graham E. Fuller, *Turkey's Kurdish Question* (Lanham, Md.: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 1998).

3. For a chronology of the saga, see CNN and *Milliyet (<www.milyet.com.tr/>),* February 16, 1999.

4. For the full text of Öcalan's defense statement, see Oktay Pirim and Süha Örtülü, *Ömerli Köyünden İmralı'ya PKK'nın 20 Yıllık Öyküsü* (Istanbul: Boyut Kitaplari, 1999), pp. 293–361.

5. Şahin Alpay, "Kürt Kapanı," *Milliyet* (Turkish daily), October 3, 1998.

6. For rebellions during this period, see *Türk İstiklal Tarihi,* Vol. 6: *İstiklal Harbinde Ayaklanmalar (1919–1921)* (Ankara: Gnkur Basimevi, 1974).

7. There is an impressive body of literature that examines the origins and evolution of Turkish nationalism and the formation of the Turkish Republic. A recent study covering these topics and offering a critical analysis of the formation of the Turkish national identity is Hugh Poulton, *Top Hat, Grey Wolf, and Crescent: Turkish Nationalism and the Turkish Republic* (London: Hurst, 1997).

8. Şeref Gözübüyük and Zekai Zengin, *1924 Anayasasi Metinleri Hakkindaki Meclis Görüsmeleri* (Ankara: Balkanoğlu Matbaacılık, 1957), pp. 439–440.

9. For a detailed coverage of each rebellion, see *Türkiye Cumhuriyeti'nde Ayaklanmalar (1924–1938*) (Ankara: Gnkur Basimevi, 1972).

10. For a detailed study of the Shaykh Said rebellion see Robert W. Olson, *The Emergence of Kurdish Nationalism and the Sheikh Said Rebellion, 1880–1925* (Austin, Tex.: University of Texas Press, 1991).

11. For the details of the formation of these societies and their politics, see Poulton, *Top Hat, Grey Wolf, and Crescent;* and Büşra Ersanli-Behar, *İktidar ve Tarih: Türkiye'de "Resmi Tarih" Tezinin Olusumu (1929–1937)* (Istanbul: AFA Yayinlari, 1992).

12. For a detailed analysis of these policies and their implication for the Turkish national identity, see Kemal Kirişci, "Disaggregating Turkish Citizenship and Immigration Practices," *Middle Eastern Studies,* Vol. 36, No. 3 (July 2000), pp. 14–17.

13. See especially chapters 2 and 3 in Barkey and Fuller, *Turkey's Kurdish Question.*

14. According to a report by the General Staff of the Turkish military summarized in *Milliyet,* September 29, 1999, the number of PKK acts of violence (*eylem*) fell steadily from 3,328 in 1994, to 1,500 in 1996, and 589 in 1998. Similarly, the number of PKK militants dropped from approximately 10,000 (both inside and outside Turkey) in 1994 to 4,000 in 1999, and the PKK was able to keep only 25 percent of them within the country, compared to 65 percent in 1994.

15. Ali Çarkoğlu and Mine Eder, "Domestic Concerns and the Water Conflict over the Euphrates-Tigris Basin," *Middle Eastern Studies,* Vol. 37, No. 1 (January 2001), pp. 41–71.

16. *Milliyet,* February 19, 1999.

17. *Milliyet,* March 8, 1999.

18. The letter was originally sent secretly on May 26. However, it was subsequently leaked and published in *Hürriyet* (Turkish daily), June 5, 1999, together with Chancellor Schröder's answer.

19. The proceedings of this meeting were published in *Hukukun Üstünlüğü Demokrasi İnsan Haklari: Sivil Toplum Örgütleriyle Düzenlenen Çalişma Toplantisı—Ankara Palas,* 14 Ekim 1999 (Ankara: Başbakanlik Basimevi, 1999).

20. *Radikal,* November 15, 1999.

21. *Radikal,* January 17, 2000.

22. In their analysis of this parliament, Barkey and Fuller note the close relationship between the membership of the parliament-in-exile and the PKK. Barkey and Fuller, *Turkey's Kurdish Question,* p. 34.

23. *Radikal* (Turkish daily), December 17, 1999.

24. *Radikal,* December 30, 1999.

25. *Radikal,* December 28, 1999.

26. *Radikal,* 5 August, 2002.

27. *Milliyet* and *Hürriyet,* December 9, 1991.

28. For the closure of these political parties and the ascendancy of hard-liners, see Philip Robins, "The Overlord State: Turkish Policy and the Kurdish Issue," *International Affairs,* Vol. 69, No. 4 (October 1993), pp. 657–676; and Henri J. Barkey and Graham E. Fuller, "Turkey's Kurdish Question: Critical Turning Points and Missed Opportunities," *Middle East Journal,* Vol. 51, No. 1 (Winter 1997), pp. 59–79.

29. Elekdag had advocated the view that Turkey's Kurdish problem was mostly foreign-instigated, emphasizing the role of Greece and Syria in particular, and arguing that Turkey should be prepared to fight two and a half wars simultaneously, with these two countries and internally with the PKK. Şükrü Elekdağ, "2½ War Strategy," *Perceptions: Journal of International Affairs* (Ankara) Vol. 1, No. 1 (March–May 1996) (\www.mfa.gov.tr/grupa/percept/i1/ per1–3.htm).

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30. *Milliyet,* June 21, June 28, and September 10, 1999.

31. Excerpts from the speech can be found in *Milliyet* and *Radikal*, September 7, 1999. The full speech can be found at \yargitay.gov.tr/bilgi/adli/99–20.html#d126. See especially the section on "Cultural Identity" (Kültürel Kimlik).

32. *Radikal*, December 14, 1999.

33. Speech by Abdullah Çay, *Radikal*, January 5, 2000.

34. These calls were turned down by the prosecutor, who argued that there were no grounds for prosecution, and that people were free to express their views; *Radikal*, January 5, 2000.

35. For an analysis of the meaning and consequences of this amendment see Kemal Kirişci, "Evaluating the Question of Minorities in Turkey in the Light of Turkish-EU Relations," in Bertil Duner, ed., *Turkey: The Road Ahead<D (Stockholm: Swedish Institute of International Affairs, 2002); for a detailed analysis of the package of amendments, see Bertil Emrah Oder, "Enhancing the Human Face of Reality in Turkey Through Accession Partnership with the EU" in ibid.*

36. For reporting by prominent journalists on an improved security situation in the southeast as early as 1994, see *Sabah* (Turkish daily), May 13, 1994. The *Turkish Daily News* (TDN), January 8, 1996, reported a significant drop in 1995 in PKK-led terrorist incidents. The *Economist*, December 17, 1995, also noted that the military had won the upper hand, but at the cost of alienating ordinary Kurds.

37. For a brief analysis of the "Sèvres syndrome" and its impact on foreign policy, see Kemal Kirişci, "Turkey: Foreign Policy Making and the Mediterranean," in Theodore A. Couloumbis, et al., eds., *The Foreign Policies of the European Union's Mediterranean States and Applicant Countries in the 1990s: A Comparative Analysis* (London: Macmillan, 1999), pp. 25–60.

38. On the conflict between the two Kurdish groups in northern Iraq and the PKK, see Michael Gunter, "Kurdish Infighting: The PKK-KDP Conflict," in Olson, *The Kurdish Nationalist Movement*, pp. 50–64.

39. For details of this operation and its background, see Kemal Kirişci, "Turkey and the Kurdish Safe-Haven in Northern Iraq," *Journal of South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 19, No. 3 (1996), pp. 21–39.

40. For the text of the resolution, see UN Security Council Document S/RES/688 (1991), April 5, 1991. The resolution called on Iraq to cease its military operations against Kurds that had precipitated the flight of more than a million refugees towards Iran and Turkey, and called on the government to cooperate with the international community in resolving the refugee crisis. For an analysis of the adoption of the resolution and its importance from Turkey's point of view, see Kemal Kirişci, "'Provide Comfort' and Turkey: Decision Making for Refugee Assistance," *Low Intensity Conflict and Law Enforcement*, Vol. 2, No. 2, (Autumn 1993), pp. 227–253.

41. Baskin Oran, "*Kalkik Horoz": Çekiç Güç ve Kürt Devleti* (Ankara: Bilgi Yayinevi, 1996); Ümit Özdağ, "Kuzey Irak ve PKK," *Avrasya Dosyasi*, Vol. 3, No. 1 (Spring 1996); and Ümit Özdağ, *Türkiye-PKK ve Kuzey Irak* (Ankara: Avrasya Dosyasi Yayinlari, 1999).

42. Oran, "*Kalkik Horoz*," pp. 128–130.

43. On PKK attacks, see TDN, March 14, 1996. On PKK-PUK conflicts, see Gunter, "Kurdish Infighting," pp. 51, 56.

44. TDN, April 14, 1998.

45. For a detailed reporting on the congress, see *Özgür Politika* (biweekly bulletin published
by the Kurdistan Information Centre London), February 10, 2000. For a general evaluation of the PKK since Öcalan's capture see Michael Radis, "The Rise and Fall of the PKK," *Orbis,* Vol. 45, No. 1 (Winter 2001), pp. 47–63.

46. For an evaluation of Turkish concerns about northern Iraq after Öcalan's capture, see Nihat Ali Özcan, "Türkiye'nin Kronikleşen Baş Agrısı: Kuzey Irak," *Stratejik Analiz,* Vol. 1, No. 12 (April 2001); and Armagan Kuloğlu, "11 Eylül Sonrası Değişen Dengeler Çerçevesinde Türkiye'nin Irak Politikası," *Stratejik Analiz,* Vol. 2, No. 23 (March 2002).

47. For a detailed analysis of Iran's relationship with the PKK, see Nihat Ali Özcan, "Iran'in Türkiye Politikasinda Ucuz ama Etkili Manivela: PKK," *Avrasya Dosyası,* Vol. 5, No. 3 (Fall 1999). For a briefer coverage of the issue in English, see Alan Makovsky, "Turkish-Iranian Tension: A New Regional Flashpoint" *Policy Watch* (Washington Institute for Near East Policy), No. 404 (August 9, 1999) \www. washingtoninstitute.org/watch/Policywatch/ policywatch1999/404.htm; and Kemal Kirişci, "Turkey and the Muslim Middle East," in Sabri Sayarı and Alan Makovsky, eds., *Turkey's New World: Changing Dynamics in Turkish Foreign Policy* (Washington D.C.: Washington Institute for Near East Policy, 2000), pp. 51–52.

48. *Tempo* (Turkish magazine), No. 18, May 1, 1996.

49. TDN, July 18, 1996.

50. For a thorough and detailed analysis of the Erbakan government's foreign policy, see Gencer Özcan, ed., *Onbir Aylik Saltanat: Siyaset, Ekonomi ve Diş Politikada Refahyol Dönemi* (Istanbul: Boyut Kitaplari, 1998), pp. 179–242.

51. *Radikal,* January 19 and 20, 2000.

52. *Radikal,* December 15, 1999.

53. *Radikal,* 19 June 2002.

54. *Yeni Yüzyıl* (Turkish daily), May 7, 1996.

55. Reported by *Milliyet,* May 7, 1998.

56. *Radikal,* October 12, 1998.

57. For a very positive reporting of this decision in the media, see *Radikal,* January 10 and 11, 1999.

58. Süleyman Demirel, "Commentary," *Middle East Journal,* Vol. 51, No. 1 (Winter 1997).

59. Meltem Müftüler-Bac, "The Never-Ending Story: Turkey and the European Union," *Middle Eastern Studies,* Vol. 34, No. 4 (October 1998), p. 243; Ziya Önis, "Turkey, Europe and Paradoxes of Identity: Perspectives on the International Context of Democratization," *Mediterranean Quarterly,* Vol. 10, No. 3 (August 1999), p. 107.

60. See, for example, remarks by Hikmet Çetin, a former foreign minister and speaker of the Turkish parliament, after the EU's ruling in *Milliyet,* December 10, 1989.

61. Quoted in the *New York Times,* February 19, 1999.

62. Anita Bocker, "Refugee and Asylum Seeking Migration from Turkey to Western Europe," *Boğaziçi Journal,* Vol. 10, Nos. 1–2 (1996), pp. 55–57, 61.

63. Barkey and Fuller, *Turkey's Kurdish Question,* pp. 37–38.

64. For a detailed analysis, see A. J. Lyon and E. M. Uçarer, "The Transnational Mobilization of Ethnic Conflict: Kurdish Separatism in Germany," paper prepared for the International Studies Association annual meeting, Minneapolis, March 1998.

65. V. Eccarius-Kelly, "Inter-Community Ethnic Conflict in Post-Unification Germany: The Kurdish Conundrum," paper prepared for the International Studies Association annual meeting, Minneapolis, March 1998.

66. Kirişci and Winrow, *The Kurdish Question,* p. 171.

67. Turkey does not recognize any ethnic or religious minorities in the legal sense of the word, other than the ones recognized in the Treaty of Lausanne of 1923. For a discussion of this issue as it relates to Kurds, see ibid., pp. 44–49.

68. Gündüz Aktan, "The European Parliament and Turkey," *Perceptions: Journal of International Affairs,* Vol. 3, No. 4 (December 1998–February 1999), p. 84, \www.mfa.gov.tr/grupa/percept/iii-4/default.htm.

69. S. Klaus, "The European Parliament in the EU External Relations: The Customs Union with Turkey," *European Foreign Affairs Review,* Vol. 5, No. 2, June 2000.

70. Philip Robins, "More Apparent Than RealThe Impact of the Kurdish Issue on Euro-Turkish Relations," in Olson, *The Kurdish Nationalist Movement,* p. 128.

71. TDN, October 25, 1996.

72. TDN, March 6, 1999.

73. Robins, "More Apparent Than Real"

74. TDN, May 10, 1995.

75. *Regular Report from the Commission on Progress towards Accession: Turkey* (Brussels: European Commission, November 1998).

76. See, for example, the commentary by Mehmet Ali Kislali, "Sèvres Korkusu," *Radikal,* December 12, 1998. For a general review of reactions to the report and a more moderate approach, see the commentary by a retired ambassador and former minister of foreign affairs, Ilter Türkmen, "AB Raporuna Tepki," *Radikal,* November 13, 1998.

77. *Radikal,* February 4, 1999.

78. *Radikal,* December 25, 1998.

79. Müftüler-Bac, "Never-Ending Story," p. 257.

80. R. Dale, "EU Needs to Make Up With Turkey," *International Herald Tribune,* May 5, 1998.

81. For these explanations, see remarks by the former president of Turkey and leader of the military coup in 1980, Kenan Evren, in *Milliyet,* April 23, 1999, and the analysis by two academics, Sencer Ayata and Ümit Özdağ, in *Milliyet,* April 22 and 23, 1999.

82. For Bülent Ecevit's views on foreign policy, see B. Ecevit, "Bölge-Merkezli Diş Politika," *Yeni Türkiye Dergisi,* March/April 1995, pp. 64–70.

83. Sami Kohen, "MHP Diş Politikasi," *Milliyet,* April 22, 1999.

84. EU European Commission, *Regular Report from the Commission on Progress towards Accession: Turkey* (Brussels: European Commission, October 2002).

85. Reported by Alessandra Stanley, *New York Times,* March 4, 1999.

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86. According to a prominent Turkish journalist, it was actually the CIA that proposed assistance to the MIT, the Turkish intelligence service, in capturing Öcalan, in return for a commitment to put him through a fair trial. See Tuncay Özkan, *Operasyon* (Istanbul: Dogan Kitapçilik, 2000).

87. *Milliyet,* February 20, 1999.

88. See *Report on Allegations of Human Rights Abuses by the Turkish Military and on the Situation in Cyprus* (U.S. State Department Report, June 1, 1995).

89. Öcalan himself revealed the important role that helicopters played in weakening his organization during an interview he gave while in Rome to *Jane's Intelligence Review* (February 19, 1999), reported in *Milliyet,* February 24, 1999.

90. *Yeni Yüzyıl,* November 19 and 21, 1996.

91. Strobe Talbott, "U.S.-Turkish Relations in an Age of Interdependence," Washington Institute for Near East Policy, October 14, 1998, <www.washingtoninstitute.org>.

92. Commentary by Sedat Sertoğlu, *Sabah,* October 16, 1998.

93. A number of prominent U.S. analysts have underlined the significance of Turkey to U.S. policies in Eurasia: Zbigniew Brzezinski, *The Grand Chessboard: American Primacy and Its Geostrategic Imperatives* (New York: Basic Books, 1997); Robert Chase, Emily Hill, and Paul Kennedy, "Pivotal States and United States Strategy," *Foreign Affairs* (January–February 1996), pp. 37, 46–48; Stephen J. Blank, et al., *Turkey's Strategic Position at the Crossroads of World Affairs* (Carlisle Barracks, Pa.: Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, 1993).

94. E-mail correspondence with Carol Migdalovitz, March 8, 1999.

95. Details of the agreement reached at this meeting were reported in *Milliyet,* October 2, 1998. For evaluations of this agreement from the perspective of Turkish national interests, see Sami Kohen's commentary in the same issue; and Ümit Özdağ, "Türk-Amerikan politikaları cakişiyor," *Milliyet,* October 6, 1998.

96. For the coverage of the meeting, see *Yeni Yüzyıl,* November 9, 1998.

97. Malik Mufti, "Daring and Caution in Turkish Foreign Policy," *Middle East Journal,* Vol. 52, No. 1 (Winter 1998), p. 48, quotes Turkish officials who assert their right to have policies on Iraq which differ from those of the United States.

98. For details of the relevant debate at the CSCE, see "The Road to the Istanbul Summit and Human Rights in the Republic of Turkey," Hearing before the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe, 106th Cong., First Sess. (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, March 18, 1999). For an analysis of U.S.-Turkish relations in general, and in respect of the Kurdish problem, see Kemal Kirişci, "U.S.-Turkish Relations: New Uncertainties in a Renewed Partnership," in Kemal Kirişci and Barry Rubin, eds., *Turkey and Its World: Emergence of a Multi-Regional Power* (Boulder, Colo.: Lynne Rienner, 2001).

99. For coverage of Clinton's speech and responses, see *Radikal, Milliyet, Sabah,* and other Turkish dailies, November 16, 1999.

100. For detailed analysis of this assertiveness in Turkish foreign policy in the Balkans, see Şule Kut, "Turkish Diplomatic Initiatives for Bosnia-Herzegovina," in Günay Göksu Özdoğan and Kemâli Saybaşılı, eds., *Balkans: A Mirror of the New International Order* (Istanbul: Eren, 1995), pp. 295–315; Şule Kut, "Yugoslavya Bunalımı ve Türkiye'nin Bosna-Hersek ve Makendonya Politikası: 1990–1993," in Faruk

Sönmezoğlu, ed., *Türk Diş Politikasının Analizi* (Istanbul: Der Yayinları, 1994); İlhan Üzgel, "Doksanlarda Türkiye İçin Bir İşbirliği ve Rekabet Alani Olarak Balkanlar," in Gencer Özcan and Şule Kut, eds., *En Uzun Onyil: Türkiye'nin Ulusal Güvenlik ve Diş Politika Gündeminde Doksanlı Yillar* (Istanbul: Boyut Kitaplari, 1998).

101. For a detailed analysis of how the Kurdish problem has constrained Turkey's policy on the Chechen conflict, see Robert W. Olson, "Turkish and Russian Foreign Policies, 1991–1997: The Kurdish and Chechnya Questions," *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs* (Abingdon, U.K.), Vol. 18, No. 2 (October 1998), pp. 209–228.

102. T. Yildirim, "Cecenistan Sorunu ve Türkiye," in Faruk Sönmezoğlu, ed., *Degişen Dünya ve Türkiye* (Istanbul: Bağlam, 1996), pp. 214–215.

103. TDN, March 8 and 9, 1998.

104. Üzgel, "Doksanlarda Türkiye," p. 423, also points at this parallel.

105. *New York Times,* March 4, 1999, p. A12.

106. *Milliyet,* March 19, 1999.