

TURKISH FOREIGN POLICY  
TOWARDS THE BALKANS IN THE POST-COLD WAR ERA

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Approval of the Graduate School of Social Sciences

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## ABSTRACT

### TURKISH FOREIGN POLICY TOWARDS THE BALKANS IN THE POST COLD WAR ERA

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This thesis examines Turkey's Balkan policy in the Post-Cold War Era with regard to changing parameters in this region. Every crisis and conflicts in the Balkans affects not only Turkey but also all international actors. For this reason, it is argued that external dynamics rather than internal ones largely affected the change in Turkish foreign policy. It is pointed out that the policy maintained by Turkey during the wars and crisis in the Balkans, was harmonious with its power and capacity in international arena. After Bosnian War and Kosovo crisis the European Union (EU) policy towards the Balkans gained impetus. Turkey attempts to participate in both North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the EU initiatives in the Balkans for the sake of balancing Greece. Besides, Turkey encouraged and took an active role in the process of the Balkan countries to NATO and the EU for the sake of following the regulations being made for Turkish minority. Then, this thesis argues that the neo-Ottomanist ideas lost its significance as the process of EU's incorporation of the Balkans gains impetus.

Keywords: Balkans, Neo-Ottomanism, Turkish Balkan relations.

## ÖZ

### SOĞUK SAVAŞ SONRASI DÖNEMDE TÜRKİYE'NİN BALKANLAR'A YÖNELİK DIŞ POLİTİKASI

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Bu tez, Soğuk Savaş sonrası dönemde Türkiye'nin Balkan politikasını bölgede değişen parametrelerin ışığında incelemektedir. Balkanlardaki her kriz ve çatışma sadece Türkiye'nin değil tüm uluslararası aktörlerin dış politikalarını da etkilemektedir. Bu nedenden ötürü, iç dinamiklerden çok dış dinamiklerin Türk dış politikasındaki değişimleri etkilediği ileri sürülmektedir. Türkiye'nin Balkanlardaki savaş ve krizler sırasında izlediği politikanın uluslararası alandaki gücü ve kapasitesiyle uyumlu olduğuna işaret edilmiştir. Bosna Savaşı ve Kosova krizi sonrasında Avrupa Birliği'nin Balkanlar'a yönelik politikası hız kazanmıştır. Türkiye Yunanistan'ı dengelemek için Balkanlardaki AB ve NATO girişimlerine katılmaya gayret etmektedir. Bunun yanı sıra, Türkiye Türk azınlığa yönelik düzenlemeleri takip etmek amacıyla Balkan ülkelerinin AB ve NATO üyelik sürecini destekleyip bu süreçte aktif rol almaya çalışmaktadır. Bu tez, AB'nin Balkanlarla bütünleşme süreci hız kazandıkça yeni Osmanlıcı görüşlerin önemini yitirdiğini ileri sürmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Balkanlar, yeni Osmanlıcılık, Türkiye Balkan ilişkileri.

To My Aunts

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**LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

|             |   |
|-------------|---|
| ALBA        | Multinational Peacekeeping Force in Albania                               |
| ANAP        | The Motherland Party  |
| BCP         | Bulgarian Communist Party   |
| BLACKSEAFOR | Black Sea Force   |
| BSEC        | Black Sea Economic Cooperation  |
| BSP         | Bulgarian Socialist Party   |
| CARDS       | Community Assistance for Reconstruction,<br>Development and Stabilisation |
| CEECs       | Central and Eastern European Countries                                    |
| CSCE        | Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe                          |
| DEIK        | Foreign Economic Relations Board  |
| DSP         | Democratic Left Party   |
| DTP         | Democratic Turkey Party   |
| DYP         | The True Path Party   |
| EAPC        | Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council   |
| EC          | European Community  |
| ESDP        | European Security and Defence Policy                                      |

|               |   |
|---------------|---|
| EU            | European Union  |
| EUFOR         | European Union Force in Bosnia-Herzegovina            |
| EUPM          | European Union Police Mission in Bosnia-Herzegovina   |
| EUPOL PROXIMA | EU Police Mission in the FYROM                        |
| FRY           | Federal Republic of Yugoslavia                        |
| FYROM         | Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia                 |
| IDB           | The Islamic Development Bank                          |
| IFOR          | The NATO-led Multinational Implementation Force       |
| IMF           | International Monetary Fund                           |
| KFOR          | The Kosovo Force                                      |
| MAP           | Membership Action Plan                                |
| MPFSEE        | The Multinational Peace Force of South Eastern Europe |
| MRF           | The Movement for Rights and Freedom                   |
| MRTV          | Macedonian state broadcaster                          |
| MKEK          | Machinery and Chemical Industries Establishment       |
| NAC-C         | North Atlantic Cooperation Council                    |
| NATO          | North Atlantic Treaty Organization                    |
| NDSV          | National Movement of Simeon II                        |
| OIC           | Organization of the Islamic Conference                |
| OSCE          | Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe   |
| PASOK         | Pan Hellenic Socialist Movement                       |
| PATHE         | Greek Motorway(Patra-Athens-Thessalonica- Evzanous)   |

|         |  |
|---------|--|
| PfP     | Partnership for Peace programme  |
| PHARE   | Poland, Hungary, Aid for Reconstructing of the Economies                           |
| PKK     | Kurdistan Workers' Party (Partiya Karkeren Kurdistan)                              |
| PMSC    | The Politico-Military Steering Committee   |
| RP      | The Welfare Party  |
| SAA     | The Stabilisation and Association Agreement  |
| SAP     | The Stabilisation and Association Process  |
| SDS     | Social Democratic Union  |
| SECI    | Southeast European Cooperative Initiative  |
| SEE     | South Eastern Europe   |
| SEEBRIG | South-Eastern Europe Brigade   |
| SEECF   | The South East Europe Cooperation Process  |
| SFOR    | The Multinational Stabilisation Force  |
| SHP     | Social Democratic Populist Party   |
| SP      | Stability Pact   |
| TDP     | Turkish Democratic Party   |
| TRACECA | Transport Corridor Europe-Caucasus-Asia  |
| UÇK     | The Ethnic Albanian National Liberation Army (NLA/KLA, Ushtria Çlirimtare Kosoves) |
| UDF     | United Democratic Forces   |
| UN      | United Nations   |
| UNHR    | United Nations High Representative   |

|          |   |
|----------|---|
| UNMIK    | United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo |
| UNPDF    | United Nations Preventive Deployment Forces             |
| UNPROFOR | United Nations Protection Force                         |
| UNSC     | United Nations Security Council                         |
| USA      | United States of America                                |
| USSR     | Union of Soviet Socialist Republics                     |
| WEU      | Western European Union                                  |

## **CHAPTER 1**

### **INTRODUCTION**

The end of Cold War necessitated a fundamental change not only in the international system but also in the Turkish foreign policy. Therefore, international actors re-examined their policies. In this regard, various ideas on whether Turkey had lost its importance or not emerged. Under these circumstances, it was a great problem for Turkey to determine a new foreign policy that was compatible with the new international environment. In the post-Cold War epoch, on the one hand, some parts of politicians, academics actively supported the maintenance of former cautious policy; on the other hand, others insisted on a more active foreign policy and added that such a policy was in accordance with Turkey's size and power since it was an important country in the region. During the international developments, Turkish foreign policy faced some criticisms from Neo-Ottomanists due to its cautious and passive character. Those criticisms especially emerged at the time of international crisis and wars.

Neo-Ottomanists claimed that the new international order represented Turkey's important historical opportunities ranging from the Balkans to Central Asia. They stated that Turkey had followed insignificant and inefficient policies towards the Balkans until that time. Thus, some politicians and political analysts thought that Turkey was no longer bound to the strait jacket of the current ideology. It was the call for a more active foreign policy. In other words, it meant Turkey's intervention in every event and its attempt to make the influence zone of it broader. One symbol of this strategy was

“reconciliation with history”.<sup>1</sup> It means that Turkey should make peace with its Ottoman past. According to these ideas, Turkish republic was not interested in this area, did not use this historical background and ties. As a result of this, Turkey always follows a traditional, cautious and passive foreign policy even though it has the ability and instruments to emerge as a world power. It is thought that the new picture of the world was full of numerous opportunities for Turkey. Some Turkish politicians, journalists and intellectuals shared the Neo-Ottomanist ideas. In this period, many people used the slogan of “Turkic world from the Adriatic Sea to the Great Wall”.<sup>2</sup> President Turgut Özal explained that such opportunities to be world power could hardly ever emerge in centuries. He added that Western Powers even realized this situation and saw how Turkey could be an influential actor in world politics.<sup>3</sup>

There is a power vacuum around the country; and in this broad arena Turkish minority and Muslims has significant level; therefore, this is one of the reasons for such ideas. There is a great emphasis on Turkey’s imperial past and it is put forward that it has several obligations towards the former parts of the Ottoman Empire. Nur Vergin explains that there is a similarity between Turkey and the tale of Sleeping Beauty; thus, this is the time for disillusionment. According to Vergin, when the system changes Turkey should change too. Moreover, it should break up its shell because as a result of ineffective and false policies, it makes itself a third world country. However,

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<sup>1</sup> Cengiz Çandar, “Türkiye, Bosna ve Tarihle Barışmak,” *Yeni Türkiye Dergisi*, 1/3 (Mart-Nisan 1995) p.282.

<sup>2</sup> Although president Özal and Prime Minister Demirel used this slogan, indeed it was firstly used by Henry Kissinger. See Gün Kut, “Yeni Türk Cumhuriyetleri ve Uluslararası Ortam,” in *Bağımsızlığın İlk Yılları: Azerbaycan, Kazakistan, Kırgızistan, Özbekistan, Türkmenistan* by B. Ersanlı Behar et al., (Kültür Bakanlığı: Ankara, 1999) p.13, end note 6.

<sup>3</sup> Mustafa Çalık’ın Turgut Özal ile Mülakatı, *Türkiye Günlüğü*, 19, (Yaz 1992), p. 15.



there is nothing, except for its fear, to stop Turkey to become a powerful state.<sup>4</sup>

In the framework of this category, Mustafa İsen asserts that Turkey has lived for a long time without remembering its Ottoman past. He presents Turkey's support for Macedonia as an advantage for the Turkish foreign policy against Greece. Besides, he claims that Macedonian-Bulgarian and Greek relations could not improve. Furthermore, he says that Kosovo's unification with Albania will create new opportunities for Turkey's influence in the Balkans. As a result, he points out that Turkey should formulate its foreign policy in the Balkans considering not only Turkish minorities but also Muslims.<sup>5</sup> Cengiz Çandar explains that there are only two choices for Turkey: disintegration or expansion. He adds that if Turkey does not behave in an appropriate manner, it will collapse.<sup>6</sup>

Turkey's policy orientation in Cold War and post-Cold War epochs did not change radically. Indeed, it looks for its future in the West; it is still a North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) member and an aspirant for the European Union (EU) membership. It builds closer ties with Central Asian and Balkan countries to show its importance to the West. On the other hand, these countries aim to reach the West through Turkey. Therefore, the pro-Western character of the Turkish foreign policy did not change. Within this regard, in this study, Turkey's post-Cold War Balkan policy will be categorized into four periods.

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<sup>4</sup> Nur Vergin, "Türkiye'nin Kendinden Korkmaması ve Aslına Rücu Etmesi Lazım," *Türkiye Günlüğü*, 19, (Yaz 1992), p.42.

<sup>5</sup> Mustafa İsen, "Balkanlar'da Değişen Sınırlar," *Türkiye Günlüğü*, 19, (Yaz 1992), p.93.

<sup>6</sup> Çandar, "21. Yüzyıla Doğru Türkiye: Tarih ve Jeopolitiğin İntikamı," *Türkiye Günlüğü*, 19, (Yaz 1992), pp. (33-34).

Chapter 1 examines, first, the reformulation of Turkey's foreign policy orientations and the importance of Turkey in this new picture of the world politics. In the initial phase of this era, international environment provided Turkey a chance for showing its importance for ensuring security, stability and peace in the regions, which were newly released from Soviet influence.

In first days of the dissolution of Yugoslavia, Turkey declared its support for territorial integrity of the country. However, upon the EU's recognition of the independence of Croatia and Slovenia and the start of war in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Turkey recognized former Yugoslav republics. Although there were different ideas in Turkey during the Bosnian War, government policy was mainly based on the support for multilateral military intervention. Due to strategical reasons, the existence of the Turkish origin people in the Balkans, and Turkey's historical and economic ties with the region, Turkey was concerned about the instability of the Balkans. Thus, this chapter tries to indicate how the crisis affected Turkey's Balkan policy and to explain the continuity and change in Turkey's relations with the Balkan countries. At that point, Chapter 1 argues that the change in Turkish foreign policy after the end of bipolar system is the result of external dynamics, such as the dissolution of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) and Yugoslavia.

Bosnian War proved that current policies of the West were far from preventing future conflicts in this region. Hence, the EU revised its policy towards the Western Balkan countries. In 1996, the Royaumont Process was initiated; it aims to support the implementation of Dayton Agreement, develop the regional projects and build good neighbourhood relations all over the region. In 1997, the EU General Affairs Council adopted Regional Approach. In post-Dayton process, there were diplomatic efforts for the prevention of further ethnic conflict in the Balkans, but the deepening of Kosovo problem demonstrated the deficiency of existent policies. Besides, a new fragmentation

trend was seen in the Balkans. Following that, in 1997 Luxemburg Council the EU gave a candidateship to Romania and Bulgaria. In other words, the Balkans splitted into different parts in itself.

Considering these, chapter 2 asserts that Turkish Balkan policy entered into a stagnant period due to domestic problems, and it is put forward that the foreign policy was not independent from domestic policies, especially in this period.

In 1999, clashes began between the Kosovar Albanians and Serbs. Turkey supported giving the autonomous status of Kosovo back, revising 1974 Constitution and respecting rights of all ethnic minorities living in Kosovo. Chapter 3 examines why Turkey refrained from supporting independent Kosovo and what the reason for Turkey's reluctant support for NATO intervention in Kosovo crisis is.

The year of 1999 can be considered as a turning point since the EU revised its Balkan policy and entered the region particularly via Greece. Hence, the balance between Turkey and Greece changed in a way that is beneficial to Greece in the Balkans. The establishment of the Stability Pact gained speed. On 26 May 1999, EU Commission proposed the creation of the Stabilisation and Association Process (SAP), which is seen as a milestone in the EU policy towards the Balkans. Following this, in Santa Maria De Feira Council in June 2000, it was decided that all countries under SAP were potential candidates for the EU membership. Therefore, this chapter states that, Turkey lost its former position in the Balkans and tried to affect the creation of the EU policies towards the region initially due to the emergence of a new actor in the Balkans.

In 2002 Copenhagen Council, the EU declared Western Balkan states as potential candidates for the EU membership. Furthermore, it is stated that the EU will assist them in their way to membership. It is clear that the EU does not want to confront with the new fragmentations and bloody wars in the

region. For this reason, it designed some new strategies to solve crisis. In this context, one of the primary goals is the prevention of the emergence of grey areas in the Balkans. Under these circumstances, Turkey realized that the future of the region is closely related to the EU and it began to formulate its Balkan policy within the EU framework and also compatible with the EU's regional strategy.

Chapter 4 examines the change in Turkey's Balkan policy that will be formulated in the EU context and the reflections of this change in Turkey's policy towards the Turkish minorities in the Balkans. It is asserted that, Turkey necessitated a reformulation of its minority policy and in general its whole Balkan policy in the EU framework due to integration of the Balkan countries to the EU. It is noticed that the increase of the Greek influence in the Balkans within the EU context led Turkey to make some effort in order to affect Balkan policy of the EU. It is argued that in the future Turkish-Greek rivalry will take place in the EU policies towards the Balkans.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **THE CHANGE IN TURKISH FOREIGN POLICY: THE EFFECTS OF EXTERNAL DYNAMICS (1990-1995)**

#### **2.1 The Importance of the Balkans for Turkey**

The collapse of the Eastern Bloc necessitated a fundamental change in the international system. Furthermore, the wave of disintegration did not come to an end with Eastern Bloc countries and Yugoslavia was also a part of this process. The collapse of both the Eastern Bloc and dissolution of the USSR has altered borders and policies. The post-Cold War period has created new economic and political opportunities. It has led to the emergence of new states and ideological changes in current ones as well as fresh conflicts and tension. In such a situation, due to its unique geographical position and its past, Turkey faces new challenges. Since the disintegration of the Eastern Bloc, Turkey has seen the emergence of many weaker states in South Eastern Europe and Caucasus. On the one hand, the threat to Turkey's security has almost vanished with the collapse of the Soviet Union. On the other hand, instead of this big threat, smaller, weaker, unstable countries, which are potential candidates for a new crisis, have come into existence.

Under these circumstances, the end of the Cold War has promoted a debate on not only foreign policy orientations in Turkey but also re-definition of Turkey's position within the Western alliance as well as its roles in the Middle East, in Central Asia and in Europe. In this regard, the question whether the geopolitical significance of Turkey has diminished or not needed to be addressed; at the beginning of the post-Cold War era the Western powers were doubtful of Turkey's importance, believing that Turkey's importance derived solely from its role as the south-eastern flank country against the

USSR until 1989. The Gulf War was a good opportunity for Turkey to prove that it was still an important player.

In the Balkans, the maintenance of peace and stability is crucial to Turkey's interests. Hence, Turkish foreign policy has been formulated so as to prevent instabilities and destabilizing factors in the Balkans.

There are several reasons for Turkey's interest in the Balkans. These can be summarized as follows: first, the Balkans is important for Turkey's security; second, the Balkans provide a bridge between Turkey and Europe, thus Turkey's economy, transportation and tourism industry depend on the stability of the region. Third, Turkey shares a common history with the Balkan states. The Ottoman legacy is both positive and negative, and Turkey is doing its best to capitalize on the positive one to extent its sphere of influence throughout the Balkan region. According to Maria Todorova Turkey affects Turkish speaking people in Bulgaria, Romania, Yugoslavia and Greece and some part of Slavic speaking Muslims and some of Gypsies.<sup>7</sup> Another reason for Turkey's interest in the Balkans is its growing concern about the new mass migration waves. Turkey has experienced extensive migration from the Balkans since the time of Ottoman Empire, because when a crisis or war emerges in the region, Turkey becomes one of the popular routes for the Balkan Muslims and Turkish minorities. Due to the high economic and social cost of these migrations, Turkey carries out a policy which promotes human rights and freedom in the troubled countries rather than have minorities migrate to Turkey. Besides, mass migrations cause the number of Turkish

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<sup>7</sup> Maria Todorova, "Ottoman Legacy in the Balkans" in *Balkans: A Mirror of New International Order*, edited by Günay Göksu Özdoğan and Kemali Saybaşı, (Eren Yayıncılık: İstanbul, 1995) p. 71.

minorities in the Balkans to decrease, which is not a desirable situation for Turkey. At present, approximately 2 million ethnic Turks live in the Balkans.<sup>8</sup>

Turkey's attitude towards the Balkans was doubtful in the beginning of the post-Cold War period. Owing to the collapse of the bi-polar system, Turkey could not easily formulate an appropriate policy. Tanıl Bora asserts that there is a Balkan trauma which is promoted by the migrations to Turkey. Bora adds that Turkish nationalism was formed as a reaction to the betrayal of Ottomanism in the Balkans and furthermore that the Turkish republic considered Balkan Muslims as a threat to secularism of Turkey.<sup>9</sup>

## 2.2 The Key Elements for Turkey's Balkan Policy

There are some key elements for establishing Turkey's Balkan policy. The first one is Turkish-American relations. After the Cold War, the United States of America (USA) emerged as a dominant power and it aimed to prevent German and Russian influence in this region. Balkan countries try to make use of Turkey to get the USA's support. From the other point of view, the USA aims to exploit Turkey's cultural and religious ties so as to be active

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<sup>8</sup> Bilal N. Şimşir, "Balkanlar ve Türkiye" in *Balkanlardaki Türk Halk Kültürünün Dünü, Bugünü, Yarını: Uluslararası Sempozyum: 26-28 Ekim 2001*, Yayına Hazırlayan Hasan Basri Öcalan, (Uludağ Üniversitesi: Bursa, 2001) pp. (19-21).

<sup>9</sup> Tanıl Bora, "Turkish National Identity, Turkish Nationalism and the Balkan Question" in *Balkans: A Mirror of New International Order*, edited by Günay Göksu Özdoğan and Kemali Saybaşılı, (Eren Yayıncılık: İstanbul, 1995) pp. (112-115).

in the Balkans.<sup>10</sup> Besides, countries in the region, apart from Greece and Yugoslavia, support Turkey-USA cooperation in the Balkans.<sup>11</sup>

During the post-Cold War period, Turkey became more important for the USA due to its foreign policy objectives in the Balkans, the Middle East and the Caucasus. In the beginning of the dissolution of Yugoslavia, both the USA and Turkey stated their support for the territorial integrity of Yugoslavia. The USA attached importance to the cooperation with the Central and Eastern European Countries (CEECs). During the dismemberment of Yugoslavia it sought new opportunities for its defence industry and testing of the New World Order. The USA aimed to establish and sustain the balance of power and stability in the Balkans. In this regard, Turkey played a partner role for the USA and it undertook some duties, such as the training of Bosnian army after the Dayton Agreement.<sup>12</sup>

Since the Central and Eastern European countries could join NATO and the EU, the enlargements of those organizations were parallel. The USA aimed to build closer ties with the Balkan countries in a NATO framework. Mustafa Türkeş states that at the NATO London Summit in June, 1990 it was decided to establish regular relations with former Warsaw Pact countries. It is declared that they are invited to participate in NATO whenever they wish. At the Rome Summit of 1991, the North Atlantic Cooperation Council (NAC-C)

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<sup>10</sup>Osman Metin Öztürk, “Türk Dış Politikasında Balkanlar” in *Balkan Diplomasisi*, edited by Ömer E. Lütem, Birgül Demirtaş Coşkun, (Avrasya Stratejik Araştırmalar Merkezi Yayınları: Ankara, 2001), pp.(21-23).

<sup>11</sup>İlhan Uzgel, “Doksanlarda Türkiye için Bir İşbirliği ve Rekabet Alanı Olarak Balkanlar,”in *En Uzun Onyıl*, edited by Gencer Özcan and Şule Kut, 2.Baskı (Büke Yayınları: İstanbul, 2000) pp. (407-408).

<sup>12</sup> Uzgel, “The Balkans: Turkey’s Stabilizing Role” in *Turkey in World Politics: An Emerging Multi-regional Power*, edited by Barry M. Rubin (Lynne Rienner Publishers: Boulder, 2001) p. 53.



was established and refused to call former Warsaw Pact states and non-NATO members as out of area. The USA initiative Partnership for Peace was established in December 1994. This did not provide CEECs with a membership guarantee. On the contrary, it only displayed the possibility of this. In May 1997, the NATO-Russian Founding Act was concluded. According to this, the Russian Federation has a say but does not have a veto in NATO. In May 1997, Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC) replaced the NAC-C.

In addition to the USA factor, the existence of people of Balkan origin in Turkey is another crucial factor that affects Turkey's Balkan policy. Owing to the waves of mass migration to Turkey from the Balkans since the late 19<sup>th</sup> century up until now, one fifth of Turkey's population is of Balkan origin. During the crisis and wars in the Balkans, these groups are one of the most effective pressure factors in Turkey's policy towards the region.

Another factor in the formation of Turkey's Balkan policy is the Greece. In addition to their disputes on the Aegean Sea and Cyprus, the two countries have become rivals in the Balkans.<sup>13</sup> The fact that in the Balkans Greece became superior to Turkey in the financial sector and started to take advantage of its EU membership in the Balkan policy caused Greece to be more powerful in this competition. Turkey tried to find new allies such as the former Yugoslavian republics and Albania.

At the end of the Cold War the perception of the main threat did not change in Greece; it remained Turkey. During the period of 1990-1993, the Mitsotakis government was in power and tried to set up a dialogue with Turkey. However, the dismemberment of Yugoslavia caused a new security problem in the Balkans. Thus, the Greek opposition criticized the attitude of the government, especially against Macedonia. The developments in the

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<sup>13</sup> Sabri Sayari, "Turkish Foreign Policy in the Post-Cold War Era: The Challenges of Multi-Regionalism," *The Journal of International Affairs*, 54/1, (Fall 2000), pp. (170-177).

Balkans created new security concerns together with the Turkish-Greek, Islam-Orthodox rivalry.

Due to the collapse of the Eastern Bloc, Greece confronted new problems: the Macedonian problem, the Albanian problem, migration from former Socialist countries and the Bosnian War. First, the Greek economy boomed, but later social and economic disorder gained impetus.

The EU formed a Conciliation Commission (the Badinter Commission set up in September 1991) for the assessment of applications of the former Yugoslav republics for recognition. The deadline for the application was 24 December 1991. The Maastricht Treaty came into force in 1993 and Greece took an interest in the Yugoslavia problem in order to become active in the EU. Despite the efforts of the United Nations (UN) representative Cyrus Vance the war between Croatia and Yugoslavia continued and the EU decided to impose a trade embargo on Yugoslavia on 8 November, 1991. On 2 January 1992, the war ended in Croatia and the Commission explained that Macedonia and Slovenia were eligible for EU recognition but Croatia and Bosnia Herzegovina were not. The EU, due to Greek opposition, also did not recognize Macedonia, but Croatia and Slovenia were recognized because of German pressure, on 15 January 1992.<sup>14</sup>

In 29 February-1 March 1992, Bosnia Herzegovina held a referendum and declared its independence in March 1992, which was recognized by the USA and the EU in April 1992. During the Bosnian War, Greece and the EU followed different methods. When the EU criticized Serbians severely, Greece supported them due to the cultural and historical ties they shared and it did not obey the embargo on Yugoslavia.

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<sup>14</sup>Melek Fırat, "Soğuk Savaş Sonrası Yunanistan Dış Politikasının Yeniden Biçimleniş Süreci" in *Türkiye'nin Komşuları*, edited by Mustafa Türkeş and İlhan Uzgel, (İmge Kitabevi Yayınları: Ankara, 2002), pp. (29-32).

In the post-Cold War era and with the support of the USA, Turkey has improved its relations with those countries most problematic for Greece: Albania, Macedonia and Bosnia Herzegovina. Melek Fırat states that although Greek policy, because of its closer relations with Yugoslavia, was criticized by the EU at that time, the Greek prime minister met the leader of Bosnian Serbs, Radovan Karadzic in order to gain the acceptance of Vance-Owen Plan by the Serbian side.<sup>15</sup> Greece was the bridge between the West and the Serbian side.<sup>16</sup>

After Dayton Agreement, the EU has become active in the Balkans. For this reason, Turkey has reshaped its Balkan policy in the context of EU policy. For the purpose of maintaining its influence in this region Turkey has tried to take part in the new processes and new mechanisms.

### **2.3 Neo-Ottomanism: a Solution for the Identity Crisis or a New Orientation for Turkish Foreign Policy**

At the beginning of the 1990s, the main political disputes were concentrated on the determination of Turkey's new role in the new international order. Balance of power-oriented policy did not respond to the needs of the post-Cold War environment. This situation proved to be obvious especially after the wars and crises in the lands of former Yugoslavia erupted. Under these circumstances, it was eventually noticed that bilateral and state-centred relations could not prevent new conflicts. For this reason, international initiatives and regional cooperation increased considerably. Hence, Turkey necessitated the revision of its Balkan policy in that context. Obviously,

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<sup>15</sup> For this reason, Athens Summit was held on 1-2 May 1993 by Greek Prime Minister Mitsotakis. Although R. Karadzic signed the Vance-Owen plan during the summit, later the Parliament of Bosnian Serbs did not ratify the plan.

<sup>16</sup> Fırat, pp. (33-34).

external factors such as the collapse of Soviet Bloc and the dismemberment of Yugoslavia caused Turkey to change its foreign policy in the post-Cold War period. There were two ways for Turkey: to follow multinational or unilateral policy towards the Balkans. Turkey formulated its policy very carefully as its every effort and act was interpreted within the direction of the revival of Ottomanism through the Balkans.

In the first phase of the post-Cold War era, Neo-Ottomanist ideas emerged because of the internal and external developments. First of all, there was an identity crisis in Turkey which occurred due to the rise of Kurdish nationalism. During this period, there was a concerted attempt to find an alternative definition of identity acceptable for not only Turks but also Kurds. In addition to this, external developments such as the Gulf War, the collapse of the USSR and the dissolution of Yugoslavia also stimulated the Neo-Ottomanist discourse.

Hakan Yavuz asserts that the rise of Neo-Ottomanist discourse in the initial phase of the 1990s stems from on the one hand, the changes which are helpful for the evolution of critical ideas and alternative discourses; and on the other hand, the developments such as the collapse of the bipolar system, the Bosnian War, the rise of Kurdish nationalism and the emergence of newly independent states in the Balkans and Central Asia.<sup>17</sup> Yavuz suggests that Neo-Ottomanism came into being as a result of regional developments and the rise of a pro-Islam bourgeoisie, the spreading of religious education and economic liberalization. Indeed, these developments forced Turkey to reconcile itself with its Ottoman past.<sup>18</sup> He adds that Bosnian War and the

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<sup>17</sup> M. Hakan Yavuz, "Değişen Türk Kimliği ve Dış Politika: Neo-Osmanlılığın Yükselişi," in *Türkiye'nin Dış Politika Gündemi: Kimlik, Demokrasi, Güvenlik*, edited by Şaban H. Çalış, İhsan D. Dağı, Ramazan Gözen, (Liberte Yayınları: Ankara, 2001) p. 39.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 47.

EU's refusal of Turkey's application for full membership have been of the utmost importance in the debates on the national identity in Turkey.<sup>19</sup>

Moreover, Şaban Çalış emphasizes the effect of Ottoman past on Turkey in the emergence of Neo-Ottomanism. He puts forward that although the Ottoman Empire collapsed at the end of the WW I, "its ghost" survived. Moreover, some Turkish people who maintained their ties with the Ottoman past are another determining factor of the "Ottoman ghost". As a result of the internal problems and international changes Neo Ottomanism came on the agenda of Turkey in the early 1990s and thus, many politicians and journalists began to emphasize the Ottoman past; in fact, Turgut Özal used the Ottoman heritage to find a solution to the identity crisis in Turkey.<sup>20</sup>

Indeed, the crisis and the conflicts in the former lands of the Ottoman Empire accelerated the arguments and debates on the Ottoman past in Turkey. Çalış puts forward that although the new Turkish Republic tried to escape from its Ottoman past, from the western point of view Turkey is the continuity of the Ottoman Empire.<sup>21</sup>

The rise of violence in Bosnia-Herzegovina changed Turkey's stance on the process of the dissolution of Yugoslavia. Turkish concern over the Bosnian issue mainly depended on the common Ottoman past and it was stated that the engagement in the Bosnian problem was Turkey's historical duty. Moreover, it was thought that this crisis was related to the Muslim identity of Bosnians. The West's inefficient policies regarding the Bosnian war created a huge disappointment in Turkey and Neo-Ottomanist ideas gained impetus.

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<sup>19</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 53.

<sup>20</sup>Şaban H. Çalış *Hayaletbilimi ve Hayali Kimlikler: Neo-Osmanlılık, Özal ve Balkanlar*, (Çizgi Kitabevi: Konya, 2001) pp. (57-64).

<sup>21</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 131.

Furthermore, some intellectuals and politicians, especially President Özal, criticized the government's attitude in the war and advocated a more active foreign policy. In contrast, the Turkish government was concerned about the spreading of ethnic and religious conflicts to the south of the Balkans. In addition to this, more involvement of Turkey in Bosnian war could worsen Turkey's relations with the Western and other Balkan countries. Özal tried to convince the USA to take more active role in the case of Bosnia. He visited former Yugoslav republics and tried to strengthen Turkey's ties with these countries. Çalış asserted that after the death of Özal, Turkey's Balkan policy entered into stagnancy. However, the Ottoman past did not disappear in Turkey completely.<sup>22</sup>

Due to the ineffectiveness of the West in Bosnian War, many Turks, even the liberal and secular minded ones, believed that Western powers did not help Bosnians because they are Muslim. As a result of the rising influence of Ottoman-Islam centred ideas on the Turkish community, many politicians began to use such discourse in their speeches. Neo-Ottomanists asserted that Neo-Ottomanism was not an imperialist policy; it was a call for the re-definition of different ethnicities, the lifting of economic barriers with the Balkans, Central Asian and Caucasus countries and the respect for their territorial integrity.<sup>23</sup> Çalış explains that Neo-Ottomanism depended neither on Turkish nationalism nor on Islam; this idea mainly built on the former lands of the Ottoman Empire.<sup>24</sup> Hakan Yavuz defines Neo-Ottomanists as pro-Turk and pro-Islam.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>22</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. (164-165).

<sup>23</sup> Yavuz, pp. (60-62).

<sup>24</sup> Çalış, p. 60.

<sup>25</sup> Yavuz, p. 37.

Neo-Ottomanism lost its influence in the political arena gradually because the changing international parameters and circumstances problematized the implementation of such an idea. Nearly all of the regional countries seek for integration with Euro-Atlantic structures such as NATO and the EU. Therefore, they have been looking toward the West. In this regard, they need Turkey's support to gain membership in the Western institutions, making it unrealistic to discuss or advocate Neo-Ottomanist ideas. Indeed, Neo-Ottomanists in the first phase of the 1990s altered their stance as a result of both regional developments and the attitude of the West towards the Balkans. Despite the rise of Neo-Ottomanism in Turkey in the first phase of the 1990s, it entered into stagnancy after Turkey-EU relations improved from the Helsinki Summit decisions in December 1999 and the EU's increasing activity in the Central and Eastern European Countries.

#### **2.4 Turkish Foreign Policy on the Dissolution of Yugoslavia**

In the post-Cold War era, old rivalries and ethnic conflicts were revived. Moreover, the end of the bipolar system required redefinition of the Turkish foreign policy. The dismemberment of Yugoslavia defined the core of this change. Under the circumstances of new international picture in the world, the greatest concern was new fragmentations, instabilities and conflicts for Turkey and Western powers. Hence, in the first phase of the dissolution of Yugoslavia, they were supporters for the maintenance of Yugoslavia. It was vital for Turkey to re-formulate its foreign policy in general and its Balkan policy in particular. The main factor in formulating the change and orientation in the Turkish foreign policy was its attitude towards the Balkan developments. Turkey had had friendly relations with Yugoslavia and other Balkan countries such as Albania, Romania in the Cold War Era. The aim of Turkey's Balkan policy in the Cold War period was to prevent Greek

hegemony over the Balkans. The dismemberment of Yugoslavia made it impossible for Turkey to implement this policy. Unless Turkey developed closer relations with the five newly independent states (Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Serbia and Montenegro, Slovenia and Macedonia), Greece, would become hegemon in the region.<sup>26</sup>

When the dissolution of Yugoslavia became clear, Turkey was concerned about the future of peace and stability in the Balkans. Thus, it developed bilateral and regional initiatives for a peaceful solution to the problem of Yugoslavia. In this regard, on 4 January 1991, a Turkish delegation under the leadership of ambassador Bilgin Unat visited Bulgaria, Romania and Yugoslavia.<sup>27</sup> On 11 December 1991, Turkish Prime Minister Demirel stated that Turkey was ready for a peaceful solution of the problem of Yugoslavia in the framework of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE).<sup>28</sup>

The disintegration of Yugoslavia was a significant event in the post-Cold War history of the Balkans. Firstly, Slovenia and later Croatia declared their independence on 25 January 1991.<sup>29</sup> When Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic decided to attack Slovenia and Croatia, they applied to the UN in February 1991 and demanded a peacemaking initiative. Consequently, the USA former Secretary of State Cyrus Vance was sent to the region.<sup>30</sup> Germany

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<sup>26</sup> Türkes, “Türkiye Avrupa İlişkilerinde Balkanlar Faktörü ve Yeni Eğilimler” in *Türkiye ve Avrupa*, edited by Atilla Eralp (İmge Yayınları: Ankara, 2002) p. 337.

<sup>27</sup> İsmail Soysal and Şule Kut, *Dağılan Yugoslavya ve Bosna-Hersek Sorunu: Olaylar-Belgeler 1990-1996*, Ortadoğu ve Balkan İncelemeleri Vakfı, (ISIS: İstanbul, 1997) p. 5.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 12.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 7.

<sup>30</sup> Soysal, “Günümüzde Balkanlar ...,” p. 182.



recognized Slovenia and Croatia in December 1991 and thus, the European Community (EC) recognized the independence of Slovenia and Croatia on 15 January 1992. The separation of Slovenia and Croatia from Yugoslavia was not as bloody as the Bosnian case. In Bosnia-Herzegovina, 44 percent of the population is Muslim, 33 percent of the population is Serbian, 17 percent of the population is Croatian and 5 percent of the population is composed of other nations.

Whereas European countries considered the Bosnian war too far from Europe, the USA was more interested in the Gulf War and the implementation of the New World Order. Afterwards, the gravity and effect of the war became greater, so these attitudes changed.

### **2.5 The Reasons behind Turkey's Close Attention to the Bosnian War**

Turkey's attitude towards the Bosnian issue stemmed from the pressure of the Turkish public and the Balkan community in Turkey. The Turkish public focused on this war because they share the same religion with Bosnian people. However, at the governmental level there were different reasons. This situation was closely related to Turkey's European identity. Mainly, it was believed that if Bosnian Muslims had not been accepted as Europeans, the acceptance of Turkey would have not been possible.

Public pressure was definitely one of the determinants of the change in the attitude of the West during the Bosnian War. Furthermore, the criticisms against the policy of the West could be seen in governmental level. For example, George Kenney, the head of the Yugoslavian board in the Department of State of the USA, resigned and criticized the attitudes of the USA and Britain towards the war.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>31</sup>Türkeş, *Bosna-Hersek Problemi: 26-28 Ağustos 1992 Londra Konferansı ve Siyasi Sonuçları*, Prof. Abdurrahman Çaycı'ya Armağan, (Hacettepe Üniv.: Ankara, 1995) p. 47.

According to Nurşin Ateşoğlu Güney, the passivity of the West in the disintegration of Yugoslavia and Bosnian War stems from the desire to make no concessions on two principles: First of all Yugoslavia should not be divided because it serves as a model for the USSR. In addition to this, Russia should not be alerted. Güney adds that Western countries tried to reduce the effects of the war by containment.<sup>32</sup>

Turkey was suspicious of Western attempts to be apprehensive about Islam in the Balkans. It is also a fact that Turkey could not stand by and watch the increasing influence of Iran in the Balkans. Moreover, newly independent states in Caucasus and Central Asia waited to see what the Turkish response to the Bosnian War would be; which is one of the other reasons for Turkish involvement in Bosnian conflict. Before the war, Turkey and the West recognized Bosnia-Herzegovina.<sup>33</sup> Serbian aggression was against the independent republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina.

During the Bosnian War there were three arguments in Turkey: First, Turkey should make an air attack on the Serbian side, unilaterally. One of the supporters of this idea was the Welfare Party. Second, Turkey's unilateral intervention was impossible and it should take place as part of a military intervention led by any one of the international organizations against Serbian aggression. Hikmet Çetin, Minister of Foreign Affairs, overwhelmingly supported this idea. Finally, this war was not directly related to Turkey; it was a result of struggle among imperialist powers.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> Nurşin Ateşoğlu Güney, "Bosna-Hersek Sorunu ve Barış Görüşmeleri Süreci" in *Yeni Balkanlar Eski Sorunlar*, edited by Gencer Özcan and Kemali Saybaşıllı, (Bağlam Yayınları: İstanbul, 1997) pp. (264-274).

<sup>33</sup> On 7 April 1992, the EU and the USA diplomatically recognized Bosnia-Herzegovina. Turkey supported its membership at the CSCE and it became a member of the CSCE on 30 April 1992 and the UN admitted it on 22 May 1992 together with Slovenia and Croatia.

<sup>34</sup> Türkeş, "Türkiye Avrupa İlişkilerinde Balkanlar Faktörü ...," pp. (333-336).

The Bosnian war accelerated the post-Cold War debates on Turkish foreign policy. Each group in the debate used the war for the approval of their ideas. Conservatives called the Bosnian war a 15<sup>th</sup> Crusade and they advocated a unilateral military intervention of Turkey. According to Neo-Ottomanists, the Bosnian War was an opportunity for Turkey to become a sub-superpower. It is stated that Turks and Bosnians shared cultural, historical and religious ties, so the Turkish Republic was obliged to intervene in this bloody war. Neo-Ottomanists asserted that the West had not responded to the Bosnian War in order to prevent Turkey from becoming a sub-superpower. Moreover, they added that the conflicts in the Balkans, especially in Bosnia-Herzegovina were designed to hinder the rise of the Neo-Ottomanism. In addition to these, Tanıl Bora asserts that Turkish nationalist intelligentsia aimed to make Turkey a regional power in the short term and a super power in the long term. Thus, the Bosnian War presented a good opportunity for implementation of these policies.<sup>35</sup>

## **2.6 Turkey's Policy during the War in Bosnia**

During the initial phase of the Bosnian War, the ruling party was a coalition by the True Path Party (DYP) and the Social Democratic Populist Party (SHP). In the beginning of the war, Turkey like Western Europe and the USA supported the territorial integrity of Yugoslavia. On 15 July 1991, İzzetbegovic came to Ankara and demanded Turkey's support for the independence and territorial integrity of Bosnia-Herzegovina.<sup>36</sup> When Milosevic and foreign minister Jovanic came to Ankara in January 1992, they

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<sup>35</sup> Bora, "Turkish National Identity, Turkish Nationalism..." p. 116.

<sup>36</sup> Soysal and Kut, *Dağılan Yugoslavya...*, pp. (8-10).

asked Turkey not to recognize the independence of Bosnia-Herzegovina. The disintegration became inevitable; therefore Turkey recognized the independence of all former Yugoslavian republics on 6 February 1992. It was significant for Turkey to avoid being the first state to recognize these republics.<sup>37</sup> On 5 April 1992, Serbian militants opened fire on civilians and a civil war embarked on in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Turkey condemned both the attacks on Bosnian civilians and the violation of the territorial integrity of Bosnia, the next day.<sup>38</sup>

Owing to Turkey's policy of the multilateral response to the Bosnian problem, it tried to put the Bosnian War on the international agenda. For this reason, it used international and regional organizations together with bilateral relations. Neo-Ottomanists generally criticised Turkey and demanded an active policy in Bosnian War. Nevertheless, Turkey's policy could not be called passive. Activism means influence in the neo-Ottomanist sense. Therefore, from the neo-Ottomanist point of view, Turkey's Balkan policy was not active.

During the Turkish presidency in the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) and Council of Europe in 1992, Turkey put Bosnia on the agenda.<sup>39</sup> Turkey called a meeting of foreign affairs ministers of OIC countries in Istanbul between 17 and 18 June, 1992 and in December, 1992 in Mecca. At the Istanbul meeting, the OIC appealed to the UN to take strict measures that included international military intervention against the Serbs. At the same

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<sup>37</sup> Şule Kut, "Turkish Diplomatic Initiative for Bosnia-Herzegovina," in *Balkans: A Mirror of the New International Order*, edited by Günay Göksu Özdoğan and Kemali Saybaşılı, (Eren Yayıncılık: İstanbul, 1995), p. 298.

<sup>38</sup> Soysal and Kut, *Dağılan Yugoslavya...*p. 17.

<sup>39</sup> Soysal, "Günümüzde Balkanlar..." p. 190.

meeting, Hikmet Çetin said that if the UN asked, Turkey would decide to make use of its military force in order to end the war in Bosnia.<sup>40</sup> Turkey addressed a letter to the Islamic Development Bank (IDB) and requested an allocation of funds for humanitarian aid to Bosnians. Consequently, Turkey's proposal was accepted and the IDB established the requested fund for Bosnia.<sup>41</sup>

In addition to its efforts in international organizations, Turkey raised the Bosnian War in bilateral meetings and it proposed solutions to the Bosnian problem. Çetin visited London, Paris, New York between 4 and 12 August 1992, and he asked to take the necessary measures to stop the war in Bosnia. This initiative was called the Plan of Action for Bosnia. This plan included no concessions on the territory of Bosnia Herzegovina but the establishment of safe areas for refugees. Moreover, Turkey suggested that the arms embargo be lifted from Bosnians and that the Serbian aggression be prevented by sanctions.

Turkey and Bosnia-Herzegovina had hopes of finding the solution to this problem at the London Conference of 26-28 August, 1992. They supported a military intervention by one international organization while Western powers (Germany, USA, Britain and France) supported a diplomatic solution. Turkish Foreign Minister Çetin criticized the ones who were responsible for the Bosnian tragedy and demanded the use of force on 27-28 August, 1992. During the Conference, Çetin signed a Protocol on building diplomatic relations with Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia and

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<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 230.

<sup>41</sup> Kut, "Turkish Diplomatic Initiative ..." p. 299.

Slovenia. In the Conference it was decided that a solution would be found by diplomatic means.<sup>42</sup> This situation continued until the middle of 1995.

Although Turkey met with other Balkan countries to find a solution to the war, it could not reach a consensus. Foreign Affairs Ministers of South Eastern European Countries were invited to a meeting in İstanbul on 25 November, 1992. Serbia was not invited to the meeting and Greece did not take part. Bulgaria declined to intervene in Yugoslavia's internal matters and the majority of the participants shared this idea. Furthermore, Albania, Macedonia, Greece and Bulgaria declared they would refuse to open their airspace for Turkey's possible unilateral intervention in Bosnia.<sup>43</sup> In fact, the failure of regional initiatives for Bosnia mainly derived from the different attitudes of the Balkan countries towards the Yugoslavian problem. At the end of the Conference, there was no call for an international military intervention.

During the Bosnian War, Turkey and Greece had different attitudes. While Greece was close to the Serbians, Turkey had strong ties with the Bosnian Muslims. Deputy Prime Minister İnönü explained Turkey's determination to participate in a possible multilateral military intervention in Bosnia to Greek Prime Minister Mitsotakis. However, Mitsotakis emphasized the necessity for non-interference in any of the Balkan countries regarding the Bosnian problem.<sup>44</sup> On 25 May 1993, the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs stated that "Turkey did not support Greece's policy of non-interference in the Bosnian War due to the fact that more than 2 million people of Balkan origin

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<sup>42</sup> Türkeş, *Bosna- Hersek Problemi: 26-28 Ağustos ...*, p. 473.

<sup>43</sup> Mehmet Gönübol, et al., *Olaylarla Türk Dış Politikası (1919-1995)*, (Siyasal Kitabevi: Ankara, 1996) pp.(633-659).

<sup>44</sup> Soysal and Kut, *Dağılan Yugoslavya...*, p. 37.

live in Turkey and it is in Turkey's best to prevent the spread of the War to Kosovo, Sandjak and Macedonia."<sup>45</sup>

Turkey's Bosnian policy included the regional approaches for the War. Özal went on a four-country tour of Albania, Bulgaria, Croatia and Macedonia on 15 February, 1993. Şule Kut states that this initiative of the President was seen as an effort to show his influence over the Turkish foreign policy and this action caused an increase in the Neo-Ottomanist arguments in the international arena.<sup>46</sup>

Turkey joined in the NATO air strike against the Serbian side by sending its aircrafts and troops to United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR), the NATO-led Multinational Implementation Force (IFOR) and the Multinational Stabilization Force (SFOR).<sup>47</sup> United Nations Security Council (UNSC) Resolution 816 was adopted on 31 March, 1993. The member countries were assigned a task to implement a no fly zone by the use of force. Turkey sent its 18 F-16's to Operation Deny Flight conducted by NATO. Greece did not give permission for the use of its airspace, so Turkish aircrafts were flown via the Mediterranean and the Operation began on 12 April 1993.<sup>48</sup> Turkish-American and European interests were similar in Bosnian War in that this war could spread to the south, to Turkey and Greece and this would be harmful for all of them. However, they disagreed with each

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<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 42.

<sup>46</sup> Kut, "Turkish Diplomatic Initiative...", p. 310.

<sup>47</sup> Kut, "Soğuk Savaş Sonrasında Türkiye'nin Balkan Ülkeleriyle İlişkileri," in *Çağdaş Türk Diplomasisi: 200 Yıllık Süreç*, edited by İsmail Soysal (Türk Tarih Kurumu: Ankara, 1999) p. 395.

<sup>48</sup> Kut, "Turkish Diplomatic Initiative..."., p. 311.

other totally on deciding whether to use military power against Serbian aggression or not.

Turkey and the USA supported Bosnia-Herzegovina's struggle to survive. In spite of the UN embargo, Turkey and Iran provided the Bosnians with arms. It was stated that the Turkish ship Turgut Reis, joined the NATO-Western European Union (WEU) fleet, was allowed to pass of ships which supplied arms to the Bosnian side.<sup>49</sup>

On 26 February 1994, as a result of the initiatives by Turkey, Germany and the USA, and at the invitation of Secretary of State Warren Christopher, the foreign ministers of Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia and the representative of the Bosnian Croats met in New York and talked about the foundation of Muslim-Croat Federation in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Turkey welcomed this development. In March, the Bosnian-Croat Federation Agreement was signed in Washington.<sup>50</sup>

Turkey actively supported the Dayton Agreement because the implementation of this agreement was significant to end the war. Turkey sent 1000 troops to peacekeeping forces based at Sarajevo and Zenica.<sup>51</sup> When Turkey sent troops to IFOR, Britain, Russia and Greece put forward the principle that restricts the involvement of a former hegemonic power in a peacekeeping force.

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<sup>49</sup> Hasan Ünal, "Balkanlarda Son Askeri ve Siyasi Durum I," *Yeni Türkiye Dergisi*, 1/3, (Mart-Nisan 1995), p. 280.

<sup>50</sup> Soysal and Kut, *Dağılan Yugoslavya...*p. 56.

<sup>51</sup>J. F. Brown, "Turkey: Back to the Balkans" in *Turkey's New Geopolitics: From the Balkans to Western China*, edited by Ian O. Lesser and Graham Fuller (Westview Press: Boulder, 1993) pp. (149-150).



## **2.7 The Debates on the Islamic and the Orthodox Axis in the Balkans**

After the end of the Cold War Era, there was a fear of a new polarization in the region of an Orthodox and Islamic axis. In this context, a lot of 3<sup>rd</sup> Balkan War scenarios emerged. Many observers believed that Turkey would not tolerate the persecution of fellow-Muslim in Macedonia. If Turks intervened in the situation, the Greeks would try to protect Slavic Christians. If Albania were destabilized and if there were attacks on the ethnic Greeks, there could be a response from the Greek government which might, in turn, lead to an intervention by Turkey. Turkey tried to prevent such a polarization. For this reason, it tried to establish closer relations with nearly all Balkan countries and signed political and military agreements that were not against a third party.

In the post-Cold War era, Greece suggested that Turkey tried to form an Islamic axis in the Balkans by establishing closer relations with Albania and Macedonia with the support of the USA and becoming the protector of Balkan Muslim minorities. Turkey's effective diplomatic initiatives and relations were interpreted as neo-Ottomanism by Greece.<sup>52</sup> Stephanos Constantinides argues that "Turkey returns to an expansionist foreign policy based on the Imperial Ottoman tradition coupled with the Islamic tradition in the post-Cold War era" and "the reviving Ottoman past begins with 1974

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<sup>52</sup>A. Hikmet Alp, "Balkan Region in Turkey's Security Environment" in *The Europeanization of Turkey's Security Policy: Prospects and Pitfalls*, edited by Ali Karaosmanoğlu and Seyfi Taşhan, (Foreign Policy Institute: Ankara, 2004), p. 190.

Cyprus intervention” . He adds that Turkey’s Balkan and Middle East policies are inextricably linked.<sup>53</sup>

İlhan Uzgel says that it was possible that there were two camps in the Balkans; Turkey, Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Macedonia constituted one side and Greece, the Russian Federation and Serbia the other until 1995. However, these were not religious camps because Turkey’s side was without religious homogeneity. Although ties between Turkey and Bulgaria, and Turkey and Romania were close, neither of these countries joined either camp. After 1995, this polarization disappeared as Greece changed its foreign policy and tried to establish closer relations with other Balkan countries. For example, Greece has important investments in Albania and Macedonia.<sup>54</sup>

According to Şule Kut, Turkey’s active diplomacy in the Balkan Peninsula gave rise to neo-Ottomanist arguments and claims of a Muslim axis. She says that apart from some crises, Turkey rarely paid attention to its ethnic kin outside its borders. Kut adds that even if Turkey was not imposing itself in the region, its geopolitical position in the Balkans was imposing on Turkey the role of a regional power.<sup>55</sup>

During the Bosnian war and the Kosovo crisis, Misha Glenny suggested that this was the beginning of a new Balkan war and that the Greek-led Slav-Orthodox world and the Turkey-led Muslim world would be two

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<sup>53</sup> Stephanos Constantinides, “The Emergence of a New Model: A new Foreign Policy in Turkey” in *The New Balkans: Disintegration and Reconstruction*, edited by Georga A. Kourvetoris et al., (East European Monographs: Boulder, 2002) pp. (380-386).

<sup>54</sup> Uzgel, “Doksanlarda Türkiye İçin....” pp. (429-431).

<sup>55</sup> Kut, “Turkey in the Post-Communist Balkans: Between Activism and Self-Restraint,” *Turkish Review of Balkan Studies*, 3, Annual 1996-97, pp. (39-41).

sides of this war.<sup>56</sup> Especially in the Western media, the members of these axes were described as Greece, Russia and Serbia in the Orthodox camp and Turkey, Bulgaria, Macedonia, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Albania in the Muslim camp. Indeed these axes were illogical because the majority of the population in the Muslim camp were Orthodox, which would make the presence of Bulgaria and Macedonia seem without reason. In addition to this, these groupings did not last long. For example, when other states unified and fought against the Ottoman Empire in the Balkan War I, later they fought against each other for the sake of gaining more lands in the Balkan War II.<sup>57</sup> In other words, interests, allies and enemies could change at any moment. Orthodox unity proved difficult to achieve in the Balkans, because Orthodox churches had tried to maintain their existence during the Communist Era.

According to Balkan War III scenarios, Greece would support Serbia, and Turkey would support Macedonia. As Turkey had closer ties with Albania, in such a conflict, it would be extremely difficult for Turkey to decide which one to support. In light of this, Şule Kut asks “why do Turkey and Greece fight with each other because of Macedonia?”<sup>58</sup> The possibility of a new Balkan war always is definitely a fear of the regional states. Since the beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, when mass migrations began from the Balkans

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<sup>56</sup> Misha Glenny, “Heading Off War in the Southern Balkans,” *Foreign Affairs*, (May-June 1995), pp. (98-108).

<sup>57</sup> Feroz A. K. Yasemee, “Nationality in the Balkans: The Case of the Macedonians” in *Balkans: A Mirror of the New International Order*, edited by Günay Göksu Özdoğan and Kemali Saybaşılı, (Eren Yayıncılık: İstanbul, 1995) pp. (121-125).

<sup>58</sup> Kut, “Yeni Balkan Savaşı ve Makedonya’nın Sonu Senaryoları,” *Türkiye Günlüğü*, 34, (Mayıs-Haziran 1995), pp. (5-10).

to Turkey, the fear of new waves of immigrants has caused Turkey to work toward creating permanent stability and peace in the Balkans.<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>59</sup> Mustafa Kahramanyol, "Balkanlarda Müslümanların Dünyü, Bugünü, Yarını," *Yeni Türkiye Dergisi*, 1/3, (Mart- Nisan 1995), pp.(236-268).

### CHAPTER 3

#### **TURKISH FOREIGN POLICY BETWEEN THE DAYTON AGREEMENT AND THE KOSOVO INTERVENTION (1995-1999)**

The Dayton Agreement was initiated in Dayton, Ohio on 21 November, 1995 by A. İzzetbegovic, President of Bosnia-Herzegovina, F. Tudjman, President of Croatia and S. Milosevic, President of Federal Yugoslavia. It was signed on 14 December 1995 in Paris, and was witnessed by statesmen from approximately 50 countries (including Turkish Foreign Affairs Minister Deniz Baykal). İzzetbegovic called this agreement a “bitter but necessary drug”.<sup>60</sup> Milosevic stressed his overwhelming desire for the neutrality of the international community and Tudjman asked every country to show respect for all articles of the Agreement.

The Dayton Peace Agreement aimed to maintain the integrity of Bosnia-Herzegovina; however, it created two entities: the Republica Srpska has 49% and the Muslim-Croat Federation has 51% of the territory. This agreement, therefore, has resulted in a weak and tentative state. The two constituent parts could establish special relations with neighbouring states and they could have their own army.<sup>61</sup> IFOR was primarily set up for the implementation of the agreement and it took over the military mission from the UNPROFOR. In this framework, first IFOR soldiers were sent to the region on 4 December 1995. Turkey joined in IFOR with 1,320 troops. IFOR

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<sup>60</sup> [http://www.ohr.int/dpa/default.asp?content\\_id=379](http://www.ohr.int/dpa/default.asp?content_id=379) (Accessed on 25 April 2004).

<sup>61</sup> DaytonAgreement,Annex4,Article:3/2(a),([http://www.ohr.int/dpa/default.asp?content\\_id=372](http://www.ohr.int/dpa/default.asp?content_id=372)) (Accessed on 12 January 2005).

ended its task in June 1997 when the number of its soldiers was reduced to 30,000 and it was renamed SFOR.<sup>62</sup>

During the Bosnian War, Turkey and the USA claimed that this war was mainly the result of the lack of balance of power; therefore, they implemented the Train and Equip Programme. In this process, the USA supplied arms while Turkey trained the Bosnian army. These are crucially important factors for Turkish foreign policy since as regional stability increases, the relations of Bosnia-Herzegovina and Turkey will develop and Turkey gains an advantageous position against Greek influence in the region. With the support of the USA, Turkey tries to minimize the effects of Greece and Russian Federation in the Balkans. Besides, one of Turkey's primary objectives is the restoration of the cultural heritage in Bosnia- Herzegovina.

Turkey's economic relations with Bosnia-Herzegovina have been limited. In this context, Bosnia-Herzegovina took the priority in the export of Machinery and Chemical Industries Establishment (MKEK) during 1998.<sup>63</sup> The Turkish-Bosnia-Herzegovina Business Council was formed within the structure of Foreign Economic Relations Board (DEIK). In May 1996, the members of the Council went to Bosnia, but they encountered a financing problem. Furthermore, the competition with EU members such as Italy and France was extremely difficult. During the governmental visits between Turkey and Bosnia-Herzegovina, it was decided that Turkey would cooperate with Bosnia-Herzegovina in the fields of defence industry and security.<sup>64</sup> Turkey developed some initiatives for the membership of the Aid Committee for Bosnia, which coordinates financial aid, and it sought USA support at this

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<sup>62</sup> Uzgel, "Balkanlarla İlişkiler...", p. 498.

<sup>63</sup> *Cumhuriyet*, 28 December 1998.

<sup>64</sup> *Cumhuriyet*, 23 February 2000.

point. Turkish Foreign Affairs Minister Deniz Baykal explained that the USA had promised to support Turkey's membership in the Conference for the Implementation of Aid for Bosnia on 8 December 1995. Due to its active policy during the war, Turkey demanded to play an active role in the restoration and reconstruction of Bosnia.<sup>65</sup>

After the end of the war, each of the three ethnicities as well as the international community considered the possibility of radical-minded people coming to power as a threat to the Dayton Agreement. In a country in which there is high tension among three ethnic groups, nearly all decisions create problems, and every action by one side arouses suspicions in the others. The results of the 12-13 September 1998 elections for the Council of Presidency showed that nationalist parties had gained power among Croats and Serbs.<sup>66</sup> Due to the critical situation in the country, number plates of the cars consist of only numbers and letters, so it is extremely difficult to comprehend the ethnic origin of the driver. Additionally, the government could not come to an agreement on words for the national anthem; therefore it has no lyrics, only music.<sup>67</sup>

Bosnia-Herzegovina is a country which is primarily kept alive by international assistance. The task of SFOR is to prevent conflicts and build security, Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) is to keep elections under control and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) is to

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<sup>65</sup> <http://arsiv.zaman.com.tr/1995/12/06/güncel/bosna.html> (Accessed on 14.05.2004); Turan Aydın, "Bosna-Hersek'te Yeniden Yapılanma Çabaları ve Türkiye," *Avrasya Etüdleri*, 3/2, (Summer 1996), pp. (57-69).

<sup>66</sup> *Cumhuriyet*, 15 September 1998.

<sup>67</sup> Dayton Agreement, Annex 4, Article:1, ([http://www.ohr.int/dpa/default.asp?content\\_id=372](http://www.ohr.int/dpa/default.asp?content_id=372)) (Accessed on 15 January 2005).

appoint the head of Central Bank. Moreover, the United Nations High Representative (UNHR) has nearly unlimited authority. For example, the Representative could intervene in election lists and remove the elected people from that list. In spite of these endeavours, there remain many difficulties in the integration of different ethnic groups.

### **3.1 Turkish Foreign Policy after Dayton: stagnancy**

Once the Dayton Agreement had been concluded, Turkey's Balkan policy stagnated; there were various internal and external factors behind this change. The first reason for the stagnancy of Turkey's Balkan policy was the change of government both in the Balkan countries and in Turkey. Short-term governments and domestic matters dominated on the agenda in Turkey. Governments concentrated on protecting their position and political rivalries gained impetus. Besides, governments of Turkey were not primarily interested in the Balkans in the 1995-1996 period. In addition to this, governmental changes in Albania, Bulgaria, and Greece affected Turkish Balkan policy to some extent. Socialists came to power in Bulgaria and Albania and they had suspicions concerning both Turkey and its foreign policy. At the same time, Greece abandoned its hostile attitude towards its neighbours. It commenced to build closer relations with them and declared its support for their membership to the EU and NATO.

Turkish-Albanian relations lost their momentum after 1995, while Albania-Greece relations improved. Albania made a great effort to achieve complete integration with the West in the first half of the 1990s. As a result of this, the economic policy of Sali Berisha provoked revolt and chaos in the country. During this chaotic situation in Albania in 1997, Turkey sent 800 troops to the Multilateral Peacekeeping Force in Albania (ALBA) in April



1997 under the resolutions of the UN.<sup>68</sup> Şule Kut asserts that Turkey was not the first country to help Albania but that Turkey acted in accordance with other countries. When Italy and Greece took the leading roles, Turkey was not very active in the Multilateral Force. In addition to these, Turkey attached utmost importance to evacuating Turkish citizens in Tirana. Furthermore, the new government of Albania thought Turkey sided with Berisha after the event in 1997. Turkish Foreign Affairs Minister İsmail Cem visited Albania for the sake of showing that this opinion was completely false. However, the main reason for stagnancy in relations of these two countries derived from the extreme importance given to the relations with Greece by the socialist-minded government of Albania.<sup>69</sup> In Albania, Muslims dominated in the Democratic Party; however, the Socialist party had anti-Ottoman and anti-Islamic agenda.<sup>70</sup>

The stagnant phase of the Balkan policy disappeared to some extent when the Democratic Left Party (DSP), Democratic Turkey Party (DTP), the Motherland Party (ANAP) coalition came to power on 30 June 1997. According to the results of the 1997 Luxemburg Summit of the EU, that Turkey could not gain a candidate country status was a huge disappointment. Within this context, the Yılmaz government commenced to follow a regionally centred foreign policy. Hence, developing good relations with its neighbours and security took the utmost priority for Turkey. However, many things changed in this region and former effective policies lost their strength with the

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<sup>68</sup> Türkeş, “Geçiş Sürecinde Dış Politika Öncelikleri...,” p. 179.

<sup>69</sup> Kut, “Soğuk Savaş Sonrasında...,” p. 390.

<sup>70</sup> Xavier Bougarel, “Islam and Politics in the Post-Communist Balkans,” in *New Approaches to Balkan Studies*, edited by Dimitris Keridis, Ellen Elias-Bursac and Nicholas Yatromanolakis, Vol.: 2, (Brassey’s Inc.: Dulles, V. A, 2003) p. 353.

end of the Bosnian War. The conflicts in the Balkans caused the amendment in Western policy.

### **3.2 Turkey's Minority Policy towards the Balkans**

It is fair to say that Turkey never uses Turkish minorities in the Balkans as a fifth column for its foreign policy since such a policy would confirm the suspicion that Turkey wants to rebuild its hegemony in the Balkans and aims to create a Neo-Ottomanist zone of influence.

In the first half of the 1990s, Turkey was primarily interested in decreasing migration from the Balkans. In the second half of the 1990s, Turkey was concerned with the reintegration of Turkish minorities into the economic, political and administrative structure of its multipartite democratic system. For this reason, it actively supported the emergence of political parties formed by the minorities. It has tried to maintain its ties with Turkish minorities through these parties.<sup>71</sup> Thus, instabilities, which derive from ethnic and religious differences, could be prevented and problems could be solved by political means. The existence of minorities is a common feature in nearly all Balkan countries. However, the integration with the NATO and the EU will bring some solutions to ethnic and religious problems. Nevertheless, there is a long way to go and as in the Greek example, being a part of Europe does not necessarily cause the betterment of the status of minorities.<sup>72</sup>

Turkey maintains different minority policies towards the different countries. In other words, the Turkish government supports Macedonia and Bulgaria instead of directly supporting Turkish minorities in these countries. It

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<sup>71</sup> Türkeş, "Turkish Foreign Policy towards the Balkans: Quest for Enduring Stability and Security" in *Turkish Foreign Policy in Post-Cold War Era*, edited by İdris Bal, (Brown Walker Press: Florida, 2004) p. 200.

<sup>72</sup> Alp, "Balkan Region in Turkey's ...," p. 193.

gives support for political parties of the minorities. In Western Thrace, Turkey stands behind the Turkish minority, not Greek government. The core of the Turkish minority policy in the Balkans can be summarized as: stay where you are, protect your culture and identity, and gain your rights according to the law of this country.

The effects of Turkey's minority policy in the Balkans could be inferred from the Turkey's attitude towards refugees and asylum seekers. The situation of immigrants of Turkish origin and culture is organised in the framework of Settling Law numbered 2510 and dated 14 June 1934, and these people are not defined as foreigners. Turkey ratified the 1951 UN Contract on the Status of Refugees with some reservations on 29 August, 1961 and accepted the Additional Protocol in 1966. As a result of these, Turkey has been obliged to give the right of asylum only to people who come to Turkey due to mistreatment in Europe.<sup>73</sup> Turkey calls the people coming from the Balkans or Central Asia guests, not refugees, because it wants these people to stay in Turkey temporarily and then return to their countries.

### **3.2.1 The Bulgarian Example**

The precise determinant of Turkish-Bulgarian relations is the sizeable Turkish minority in Bulgaria. The Rebirth Process reached its limit in 1989.<sup>74</sup> In the first half of 1985, Turkey demanded that Bulgaria give permission for the emigration of its Turkish minority to Turkey. The Bulgarian authorities declared that only Bulgarians lived in Bulgaria. In 1987, Turkey put the issue

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<sup>73</sup> Hüseyin Pazarcı, *Uluslararası Hukuk Dersleri*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Book, (Turhan Kitabevi: Ankara, 1998), pp. (206-215).

<sup>74</sup> The Rebirth Process is the massive campaign for erasing the national identity of Turkish citizens began by forcing them to change their names with Bulgarian ones in December 1984.

of Bulgarian policy towards minorities on the agenda of the 16<sup>th</sup> Islamic Conference and demanded a review of relations with Bulgaria.<sup>75</sup> Later, Bulgarian government accepted the presence of the Turkish minority and gave permission to migrate to Turkey in 1989. 300,000 Turks went to Turkey in August 1989, although 130,000 of these people returned to Bulgaria in December 1989.<sup>76</sup>

The Rebirth Process caused some problems in the post-Cold War era. First of all, this was a shameful event for the post-Cold War Bulgaria. Secondly, Turkey has become an important factor in relations with other regional countries and its support was necessary for Bulgaria in this new era. Thirdly, due to Rebirth Process, skilled people went to different countries.<sup>77</sup>

A minority rights movement, which had been formed under the leadership of Ahmet Doğan, was re-established in 1989 and called the Democratic League of Human Rights. The Bulgarian Communist Party resigned on 10 November 1989, and prisoners were released on 22 December 1989. Consequently, the Movement for Rights and Freedom (MRF) was established on January 1990.<sup>78</sup> As a result of the efforts of the MRF, some important steps were taken in Bulgaria: the forcefully changed names were to be replaced by the original names through administrative way, Turkish and

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<sup>75</sup> Nazif Mandacı and Birsen Erdoğan, *Balkanlarda Azınlık Sorunu: Yunanistan, Arnavutluk ve Bulgaristan'daki Azınlıklara Bir Bakış*, (Stratejik Araştırmalar ve Milli Etüdler Komitesi Araştırma Projeleri Dizisi: Ankara, 5/2001), p. 110.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>77</sup> Türkeş, "Geçiş Sürecinde Dış Politika Öncelikleri: Bulgaristan Örneği" in *Türkiye'nin Komşuları*, edited by Mustafa Türkeş and İlhan Uzgel, (İmge Yayınları: Ankara, 2002) pp. (185-186)

<sup>78</sup> Nurcan Özgür, *Etnik Sorunların Çözümünde Hak ve Özgürlükler Hareketi*, (Der Yayınları: İstanbul, 1999) pp. (74-84).

religion lessons were provided in state schools, cultural foundations, Turkish broadcast on radios and TVs and the publication of Turkish newspapers and magazines were permitted.<sup>79</sup>

During the dismemberment of Yugoslavia, Bulgarian foreign policy was defined as active neutrality. It diplomatically recognized the independence of Slovenia, Croatia, Macedonia and Bosnia-Herzegovina in January 1992. Both Bulgaria and Turkey supported the territorial integrity of Yugoslavia and Bosnia-Herzegovina in this context. The policies of these two countries were similar in some degree. The embargo on Yugoslavia affected Bulgaria's economy, transportation and its connection with Europe. Corridors 8 and 4 of the EU were not built during the war in Yugoslavia. It was said that Bulgaria illegally sent oil to Yugoslavia.<sup>80</sup> Not only its recognition of Macedonia but also its involvement in imposing an embargo against Yugoslavia severely undermined its relations with Greece and Yugoslavia. Bulgaria does not recognize Macedonia as a nation because it claims that they are originally Bulgarians. However, it declared that it has no territorial designs on Macedonian lands. Turkey was pleased with Bulgaria's recognition of Macedonia.

The religious aspect of the Bosnian War caused the fear of a possible ethnic clash between Bulgarian nationalists and the Turkish minority. Bulgaria was concerned about the expansion of Islamic fundamentalism in the Balkans and so its policy focused on the human rights dimension of the war while it avoided building relations with Bosnian people. Turkey's decision to send peace force to Bosnia under the leadership of the UN provoked reaction in

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<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*, p.347.

<sup>80</sup> Türkeş, "Geçiş Sürecinde Dış Politika Öncelikleri...", pp. (196-197).

Bulgaria but ensuing developments proved that fears about Turkey were unreasonable.

Although there have been some short-term fluctuations, there have not been any serious problems between Turkey and Bulgaria.<sup>81</sup> The reason for progress in these two countries' relations is not only related to the existence of the Movement for Rights and Freedom and the situation of minorities; it is also the result of the new international conjuncture. Like other Eastern Bloc countries, Bulgaria has tried to build closer relations with Turkey.

The first contact on the General Staff level was the attendance of General Mehmet Önder at Bulgarian talks in February 1991. In this regard, on 20 December 1991, the Turkish Chief of the General Staff Doğan Güreş made a visit to Bulgaria where Turkey and Bulgaria signed the Sofia Document, which included among its provisions an agreement not to hold military exercises within 15 kilometres of their mutual border and to use a maximum of 10, 000 soldiers and 200 tanks. Bulgarian Prime Minister Dimitrov came to Ankara and the two countries signed the Agreement on Friendship, Good Neighbourhood Relations, Cooperation and Security on 4-6 May 1992. This had been the third friendship agreement since 1925. Bulgaria also signed the same agreements with its other neighbours but the fact that "security" took place only in this agreement was thought interesting.<sup>82</sup> In November 1992, the Edirne Document was signed and later Turkey withdrew some units from the Bulgarian border.

In the post-Cold War Era, the main components of the Bulgarian foreign policy were to enter Euro-Atlantic institutions, to follow an active neutrality policy, to build a security belt in its surroundings by bilateral and

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<sup>81</sup> <http://bulrefsite.entrewave.com/view/bulrefsite/s129p144.htm>. (Accessed on 19 November 2003).

<sup>82</sup>Özgür, p. 356.

multilateral agreements, to prevent regional tensions and conflicts and not to intervene in these, to be neutral in international strife, to sustain the balance in its relations with neighbour countries, and to preclude the emergence of regional political unity in its security field.<sup>83</sup> In the background of these principles, Bulgaria's weak and insufficient military capacity could be noticed. Nearly all of the former Eastern Bloc countries have considerable concerns in security and economic issues in this new era. For this reason, they aim to enter to Euro-Atlantic institutions. For example, NATO membership means military security and the EU is the symbol of economic and social development. In the case of Bulgaria, there is still a fear about Turkey because of its military power. Due to this, Bulgaria aims to balance its relations with Greece and Turkey. Bulgaria tried to secure its southern flank, and for this reason it chose to balance its relations with Turkey and Greece by making similar agreements with both of them. When Bulgaria recognized the independence of Macedonia, the balance deteriorated and Bulgarian-Turkish relations became closer. Bulgaria tries to be neutral about blocs in the Balkans and begins to follow reconciliation policy and wants to join to Euro-Atlantic structures in the post-Cold War period.

According to Nurcan Özgür, Bulgaria's security problem with Turkey has an ethnic and a geopolitical dimensions. The former problems derive from Bulgaria's minority policy. In the period of 1984-1989, Turkey internationalised this problem by calling the international community's attention to the plight of minorities in Bulgaria. Turkey did not make "an attack as experienced in Cyprus".<sup>84</sup> It is a very important point because during this period some of the Bulgarians were profoundly concerned with becoming

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<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 269.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. (332-333).

a second Cyprus. Due to Turkey's benign policy, Bulgarian-Turkish relations improved in the post-Cold War era.

In this new period, the strategic importance of Turkey increased as a result of the developments in Central Asia and Middle East. This led to a suspicion that Turkey would try to re-unite former Ottoman lands, causing a sudden rise in Bulgaria's nationalist movements. Although the Bulgarian Socialist Party (BSP) formulated its foreign policy in the context of this suspicion, it accepted Turkey's importance in the Balkans. In addition to this, Bulgaria was concerned with the possibility that Turkey might avenge the persecution of the Turks in Bulgaria. Turks are the largest minority groups in Bulgaria. Besides, Turkey is their kin-state and a neighbour of Bulgaria. Moreover, the Turkish minority lives near the Turkish borders. All of these factors create the Bulgarian suspicion against Turkey. Any initiative of Turkey about this minority is considered as a threat by Bulgarian authorities.<sup>85</sup> The Movement for Rights and Freedom undertakes defence of minorities and prevents the tension between these two countries due to this problem.<sup>86</sup>

Bulgarian nationalist asserts that Turkey funds the Movement. According to Turkish authorities the Movement for Rights and Freedom is a Bulgarian political organization and Turkey's support is only moral.<sup>87</sup>

Bulgaria and Greece have long had problems but have always united against Turkey. Of course they have religion in common as well as culture

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<sup>85</sup> For example when in 1991 and 1992 petitions were made to Bulgarian Constitutional Court for closing of the Movement for Rights and Freedom, reactions came from Turkey. The letter of Prime Minister Mesut Yılmaz was one indicator of these reactions.

<sup>86</sup> Özgür, p. 336.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 338.



and similar perceptions of Turks. There have also been closer relations and cooperation between the Bulgarian Communist Party and the Greek governments since the 1970s. Moreover, the BSP and the Greek governments generally consider Turkey as a common threat. Since Turkey has an active USA support, it is more powerful and there is a great number of Turks living in the Balkans and Central Asia.

Rhodopes is an important area for Bulgaria because of its power plants, forests, rivers and mineral resources. Bulgaria is deeply concerned about both the existence of Muslim and Turks and the activities of the MRF in this region. Greek and Bulgarian media claim that the Movement for Rights and Freedom tries to Turkify Bulgarian Muslims (Pomaks) in Rhodopes and unify them with the Turks of Western Thrace, with the aim of joining these regions to Turkey. There is another element that strengthens the sensitivity of Bulgaria: Turkey. It is believed that Turkey supports the efforts of the MRF, though that has not been substantiated. In spite of the Greek-Bulgarian disagreement over Rhodopes, Turkey's 1974 Cyprus intervention and the threat posed by Turkey create a common ground in the relations of these two countries.

After 1995, internal debates increased within the Movement for Rights and Freedom, causing some partitions as well as rifts. Mustafa Türkeş says the main problem of the MRF was its failure in terms of institutionalising the party and the corruption in the party leadership.<sup>88</sup> There are some factors behind the decrease of the political power of the MRF:

- a) The economy was in crisis and minorities supported to BSP due to their nostalgia for life in the Communist Era.
- b) The migration to Turkey reduced the votes of the MRF.
- c) Mistrust of party leaders, who were thought to have spied for the Bulgarian Communist Party (BCP) in the Communist Era.

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<sup>88</sup> Türkeş, "Geçiş Sürecinde Dış Politika Öncelikleri..." pp. (187-188).

- d) The pressures of the BSP and other nationalist parties on voters and the MRF.
- e) The most important reason for the decrease in the votes was the establishment of new parties for minorities and separation from the MRF. For example, Mehmet Hoca formed Democratic Change Party in 1994 and the United Democratic Forces (UDF) supported it. Nedim Gencev's Democratic Justice Party (1994) was supported by the BSP.

The organization and support of the Kurdistan Workers' Party (Partiya Karkeren Kurdistan, PKK) in Bulgaria is a subject to be seriously considered with regard to Bulgarian-Turkish relations. This issue appeared on the agenda of both countries, especially during the BSP government. In April 1994, some documents stating that Alawi Turks were actually Kurds, together with Kurdistan maps that showed Diyarbakır as a capital were distributed in Bulgaria. In September 1994, the Culture and Education Association of Kurds held a Conference on the problems of Kurds. The Organization of Kurdish University Students organized protests against Turkey's operation in Northern Iraq in front of the Turkish Embassy on 1 May 1995. In this period, Bulgaria declared that Kurds of Bulgaria had no relations with the PKK. However, the PKK issue is one of the points in the Friendship, Good Neighbourhood, Cooperation and Security Agreement in May 1992 and the Agreement on Narcotic Smuggling and Combating Terrorism in February 1995. Bulgarian authorities officially declared the non-existence of PKK militants in Bulgaria. Sometimes the BSP condemned the Movement for Rights and Freedom due to its demands for the rights and freedoms not given to minorities in Turkey. The UDF is more moderate on this subject.<sup>89</sup>

The secret emigration to Turkey is a problem for both countries. The methods to overcome this issue were discussed between the representatives of

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<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. (349-351).

Turkey and Bulgaria. Turkey supplied credits and encouraged Turkish investors to make their investments in the economically underdeveloped regions where the Turkish minority lived. The MRF actively participated in this implementation.<sup>90</sup> After 1997, Turkish investment in Bulgaria gained impetus. In January 1999, the Free Trade Agreement came into force between these two countries.<sup>91</sup> Turkey is not in favour of waiving visas between Turkey and Bulgaria, as it fears a new mass immigration. Furthermore, Bulgaria considers this implementation as an additional economical burden and it abstains from it.

### 3.2.2 The Macedonian Example

Macedonia is one of the Balkan countries in which Turkey is very interested. Since the Communist Era, Turkey has had close relations with this republic for two reasons: the first one is that 85% of Turks of the former Yugoslavia live in Macedonia; the second is that both have similar security concerns.

The stability of Macedonia is vital for the stability of the Balkans and also that of Turkey. For that reason, the Turkish government supports not only Turks in Macedonia but also the Skopje government. However, some Turks in Macedonia and Albanians accuse Turkey of being pro-Macedonian.<sup>92</sup> The only way to sustain the independence of Macedonia is not to give priority to ethnic and religious policy.

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<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*, , p. 340.

<sup>91</sup> Türkeş, "Geçiş Sürecinde Dış Politika Öncelikleri..." pp. (200-202).

<sup>92</sup> Kut, "Soğuk Savaş Sonrasında..." pp. (399-400).

The Turks in Macedonia called as nationality and since 1945 they had cultural and educational rights. In 1974, Turks was accepted as a founding nation and until 1996 Turkish was an official language in municipalities. Although Turkish parties can be seen in Macedonia's political arena, many Macedonian Turks maintain their support for Albanian political parties because they assume the possibility for taking part in the Parliament is higher than Turkish ones. Besides, some Turkish people believe that Albanian parties advocate their interests better than Turkish ones.<sup>93</sup>

The Turkish Democratic Party (TDP) was established by the representatives of Turkish minority under the leadership of Erdoğan Saraç on 17 October 1992. This establishment was a reaction against the Macedonian government. Primarily, its criticism was limited to the education problems of the Turkish students around Zepa-Debar and the TDP acted in accordance with Albanian parties.<sup>94</sup>

The prospect of joining the EU has brought about better human rights legislation in the Balkan countries. Thus, Turkey supports their efforts for the integration to Euro-Atlantic structures, since this membership will pave the way for the strengthening of peace, stability, rule of law, democracy and betterment of the status of minorities in these countries.

The Macedonian Turkish minority was afraid of the privatisation process. For example, it is not possible to make TV broadcasting in Macedonia due to privatisation. In the Socialist era, the Macedonian state broadcaster (MRTV), allowed 3.5 hours of Turkish programming. In the post-Cold War era while Macedonians, Albanians and other nationalities have their own TV and radio stations, Turks usually watch Turkish TV.

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<sup>93</sup> Mandacı and Erdoğan, p.81.

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid.*

Macedonia declared its independence on 17 September 1991 and made it clear that it had no territorial demands on other countries. There were many protests against Macedonia in Greece, objecting to the country calling itself Macedonia, insisting that Macedonia should renounce all claims to Greek territory, and that it should give up claim to be a Macedonian minority in Greece. Article 3 of the Macedonian Constitution made it possible to change the borders of the country. The 1<sup>st</sup> paragraph of article 49 stated that Macedonia would defend the rights of Macedonian minorities in neighbouring countries. Greece interpreted these statements as a threat to its territorial integrity, and stopped oil exports to Macedonia. The EU and the international community criticized Greece's uncompromising attitude. In January 1993, Britain, France and Spain proposed a new name: the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM)<sup>95</sup>. In the UN General Assembly, Macedonia was unanimously accepted as a member under that name.<sup>96</sup>

In 1993, Papandreou became prime minister in Greece and revised and hardened Greek policy towards the Balkans and Turkey.<sup>97</sup> Due to the agreements signed by Turkey with Albania, Macedonia and Bosnia Herzegovina and its closer cooperation with the USA in the Balkans, Greece's concerns increased. The security concerns of Greece about Macedonia were inextricably linked to Turkey. It was believed that although Macedonia was weak militarily, Turkey's recognition and military aid were sufficient reasons

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<sup>95</sup> Some countries such as Bulgaria, China, Russia and Turkey recognized the FYROM as Republic of Macedonia.

<sup>96</sup> Firat, pp. (35-40).

<sup>97</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. (23-27).

for the Greeks to be suspicious of Macedonia.<sup>98</sup> Greece decided to enforce a trade embargo on Macedonia in February 1993 and it closed its port of Thessalonica to Macedonia. In response, Bulgaria opened Bourgas and Albania opened Durres to Macedonia. Turkey gave some aid to Skopje during the embargo. On 16 December, 1993, other EU members (Britain, France, Denmark, the Netherlands, Italy and Germany) recognized Macedonia, and on 8 February, 1994 so did the USA. As a result of the international reaction and the weakening of its position in Balkan politics, Greek authorities met with Macedonian counterparts under the mediation of Cyrus Vance in Washington.

The EU criticized the attitude of Greece towards Macedonia since this situation could cause new instabilities in the region, and undermine the Mediterranean politics of the EU. Furthermore, the mutual cooperation between Serbs and Greeks worried Macedonia. The EU Commission sued Greece in European Court of Justice. Furthermore, total removal of Greece from the Union was suggested.<sup>99</sup>

On 13 September 1995, as part of the USA mediation, the Foreign Ministers of Macedonia and Greece signed the Interim Accord for normalizing the bilateral relations in New York. In doing so, Greece formally recognized Macedonia. Both sides accepted common borders, respecting one another's territorial integrity and independence. Moreover, they ceased to be a threat to one another. The meetings about the name would continue under the supervision of the UN Secretary General. Macedonia pledged that it had no claims on Greek lands and would not intervene in Greece's internal affairs nor would it use the sun of Vergina in its flag anymore. Greece agreed not to block

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<sup>98</sup> Alexandros K. Kyrrou, "An Assessment of American Strategy in the South Balkans since the Dissolution of Yugoslavia" in *The New Balkans: Disintegration and Reconstruction*, edited by Georga A. Kourvetoris et al., (East European Monographs: Boulder, 2002) p. 400.

<sup>99</sup> Demetrius Andreas Floudas, "Pardon? A Conflict for a Name? FYROM's Dispute with Greece Revised" in *The New Balkans: Disintegration and Reconstruction*, edited by Georga A. Kourvetoris et al., (East European Monographs: Boulder, 2002), p. 97.

Macedonia's membership in international organizations when it applies in the name of FYROM, and that it would support Macedonia in developing relations with the EU. On 5 October 1995, Macedonia changed its flag and reduced the 16 points of the sun of Vergina to eight. Greece lifted the embargo on 14 October 1995. After that, Greece acted as the representative of the EU in the Balkans and it developed close economic and political ties with the states in the region.

### **3.3 The Change in Greek Foreign Policy and its Effects on Turkish Balkan Policy**

Greece began to improve its relations with Balkan countries. In March 1996, the President of Greece visited Albania and the Friendship and Cooperation Agreement was signed. Like Turkey, Greece initiated a trilateral meeting with Bulgaria and Romania in 1996. Greece aimed to reduce armament, solve current bilateral problems in the EU framework, and become one of the important countries in Mediterranean politics of the EU. Furthermore, it built a bridge between Eastern European Countries and the EU. Thereafter, it improved its relations with Turkey and declared its support for Turkey's membership to the EU. At the 1999 Helsinki Summit of the EU, Turkey was accepted as a candidate country.<sup>100</sup>

In 1993, Turkey accepted the West–East Motorway Project that connects Turkey to Adriatic Sea and starts in Durres, Albania and goes through Bulgaria and Macedonia. Turkey took on the responsibility for building the Albanian part of this road. Greece claimed that it had been excluded from this project, and it is true that the road gives Turkey access to markets that had previously been monopolized by Greece. The Greek initiative Via Egnatia began with the proposal of the Trans Balkan Motorway, which

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<sup>100</sup> Firat pp. (26-55).

starts in Varna and goes through Sofia and Skopje; it will end in Durres of Albania. However, Turkey demanded that the route begin in Istanbul, whereas Greece proposed that it should begin in Iguminitza and pass through Valos and Aegean Macedonia to end in Thessalonica. Greece explained that all Balkan countries are tied to this main way and that Durres and Istanbul will be connected. Indeed, Bulgaria and Macedonia were in favour of Turkey's proposal, but Greece launched its project with 300 million ECU aid from the EU. Greece put forward a second motorway project in a north-to-south direction. This route starts in Greece and passes through Bulgaria, Romania, Moldova, Ukraine, Belarus and ends in Russia. Besides, Greece presented itself as a guide in the EU membership process, thereby strengthening its ties with the countries with which Turkey had problems, and so encircled Turkey, especially in Caucasus and Middle East.<sup>101</sup>

### **3.4 The Passivity of Western Policy and the Inflaming of the Kosovo Problem**

The post-Cold War environment is different from previous bipolar system in many respects. As a result of the Bosnian War, bilateral relations were no longer sufficient. The policy implemented in the framework of international institutions and organizations gained impetus. For this reason, Turkish foreign policy encountered some difficulties and became less effective, especially after the Bosnian war. The USA encouraged Central and Eastern European Countries to join NATO and the EU, mainly to prevent German-European hegemony in these states. The EU therefore strengthened its ties with Central and East European Countries just after the end of the bipolar system. However, the EU did not follow such a policy in the Balkans.

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<sup>101</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. (57-72).



Furthermore, the EU was criticized due to its insufficient policy towards former Yugoslav republics.

After the Bosnian War, the EU realized the significance of the Balkans for the security of Western Europe. The Bosnian case made it clear that any kind of instability in the Balkans could spread to other parts of Europe. In addition to this, due to its ineffectiveness in the War in Bosnia, the EU faced the threat of losing its credibility. Obviously, the system had completely changed in the whole world and under these circumstances, if the EU could not solve or prevent instabilities and conflicts in such a close region, its image would be severely damaged.

When the EU realized the importance of sustaining peace and stability in the Balkans, it took some initiatives to bring the region up to a minimum level of stability. For example, in 1996 the Royaumont Process was initiated, which aimed to support the implementation of the Dayton Agreement, development of regional projects and building good neighbourhood relations all over the region.

In 1997, the EU General Affairs Council adopted the Regional Approach. It symbolizes the establishment of political and economic conditions for the development of bilateral relations with five Western Balkan countries. In the background of these efforts, there was a clear reason: the EU did not want new fragmentations in the Balkans. In the Regional Approach, Western Balkan countries were separated into two groups. FYROM and Albania did not participate in 1991-95 War, so their relations with the EU were at a high level. The other three countries were parties of Dayton/Paris Agreements and their implementation of the provisions of these agreements was a significant factor concerning the relations with the EU.

When some degree of peace and stability was brought to the Balkans, the problems in the Kosovo province of Serbia increased. Because of Milosevic's policy, the passive resistance of the Kosovar Albanians

unexpectedly turned to an armed one. When Milosevic changed the autonomous status of Kosovo within the Serbian republic in 1989, Albanians boycotted general elections of Serbia and declared Ibrahim Rugova the President of Kosovo as a result of their own election. Moreover, they broke off their relations with the Serbian authorities. At that point, the Serbian response was a very violent one. Therefore, hostility and bloody conflicts increased in the area and the UÇK (The Ethnic Albanian National Liberation Army NLA/KLA, Ushtria Çlirimtare Kosoves) emerged as a new effective actor in Kosovo lands.

Due to the Bosnian experience, Western Europe and the USA responded reasonably and in a timely fashion. In fact, the USA had begun to be interested in the Balkans after the end of the Cold War. For example, it built closer political relations with Albania in March 1991. The USA Secretary of State made a visit to this country and USA aid for Albania was commenced. Therefore, all international actors knew the importance of Kosovo issue very well. For this reason, President Bush sent a letter to Milosevic and General Zivota Panic, Yugoslav army's commander in December, 1992 and stated that if there were a crisis in Kosovo deriving from Serbian aggression, there would be an inevitable military attack against not only Kosovar Serbs but also Yugoslavia.<sup>102</sup>

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<sup>102</sup> Soysal, "Günümüzde Balkalar..." p. 193.

## CHAPTER 4

### THE EU AS THE DETERMINING FACTOR IN THE BALKANS AND TURKEY'S BALKAN POLICY (1999-2002)

#### 4.1 Turkey's Policy during the Kosovo Conflict

In a relatively stable environment, the Kosovo conflict shifted all calculations and policies. The EU and the USA focused on the problem and tried to resolve the conflict. Turkey behaved differently to some degree in Kosovo case because due to the 1999 elections, politicians were mainly focusing on domestic affairs. In addition to this, relations with Syria were at a critical point because it was sheltering members of the PKK and because of the capture of PKK leader A. Öcalan.

The defeat of the ANAP in the 1991 general elections together with the death of President Özal in 1993, had produced an unstable government in post-Cold War Turkey. Domestic problems and ineffective government became stumbling blocks for Turkish foreign policy. Military/bureaucratic elite and government duality and even the shifts in the government could sometimes be seen. For example, during the DYP- The Welfare Party (RP) Coalition in 1996, pro-Western stance of Tansu Çiller and anti-NATO and pro-Islam stance of her coalition partner Necmettin Erbakan dramatically increased the tension in both domestic and foreign policies.

During the Kosovo crisis, citizens of Balkan origin living in Turkey pressured the government to take a more active attitude. In addition to this, in the Turkish media the Kosovo crisis was represented as a repetition of the Bosnian one and there was clear support for Kosovar

Albanians.<sup>103</sup> Furthermore, the Turkish government was criticized for its ineffectiveness.

Turkey accepted Yugoslavia as a successor state of the former Yugoslavia. After the Bosnian War Turkey tried to restore its relations with Yugoslavia. It explained that Kosovo was Yugoslavia's domestic problem and it did not recognize the independence of Kosovo. Besides, the Turkish government stated that an independent Kosovo could cause new, more serious and bloody developments in the Balkans. For example, the territorial integrity of Bosnia Herzegovina and Macedonia would be endangered.

Kosovo was significantly different from Bosnia in that it is a part of Serbia. However, Bosnia–Herzegovina is an independent state. In addition to this, some connections were established between the Kosovo conflict and the Kurdish problem. Generally, Europeans and the USA criticized Turkey regarding Kurdish problem. For example, some Western intellectuals and Russian politicians emphasized the strong similarity of Kosovo and Kurdish issues. In this regard, Noam Chomsky makes a comparison between Serbia and Turkey. He says that Turkey took part in NATO operation against the Serbs but that its attitude towards the Kurds is not very different from the one that Serbs have towards the Kosovar Albanians.<sup>104</sup> Apart from these ideas, Albanians in particular claimed that the Kosovo and Cyprus issues were the same. In fact, the Kosovo issue was related to neither the Kurdish nor the Cyprus issues in Turkish foreign policy.

It must be emphasized that Turkey was not passive in Kosovo case. Turkey's Kosovo policy was primarily based on two principles: Turkey was extremely sensitive about the inviolability of borders and it supported the

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<sup>103</sup> *Hürriyet*, 28 January 1999.

<sup>104</sup> [www.amazon.com.Noam Chomsky, The New Military Humanism: Lessons from Kosovo, 1999.](http://www.amazon.com.Noam-Chomsky-The-New-Military-Humanism-Lessons-from-Kosovo-1999) (Accessed on 12 October 2003).

territorial integrity of Yugoslavia. It was stated that the rights of all the minorities should be taken into consideration by giving autonomy to Kosovo, as in the 1974 Constitution.<sup>105</sup> When the Foreign Minister of Turkey, İsmail Cem visited Yugoslavia on 7 March, 1998, he made a detailed proposal which consisted of three stages. First, the clashes should be stopped immediately; second, the Education Agreement signed in 1996 should be fully implemented; and last, the rights in 1974 constitution should be revised and re-instituted. Following this, Turkey added the principle of the protection of the rights of all minorities in Kosovo to its formal policy.

In the first phase of the crisis, Turkey used diplomatic means to gain autonomous status for Kosovo as well as regain constitutional rights of the minorities, so as to make Kosovo the 3<sup>rd</sup> republic of Yugoslavia. Turkey insisted that the rights not only of Albanians but also of Turks and other minorities be respected. In fact, Turkey, from the start, had deep concerns about Kosovo and behaved carefully about this matter. For example, when İbrahim Rugova visited Turkey on 11 February 1992, he asked for Turkey's diplomatic recognition of the Kosovo Republic, but Turkey rejected this request. On 27 February 1992, the leader of the Kosovo Autonomous Administration, Bukovi came to Turkey and demanded diplomatic recognition. Turkey explained that Kosovo was an autonomous administration in Yugoslavia and refused this demand.<sup>106</sup>

When the violence increased in Kosovo, Turkey advocated an international intervention. During Kosovo crisis, President Demirel stressed that Turkey was ready to take part in the activities of the international community for Kosovo. President Demirel had a more active attitude than the

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<sup>105</sup> Uzgel, "Kosovo: Politics of Nationalism and the Question of International Intervention," *Turkish Review of Balkan Studies*, 4, Annual 1998/99, pp. (226-230).

<sup>106</sup> Soysal, "Günümüzde Balkanlar ...," p. 229.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs towards Kosovo. According to him only NATO could stop Milosevic.<sup>107</sup>

In the Kosovo issue, with the decision of Bulgarian Parliament on 23 October 1998, it was announced that Bulgaria supported the peace force for Kosovo and it could give logistic and engineering support. It was emphasized that Bulgaria would not join any military operations and it advocated the territorial integrity of Yugoslavia. Turkey, Greece and Romania declared their demand for the protection of the territorial integrity of Yugoslavia.<sup>108</sup> Bulgaria was primarily concerned with the NATO intervention against Yugoslavia, and Bulgarian Minister of Foreign Affairs explained that Bulgaria always favoured diplomatic solutions for problems.<sup>109</sup>

During the NATO Defence Ministers' Autumn Meeting in Portugal, Secretary General Javier Solana declared the acceptance of the limited air operation at first with a comprehensive air operation to follow.<sup>110</sup> According to UNSC Resolution 1199, Serbian police and Yugoslav soldiers had to be withdrawn from Kosovo before 27 October 1998. Milosevic accepted this and on 8 October 1998 UCK and Serbian side signed a cease-fire. In this framework, 2000 OSCE observers were to be sent to Kosovo to study the situation there, but soon after OSCE staffs were recalled from the field. In December the violence increased and the cease-fire was violated. As a result of international pressures, Milosevic and Rugova met on 15 May 1998 in Belgrade. Milosevic asserted that Kosovo was a domestic matter of

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<sup>107</sup> "Turkey's Attitude on Kosovo," *Turkish Review of Balkan Studies*, 4, Annual 1998/1999, pp. (303-307).

<sup>108</sup> Türkeş, "Geçiş Sürecinde Dış Politika Öncelikleri...", p. 204.

<sup>109</sup> "Bulgarian News Agency", *Daily News*, 19 February 1999.

<sup>110</sup> *Cumhuriyet*, 25 September 1998.

Yugoslavia and he rejected mediation from another country. The Serbian side rejected the USA proposal about the stationing of NATO soldiers in Kosovo and the holding of independent elections after three years in Rambouillet. Following this, on 24 March 1999, NATO began bombing Yugoslavia without a UNSC resolution.<sup>111</sup> Yugoslavia accepted the USA solution and The Kosovo Force (KFOR) was created in Kosovo. The civil administration was transferred to United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) and KFOR, which provided the security.<sup>112</sup>

However, Russia and China did not support NATO's intervention in this problem. Greece and Bulgaria were reluctant to open their airspace and give logistic support for NATO. Furthermore, Kosovar Albanians' desire for the recognition of the independence of Kosovo and their right to self-determination was not internationally accepted. Even the moderate leader Ibrahim Rugova supported the independence of Kosovo.<sup>113</sup> However, at the end of the negotiations and because of pressure from the USA and the EU, some extreme people in UCK such as Adem Demaci resigned, and UCK accepted a maximum autonomy solution. All in all, UCK made it clear that this did not mean it relinquished the struggle for independence. After the end of the conflict, there was no stability and Kosovo's status was unclear.<sup>114</sup>

Ankara sent first 11, and then 18 F-16 airplanes, and 1,000 troops (through Bulgaria because Greece would not give permission to pass), and opened its two airbases for the use of NATO. As a result of Turkey's contacts

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<sup>111</sup>Uzgel, "Balkanlarla İlişkiler...", pp. ( 511-512)

<sup>112</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 509.

<sup>113</sup> *Cumhuriyet*, 14 June 1998.

<sup>114</sup> Alp, "Balkan Region in Turkey's...", p. 191.

with NATO, these troops were stationed in Mamuša, Dragoş and Prizren where ethnic Turks live.<sup>115</sup> Turkish aircrafts initially took part in the control flights, but then participated in bombing.<sup>116</sup> After the NATO intervention, Turkish Foreign Affairs Minister İ. Cem and later President Demirel went to Kosovo. It was said that Turkey tried to display that its connection with the region still sustained. It was added that Turkey had tried to protect its influence in Kosovo through the Turkish minority and to search for new opportunities for Turkish firms in the reconstruction of Kosovo.

During the Kosovo crisis, as it had during the Bosnia crisis, Turkey preferred to act in accordance with international organizations, the USA and the EU. It tried not to burn its diplomatic bridges with Serbia and Montenegro. Turkey reluctantly supported the multilateral NATO intervention in Kosovo since it aimed to take part in the post-intervention arrangements. In domestic policy, it was said that Turkey lost its effectiveness, and Russia and Greece became more active in the Balkans. During this period, criticisms of the attitudes of Turkish politicians and the Turkish Red Crescent could be seen. Besides, the EU was widely criticized by the Turkish media. From time to time, it was asserted that the NATO intervention was necessary but that it came too late. Moreover, it had not really solved the problem. In fact, Turkey's Kosovo policy was severely criticized by some Turks and Kosovar Albanians. Adem Demaci, the political representative of the UCK, explained that Turkey had damaged Kosovo when it recognized the territorial integrity of Yugoslavia. He said that Turkey should have behaved more boldly and decisively, should not only have interested in Turks but also Albanians and Bosnians. He added that, in the Balkans Turkey should have preceded the

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<sup>115</sup> *Cumhuriyet*, 21 June 1999.

<sup>116</sup> Uzgel, "Balkanlarla İlişkiler...", pp. (512-513).



USA and the EU and he doubted that Turkey thought that autonomy was sufficient for Kosovo.<sup>117</sup> At that point, some Kosovo Albanian politicians made similar demands. They declared their desire for Turkey's support at least in the diplomatic arena. Besides, Turks of Balkan origin in Turkey, particularly of Albanian origin, had supported the resistance of Albanians in Kosovo since the 1980s and they had put pressure on Turkey during the Kosovo conflict.

#### **4.2 The Efforts of Turkey for the Turkish Minority in Kosovo after the Rambouillet Agreement**

In Bulgaria and Macedonia, the Turkish minority struggled for its rights via its political parties. The Movement for Rights and Freedom gained 21 seats in the 2001 elections and on 20 July 2001 it established a government with the National Movement of Simon II (NDSV). Turkey clearly and forcefully supported the MRF during the 2001 elections for the first time.<sup>118</sup> Previously, Turkey had not declared its support.<sup>119</sup>

All in all, some factors continued to threaten the ethnic harmony in Bulgaria. For example, bureaucratic difficulties were encountered in regaining land and property, and the economic problems were serious. Bulgarian

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<sup>117</sup> *Cumhuriyet*, 16 October 1998.

<sup>118</sup> Dayıoğlu, p. 343.

<sup>119</sup> For example, when UDF was in power, Prime Minister Kostov demanded Turkish counterpart Yılmaz not to give clear support for the MRF. Turkey accepted this and the relations between Turkey's Bulgaria ambassador (M. Ali İremçelik) and the leaders of the MRF alienated.

suspicious of Turks and the Communists' anti-Turkish feeling remained strong.<sup>120</sup>

It is often said that one of the reasons for Turkey's cautious Balkan policy is its Ottoman past. Turkey carries out a balanced policy that does not cause a suspicion of Turkey wishing to reunite its former Ottoman territories. The situation is different in Kosovo. In 23 February 1999, the Rambouillet Agreement, Turkish minority was not dealt with. Afterwards, as a result of Turkey's efforts, their name was added to the agreement. In 2001, limited linguistic rights were given to the Turkish minority, but Turkish language will never again be an official language.<sup>121</sup> The Turks of Kosovo lost their rights in the 1974 Constitution, and Turkish has been accepted as a semi-formal language. Before the dissolution of Yugoslavia, Turkish was the third formal language along with Serbian and Albanian. Identity cards were written in three languages.

Turkey showed that it would never abandon the Turks in Kosovo. To make this clear, İsmail Cem in his visits to this region met local and international officers in Kosovo and demanded the protection of the status of Turkish language in the new constitution. During his visit, Cem explained Turkey's serious concerns about the rights of Kosovo Turks to UNMIK Chief Administrator Hans Haekkerup. The UNMIK Chief Administrator said that the two official languages of Kosovo have been Albanian and Serbo-Croat; other languages would only be used in some specific situations. He added that, "Communities of Kosovo have seats in the new parliament and Turkish assembly members will have the right to speak in Turkish, with translation."<sup>122</sup>

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<sup>120</sup> J.F. Brown, pp. (149-150).

<sup>121</sup> *Cumhuriyet*, 15 May, 2001.

<sup>122</sup> <http://www.unmikonline.org/press-r/pr579.html> (Unmik Press Release-10 May 2001, SRSG Meets Turkish FM Cem) (Accessed on 28 October 2004).

All in all, Turks of Kosovo were ignored in Rambouillet Agreement on 23 February 1999. As a result of pressure from Turkey, some linguistic rights were given to them. One of the achievements was that their identification cards would be in Turkish. Turkish will no longer be an official language under the UNMIK administration, so English became an official one. Turkish is an official language in Prizren but not in Pristine. Therefore, Turkish is considered a minority language. In this new era, new TV stations have emerged but many of them broadcast in Albanian. Meanwhile, Turkish broadcasting in Pristine TV has been reduced to one hour per day, and its region of broadcasting is now limited to the immediate surroundings of Pristine.

According to UNMIK authorities, the use of Turkish language diminishes day by day, and it is only spoken by approximately 1-2% of the population. By contrast, many people speak Albanian and some international languages such as English. The prime minister of Kosovo, Bayram Recebi, asserted that in order to maintain its relations with Serbia and Montenegro and to enter to the EU, Turkey adopted a policy distancing itself from Kosovo. With regard to the Turkish minority, he said that there is no pressure on them, and as a result of mixed marriages and lack of clear statistics, the real number of Turks is not known but it is estimated that there are 10 or 20,000 Turks living in Kosovo.<sup>123</sup> The UNMIK Chief Administrator stated that although Turkish language is not an official one, the Turkish community enjoys many rights such as: “the right to have all parliamentary decisions in Turkish, usage of Turkish in maps, guaranteed primary and secondary schools where the

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<sup>123</sup> “Sınırlar Arasında” TV Programme on TRT 1 (04.08.2004).

Turkish community is in larger numbers and the release of all municipal documents in Turkish.”<sup>124</sup>

Finally, the ethnic hatreds have not disappeared in Kosovo. On the contrary, they have deepened and continue to increase in the background. The UNMIK aims to implement UNSC Resolution 1244, and therefore it has done its best to build and enforce democratic institutions. However, there is no sympathy for the UNMIK and Ibrahim Rugova in Kosovo. Turks and Serbs did not participate in the first local elections after the NATO operation in 1999. The administration of Kosovo was to be controlled by UNMIK according to the UNSC resolution in the post-intervention period. 50,000 KFOR soldiers are stationed in Kosovo. Neither the Serbs nor the Albanians or any other minority groups are satisfied with the solution and the new situation of Kosovo.

#### **4.3 Regional Aspect of the Kosovo Problem and Turkey’s Policy**

Due to the Kosovo example, new clashes emerged in Southern Serbia and later in Macedonia. In Southern Serbia, Presevo, Medvedya and Buyanovac Liberation Army commenced its activities by laying claim to this region, which constitutes Eastern Kosovo, separated from Kosovo in 1947. NATO formed a five kilometres buffer zone that separates Kosovo from Serbia in June 1999. Albanian militants used the buffer zone to launch attacks on the Macedonian border and on the Serbian forces in the south of Serbia. For the purpose of ending these events, NATO gave permission to Serbian forces to enter the region surrounding Kosovo. Thus Serbian troops were sent to the Presevo valley in March 2001. In response, Albanian militants began to go towards Macedonia. Kosovo proved that the conflicts in the Balkans could

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<sup>124</sup><http://www.unmikonline.org/press/2001/mon/1mm140501.html>.(Kosovar Turks Counselling to Accept Interim Constitution) (Accessed on 28 October 2004).

spread to the south and this was a great concern for Turkey just because Macedonia and Albania were in a dangerous situation, so stability and security in the Balkans had been jeopardized. Moreover, this conflict could worsen Albanian-Macedonian relations, but Turkey has friendly relations with both of them. Besides, some Western politicians stated that they feared the possibility that Turkey and Greece might have a falling out due to the conflict in Macedonia.

When Milosevic mined Albanian border, it was stated that due to this development, the UCK would turn towards Macedonia and this could cause the instability in this part of the Balkans. In 2001, clashes began between Macedonian security forces and Albanians in border towns of Macedonia near Kosovo. Due to fears of a possible internal war, the Macedonian government demanded the active involvement of NATO and the UN.<sup>125</sup> Skopje recognized Taiwan in 1999, for this reason China, one of the five permanent members of the UNSC, ensured the withdrawal of UN Preventive Deployment Forces (UNPDF) from Macedonia.<sup>126</sup> As a response to the clashes, Turkey, Greece and Bulgaria declared their support for the territorial integrity of Macedonia.<sup>127</sup> Turkey behaved in accordance with the EU and NATO during the conflict in Macedonia.

After the NATO intervention, the Ohri Agreement was signed. It guarantees the rights of Albanians to take a full and active part in public life, and a university in which the medium of education is Albanian language; moreover; Albanians can actively participate in Macedonian security forces.

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<sup>125</sup> *Cumhuriyet*, 1 March 2001.

<sup>126</sup> <http://www.ntvmsnbc.com/news/71034.asp>. (Accessed on 18 May 2004).

<sup>127</sup> *Cumhuriyet*, 27 March 2001.

Following this, a NATO force consisting of 700 soldiers was stationed in Macedonia.

The Turkish minority in Macedonia expressed their desire for Turkey to be more sensitive about the Balkans. Furthermore, it is stated that in the next local elections, some provinces have been united, so Turks will lose some of their acquisitions. For this reason, Turks may lose their majorities where they have Turkish mayors. Another problem is the danger of losing official language status of Turkish in some provinces. According to the Macedonian Constitution, if a minority has more than 20% of votes in a province, the language of this group will become the second official language. Hence, Albanian is the official language all over the country.

Turks who have graduated from Turkish schools face a hard decision because in high schools the medium of education is Albanian or Macedonian. At present, if a Turk wants to go to university, he or she is compelled to study in Albanian or Macedonian language.

The “Together for Macedonia” coalition under the leadership of Social Democratic Union (SDS) that includes TDP won the previous elections and two members of TDP entered the Macedonian Parliament at the end of elections on 15 September 2002. On 27 January 2002, Erdoğan Saraç, the leader of the TDP, resigned and Kenan Hasip was elected as the new leader.<sup>128</sup> Kenan Hasip, the leader of the Turkish Democratic Party, pointed out that due to Turkey’s effective support for the Party, the Turkish minority voted for Turkish deputies. He mentions that one of the main problems for Turkish minority is education. In eastern part of the country, living conditions are very low and for this reason, compulsory education is limited to four years. What is more, 40% of the Turkish population lives there, so their influence on the community decreases due to their lack of education.

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<sup>128</sup>[\(10Yılın Ardından Yeni TDP ve Seçimler\)](http://www.makturk.info/modules.php?name=News&file=article&sid=44) (Accessed on 6 August 2004).

#### **4.4 The Change in the EU's Approach towards the Balkans: EU Initiatives**

The EU aimed to bring the minimal stability to the Balkans, but the Kosovo conflict proved that it was not sufficient. The revision of the EU's policies towards the Balkans started in 1997. Thus, the EU again tried to revise its policy established the Stability Pact (SP). The Royaumont Process seen in 1996 was put under the SP framework. The participants are the EU members, Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Macedonia, Romania, Russia, Canada, Japan, Turkey, the USA and after October 2000, Yugoslavia. The EU and the USA supply financial resources. The SP gets most of its funding from the EU. It has human dimension and security aspects like the OSCE, but it includes economic development different from the OSCE.

SP directs the South Eastern European countries to cooperate with each other. In this context, a clear message is given to them: they could not enter the EU until they cooperate among themselves and forget former hostilities. The target of the SP is to bring peace, stability and economic development to the region. As a result of the Kosovo conflict, it can be easily understood that stability needs peace and economic development. SP is complementary to the SAP. Turkey joined the SP's many projects not as a receiver but as a contributor. It undertook the responsibility of a co-chairmanship of the Working Table II of the Stability Pact for July 2000-December 2000 period. It prepared a working programme containing technical and training projects. All of them are to be realized by the national resources of Turkey. This stance received some criticisms. According to these ideas, why Turkey uses its limited national means for one of the initiatives of the EU is not certain.

Turkey participated in the Foreign Affairs Ministers Conference in Cologne on 10 June 1999 that convened in order to adopt the SP. The Turkish

president joined the constituent meeting of the SP in Sarajevo in July 1999. Turkey succeeded in adding a paragraph about giving reconstruction awards in the Balkans to the South Eastern European countries, and an article on combating terrorism into the Concluding Declaration. Turkey demanded to give importance to the regional initiatives started by regional countries, such as the South East Europe Cooperation Process (SEECP). It is clear that Balkan countries give the utmost importance to NATO and the EU.

In the 1990s, the EU focused on crisis management and reconstruction in the Balkans. In 1999, SAP started, it was considered as a cornerstone for the EU's Balkan policy. On 26 May, 1999 the European Commission proposed the creation of an SAP of Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY), FYROM and Albania. The SAP was formed for the improvement of the Regional Approach. In June, 2000 at the Santa Maria De Feira European Council, it was stated that all countries covered by SAP were potential candidates for the EU membership. "SAP is a framework in which various factors help countries to undergo a political and economic transition, which prepares them for a new form of contractual relationship (The Stabilisation and Association Agreement, SAA)".<sup>129</sup> The SAAs resemble the European Agreements between the EU and CEECs of the early 1990s. The EU signs a SAA with the Western Balkan country whether it has made progress in meeting the SAP conditions. The EU signed SAA with FYROM in April 2001, with Croatia in October 2001 and negotiations with Albania started in late 2002. The EU supports regional cooperation; however; these states should be convinced of the fact that regional initiatives will not damage the Euro-Atlantic integration process. For example, many Balkan countries were

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<sup>129</sup> [www.europa.eu.int/comm/external\\_relations/see/sap/index.htm](http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/see/sap/index.htm) (Accessed on 21 May 2004).



concerned about this issue in the formation of Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC).

After the Kosovo conflict, it was absolutely necessary to solve disputes and to deal with the post-conflict rehabilitation and reconstruction.<sup>130</sup> Therefore, the EU formulated its policy within this framework. In 2000, Community Assistance for Reconstruction, Development and Stabilisation (CARDS) replaced all previous mechanisms of the EU assistance to the Western Balkans.<sup>131</sup>

The EU appointed Greece to the leadership role in the Balkans. The EU funds, given for infrastructure building as part of the programme of Poland, Hungary, Aid for Reconstructing of the Economies (PHARE), have been awarded to Greek firms. The EU tries to link the Balkans to Europe via Greece in terms of energy and communication. When Greece entered several strategic sectors such as telecommunication and refinery, the EU fully supported the Greek firms in buying the privatised public utilities. Greece is in the vanguard of the regional initiatives of the EU, such as the Royaumont Process. In 1999, BSEC-EU Cooperation Fields Meeting in Athens Greece proposed to take the responsibility of enhancing EU-BSEC ties. Due to these initiatives of Greece, the Bosnian administration decided to recognize Southern Cyprus. Greece has been participating in SEECF, bilateral meetings of Ministers of Foreign Affairs, SP, Royaumont Process, Southeast European Cooperative Initiative (SECI), Multinational Peace Force of South Eastern Europe (MPFSEE) and BSEC.

Former Eastern Bloc states in Central and Eastern Europe are invited to the Western institutions such as the EU and NATO mainly due to historical,

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<sup>130</sup> Türkeş and Alp, "The Balkans in Turkey's Security Environment," *Turkish Review of Balkan Studies*, 6, Annual 2001, pp.(136-138).

<sup>131</sup> [www.europa.eu.int/comm/external\\_relations/see/sum\\_06\\_03/index.htm](http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/see/sum_06_03/index.htm) (Accessed on 21 May 2004).

political reasons. The other cause of this invitation is to bring stability to these regions. For example, this tendency is obvious especially in the EU membership process. Although the fact that the CEECs were accepted by the EU before Turkey caused some resentment in Turkey, it is broadly accepted that their membership will improve Turkey's relations with them.

Turkey has tried to enter the Balkans with the USA's cooperation. However, when instability and conflict in the region decrease, Turkey tends to have less impact on its affairs. Turkey has limited economic relations with the Balkan countries. Eximbank Credits were mainly given to Central Asia and Caucasus, since these regions are enormously important for Turkey. According to the private sector of Turkey, the Balkan market is small. Moreover, the EU has negative attitude against Turkish firms in terms of providing credits from the EU sources. Turkey has tried to increase its political influence by using regional initiatives supported by the USA. For this reason, Turkey has taken its place in the SECI, MPFSEE and other regional initiatives. However, as Greece is becoming an effective and important actor in the Balkans day by day, Turkey is gradually losing its influence. The EU membership is an important factor for the revival of Greek foreign policy in this region since the attractiveness of the Euro-Atlantic institutions is incomparable.

## CHAPTER 5

### THE TIME FOR REFORMULATION OF TURKEY'S BALKAN POLICY IN THE EU CONTEXT (2002-2004)

#### 5.1 The Western Balkans and the EU: Towards an Open Door Policy or an Uncertain Future

After the dissolution of the Eastern Bloc, countries in the region looked for integration with the West. The possibility of the membership of East European countries to the EU and NATO was offered in 1991. Due to the high cost of economic integration, the West gave priority to integration in the security field, so NATO enlargement began. Economic integration would be gradually realized. European Agreements have been signed with some of the Central and Eastern European states and they are encouraged to form Free Trade Areas with the EU.<sup>132</sup>

The EU's policies towards Eastern Europe caused differentiation within these states and as a result they are divided into three different groups: the East Central European (Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Slovakia), South East European (Bulgaria and Romania), and Western Balkan (Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia and the FRY) states. The positive message was given to the East Central European countries (Visegrad states)

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<sup>132</sup> Türkeş, "Geçiş Sürecinde Dış Politika Öncelikleri...", pp. (175-177).

long before the other two groups.<sup>133</sup> At the 1997 Luxemburg Summit, the EU sent the same message to the South Eastern Europe (SEE) countries. Although, they are geographically in the third group, Slovenia, Romania and Bulgaria signed Association Agreements with the EU and they got rid of being called the Western Balkan states.<sup>134</sup> In this process, there was a need for common strategy and action within these groups, but this could not be seen in the Western Balkans. Besides, the wars and conflicts (in Bosnia, Kosovo and Macedonia) affected the destiny of Western Balkans. Therefore, this group took the last place in the EU membership queue, but the EU was aware of the fact that exclusion could cause new fragmentations and conflicts. Thus, these fragmentations and conflicts will be a great threat to the EU's security.

In 1999, the EU explained that it had started to use a new approach towards the Balkans, and in the long term it will invite Western Balkan states to integrate with the EU.<sup>135</sup> The 2002 Copenhagen European Council confirmed Western Balkan countries as potential candidates and the EU would thereafter support their efforts to move closer to the Union. The EU explained that the implementation of the Dayton and Ohrid Agreements are key elements in the EU's policy. In addition to this, it was explained that Hungary, Poland, Czech Republic, Estonia, Lithuania, Latvia, Malta, Cyprus, Slovenia and Slovakia would enter the EU in May 2004. Bulgaria and Romania will become

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<sup>133</sup> Türkeş, "Double Process: Transition and Integration and Its impact on the Balkans" in *Non-Violence and Dialogue Culture Among the Younger Generation-Pathway to Ethnic Peace in South-Eastern Europe*, edited by Atanas Matev (Balkan Peace Institute: Sofia, 2003) pp. (9-10).

<sup>134</sup> In fact nearly all countries in this region have some reservations being called a Balkan country and they put great emphasis on their European identity. For example Croatia uses a slogan of "Croatia is a part of Western European culture" in its tourism brochures. (*Cumhuriyet*, 11 July 2002).

<sup>135</sup> *Cumhuriyet*, 28 May 1999; [http://europa.eu.int/comm/external\\_relations/see/actions/sap.htm](http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/see/actions/sap.htm) (Accessed on 18 May 2004).

members in 2007. This sent a very significant message to Western Balkan countries.

At the 2003 Thessalonica Summit, the EU reiterated that the future of the Balkans lies in joining the EU. SAP has remained to be the framework for the European course of the Western Balkan countries. It was stated that the progress of each country strongly depended on its own merits in meeting Copenhagen criteria, the conditions set for the SAP and the conditions confirmed in the final declaration of the November, 2000 Zagreb Summit. It was stressed that Albania, Croatia, Serbia, Slovenia, Macedonia and Yugoslavia were parts of the “European Family”.<sup>136</sup> The Thessalonica Summit made it clear that the EU’s doors are open to the Balkan states, but also stated that the length of the qualifying period for membership time is bound to the performance of the countries in achieving the reforms in economies, standards of democracy, human rights, good governance and rule of law demanded by the EU.

Three candidate countries (Bulgaria, Romania and Turkey) and five Balkan countries attended the closing session of the Thessalonica Summit. After the meeting, it was stated that EU aid for the Balkans would continue with the aim of economic reconstruction of this region. The programme, under the title of Thessalonica Agenda, was approved in the Summit. Besides, 5 billion Euros for 2002-2007, and an additional credit of about 200 million Euros for 2002-2006 is to be given to them, but these countries should immediately find a solution for some serious problems such as organised crime and human smuggling. Greece has problems with Albania on Northern

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<sup>136</sup>[http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/external\\_relations/see/sum\\_11\\_00/index.htm](http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/see/sum_11_00/index.htm) (Accessed on 21 May 2004).

Epirus and with Macedonia on the name of the country, but it supports their EU membership due to solving these problems within the EU.<sup>137</sup>

Some other elements of Thessalonica Agenda are that the Balkans will be a part of united Europe, and that Bulgaria, Romania and Western Balkan countries should implement the free trade agreements network among themselves. Western Balkan states should apply lifting visa requirements on travel within these countries. This implementation could be realized under the Stability Pact. During the Summit, it was considered that Croatia had been the most fortunate when compared to the other five Balkan states in the EU membership process.<sup>138</sup>

The Turkish media interpreted the Thessalonica Summit, which was called the EU-Western Balkans Summit, differently. It was stated that the EU gave priority to these countries over Turkey.<sup>139</sup> Turkish media justified this situation by the threat perception of the EU on grey zones in the Balkans; therefore, the EU tried to make these areas secure within the EU context.

The European Commission accepted the South-eastern Europe Stability and Partnership Process on 27 May, 1999. Moreover, EU officials stated that the EU would form a new approach to the Western Balkans (Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia and Yugoslavia) and these states would be invited to join the EU in long-term process. The EU explained that Turkey and Western Balkan countries could not be take place in the same category. The CEECs, which are currently EU members, have expressed their support for

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<sup>137</sup>Charalambos Tsardanidis and Evangelos Karafotakis, "Greece's Economic Diplomacy Towards the Balkan Countries," *Perceptions*, 5/3, (September-November 2000).

<sup>138</sup> [http://europa.eu.int/comm/external\\_relations/see/gacthess.htm](http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/see/gacthess.htm). (Accessed on 18 May 2004).

<sup>139</sup> *Cumhuriyet*, 21 June 2003.

Turkey's entrance to the EU and added that they want to share their experiences with Turkey.<sup>140</sup>

Although the Pan-European Networks, consisting of transport, telecommunication and energy, were created for the purpose of forming an internal market, they became instruments for the transition of former Communist countries to a market economy and the EU membership process. The first Pan-European Conference was held on 29-31 October 1991 in Prague, the second one was held on 14-16 March 1994 in Crete. During the second conference, it was adopted that the nine identified transport corridors would integrate Western, Central and Eastern European countries into the network of the EU. Afterwards, the third conference was held on 23-25 June 1997 in Helsinki and the implementation of the corridor concept by the Pan-European areas was decided. The EU adopted the December, 1994 Essen European Council's 14 Priority Transport Projects in 1996. Greek Motorways (PATHE and Via Egnatia) are parts of these 14 Priority Transport Projects. The Patra-Athens-Thessalonica-Evzanos (PATHE) and Egnatia belong to trans-European networks. PATHE connects Igoumenitsa to Alexandroupolis and to Turkish-Greek border. The PATHE highway crosses north to south. Egnatia (East-West) has nine major vertical axes connecting the motorway to Albania, FYROM, Bulgaria and Turkey.<sup>141</sup>

Due to preparing the Central and Eastern European countries to the EU membership, 10 transport corridors have been formed by the EU for the purpose of linking these countries to Trans-European Networks that are in Western Europe.

Some of these ten Pan-European Transport Corridors are, Corridor 4 that links the EU to South-eastern Europe Berlin/Dresden/Nuremberg

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<sup>140</sup> *Cumhuriyet*, 27 May 2000.

<sup>141</sup> [http://bhcc.gr/downloads/Greek\\_Logistics\\_Market.pdf](http://bhcc.gr/downloads/Greek_Logistics_Market.pdf) (Accessed on 9 December 2004).

(Germany)-Prague (Czech Republic)Vienna (Austria)Bratislava (Slovak Republic) Gyor/Budapest (Hungary)-Bucharest/Arad/Craiova/Constanta (Romania)-Sofia/Plovdiv (Bulgaria)-Thessalonica (Greece)-Istanbul (Turkey) and Corridor 10 that builds connection between Salzburg-Villach-Ljubljana-Zagreb-Belgrade-Nis-Skopje-Thessalonica. This corridor has four branches: Branch A: Graz-Maribor-Zagreb, Branch B: Belgrade-Novi Sad-Budapest, Branch C: Nis-Sofia-Corridor 4 and Branch D: Bitola-Florina-Via Egnatia-Igoumenitsa. Stability in the Balkans is certainly essential for the future of these corridors. As a result of the great importance of the energy resources of the Caucasus and Central Asia, it is vital for the EU to extend the European Networks towards these regions. Hence, the EU built Transport Corridor Europe-Caucasus-Asia (TRACECA) that was initiated in Brussels in May 1993. Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Mongolia, Ukraine and Moldova take part in this project. In this regard, Bulgaria, Romania and Turkey applied to the European Commission for taking part in TRACECA in March 2000 and they became members.<sup>142</sup>

## 5.2 The EU Missions in the Balkans

The EU took over the responsibility of training the Bosnian police force from the UN Mission on 1 January, 2004, thereby undertaking its first formal mission. The European Union Police Mission (EUPM) consists of 512 police from member and non-member states, 50 civil experts and 300 local workers. It depends on SFOR of NATO (SFOR was sent to the country in 1995). This task was accepted as the first important activity in the framework of the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP). The EU Police Mission, code-named EUPOL PROXIMA, operates in the FYROM in line with the

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<sup>142</sup> [www.traceca.org](http://www.traceca.org). (Accessed on 12 October 2004).



objectives of Ohrid Framework Agreement of 2001. The mission was launched on 15 December 2003. On 29 September 2003, the EU Council adopted Joint Action 2003/681/CFSP on the EU Police Mission in the FYROM. According to the Joint Action, 3<sup>rd</sup> states maybe invited to participate in PROXIMA mission. The EU Council adopted a decision concerning the conclusion of an agreement between the EU and Turkey on the participation of Turkey to PROXIMA.<sup>143</sup>

On 31 March 2003, the EU launched a military operation, Concordia that used NATO assets and capabilities, in the FYROM.<sup>144</sup> Turkey is one of the 14 non-EU member countries in the framework of Concordia. The aim of the operation is to contribute further for a stable secure environment and to allow the implementation of Ohrid Agreement. The Operation was completed on 15 December 2003 and it was replaced by the EU Police Mission named Proxima.<sup>145</sup> On 2 December 2004, EU's operation Althea in Bosnia-Herzegovina started. 7,000-strong European Union Force in Bosnia-Herzegovina (EUFOR) replaced SFOR of NATO. The Operation includes 22 countries and 11 of them are non-EU member. Turkey took part in Althea.<sup>146</sup>

Some people assert that Turkey-Greece tension delayed the deployment of the EU Forces in Macedonia because they did not agree with each other on the use of NATO facilities.<sup>147</sup> This is one of the problematic issues for Turkey. It does not want to lose its power in the decision-making

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<sup>143</sup> [www.statewatch.org/news/2004/jul/jha-19-jul-prel.pdf](http://www.statewatch.org/news/2004/jul/jha-19-jul-prel.pdf) (Accessed on 6 December 2004).

<sup>144</sup> <http://ue.eu.int/uedocs/cmsUpload/Fourteen%20non-EU%20countries.pdf> (Accessed on 6 December 2004).

<sup>145</sup> [http://www.un.org/Docs/sc/unsc\\_resolutions.html](http://www.un.org/Docs/sc/unsc_resolutions.html). (Accessed on 6 December 2004).

<sup>146</sup> [www.europa-defence.co.uk/directory-eu3.htm](http://www.europa-defence.co.uk/directory-eu3.htm) (Accessed on 6 December 2004).

<sup>147</sup> [www.time.com/time/nation/article/0,8599,350275,00.htm](http://www.time.com/time/nation/article/0,8599,350275,00.htm) (Accessed on 21 March 2004).

process of NATO operations. The EU's military missions concerning Turkey by using NATO assets will be so risky for Turkey. For this reason, Turkey has tried to join the decision-making process of such operations. In addition to this, the effectiveness of Greece increases in the Balkans because the EU has entered this region in cooperation with Greece. According to EU decisions of 5 March, 1995, it is possible for Turkey to take its place on some technical committees. The Luxemburg Summit of 1997 expressed the possibility of Turkey joining some community programmes such as education and research and PHARE programme and some community bodies.

### **5.3 Balkan Countries Look for Hard Security: NATO Membership**

In May 2004, the Czech Republic, Slovenia, Slovakia, Hungary, Poland, Malta, Cyprus, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania entered the EU; but there are some indications for diverse attitudes to be adopted in the EU in the future. The Letter of Eight and the Letter of Ten Countries (Albania, Bulgaria, Croatia, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Macedonia, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia) are direct examples of EU members who support the USA's Iraq policy. This attitude of the newest members of the EU and future EU members shows that in addition to seeking EU membership they also want closer relations with the USA. France and Germany do not approve of this attitude.<sup>148</sup>

Hungary, Poland, Czech Republic became NATO members in 1998 and they took place in the NATO Summit which commemorated its 50<sup>th</sup> year of existence, in Washington, D.C., on 23-25 April, 1999. The Membership Action Plan (MAP) was constituted for Albania, Bulgaria, Estonia, FYROM, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia, and Slovenia. The South East Europe Initiative was organized for Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. NATO started the Partnership for Peace Programme

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<sup>148</sup> Türkeş, "Turkish Foreign Policy..." p. 207.

and the Consultative Forum on Security Matters after the Washington Summit. At the 2002 Prague Summit, NATO's extension to Central and Eastern European Countries was on the agenda and Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia became new members. Interestingly, for the first time in NATO history a summit was held in a former Eastern Bloc country. The fact that Romania and Bulgaria are now NATO members is important for Turkey because that means Turkey is not a "broken flank country" anymore.<sup>149</sup>

#### **5.4 Turkey's Efforts to Protect Its Effect on the Balkans**

In the newly constituted Balkans, Turkey tries to sustain its Balkan policy within the context of current regional and international initiatives. It can be said that just after the dissolution of the Eastern Bloc, Turkey had the chance of formulating its policy. Since the EU and the USA have not shown much interest in this they have not yet adopted a definitive policy. However, this ambiguity disappeared at the end of the Bosnian War, and the Kosovo and Macedonian conflicts. Since then, Turkish foreign policy has shown the effects of these events. Moreover, while Turkey's influence in the 1990s was diminished, Greece has become a more potent force in this region.

The agreements, which ended human suffering in Bosnia, Kosovo and Macedonia, caused a reformulation of the policies of the USA and the EU. The Western world realized the great significance of the Balkans. Common summits and bilateral relations gained speed in the Balkans after the dismemberment of Yugoslavia. To bring stability to the Balkans will solve the region's problems. In this regard, several initiatives have been started in the Balkans. For example, the EU, NATO and regional initiatives reached to high numbers, but certainly the existence of many initiatives could not solve the

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<sup>149</sup> [www.mfa.gov.tr/PrintPageE2.asp](http://www.mfa.gov.tr/PrintPageE2.asp). (Accessed on 13 October 2003).

problems. The attitudes of Greece and Turkey toward the initiatives for the Balkans are different. When Greece puts its weight behind the EU-led plans, Turkey focuses on NATO or regional ones. Furthermore, Balkan countries have chosen another way; they try to take advantage of all these stability initiatives by considering them as a step toward membership in the EU and NATO.

Turkey attaches great importance to regional cooperation project, which helps Balkans be a more stable and peaceful region. In the 1990s, it made an effort to normalize its relations with the newly independent states and gave support to multilateral initiatives and regional cooperation.<sup>150</sup> The Meeting of Foreign Affairs Ministers of South Eastern European Countries (Albania, Bulgaria, Greece, Macedonia, Romania, Turkey and Yugoslavia) was held in Istanbul in June 1998.<sup>151</sup> During the meeting, the Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs, İ. Cem, made an appeal to bring an immediate end to all kinds of violence in Kosovo. Due to the objection by Yugoslavia, the Kosovo problem was not mentioned in the Istanbul Declaration.<sup>152</sup> Meanwhile, DEİK organized a conference with the participation of Turkish, Albanian, Bosnian, Bulgarian, Croatian, Macedonian, Greek and Romanian government officials and businessmen.<sup>153</sup> Following this, presidents and prime ministers of the South-eastern European Countries met in Antalya on October 1998. This Summit was held during Turkey's period of chairmanship, and Greece,

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<sup>150</sup> Türkeş, "Turkish Foreign Policy ...", p. 204.

<sup>151</sup> *Cumhuriyet*, 10 June 1998.

<sup>152</sup> *Cumhuriyet*, 9 June 1998.

<sup>153</sup> *Cumhuriyet*, 8 June 1998.

Bulgaria, Albania, Romania, Macedonia, and Yugoslavia joined the meeting and Croatia while Bosnia-Herzegovina sent observers.<sup>154</sup>

The Balkan Political Club was formulated as a result of several meetings in Sofia in 2001 with the participation of 40 founding members from Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Greece, Macedonia, Romania, Turkey and Yugoslavia. It aimed to bring cooperation and peace to the Balkans. Turkish President Demirel is one of the founders of this Club.<sup>155</sup> In the fourth International Conference of the Club in 2003, government officials and former politicians of the Balkan countries focused on the need for the maintenance of the multi-cultural status of the Balkans.<sup>156</sup>

After the end of the Cold War, the emergence of many newly independent states, the wars in former Yugoslavia and the problems created by transition to democracy and free market economy caused the experience of Balkanisation together with Europeanization. Thus, nationalism rose, and the situation of minorities, border disputes, and protection of national unity caused a variety of problems. In the end, Balkan countries began to seek for regional and continental cooperation to guarantee their security.

### **5.5 The other Initiatives for the Balkans**

In December 1990, Turkey took the initiative in launching the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC). The foreign ministers of ten countries (Bulgaria, Turkey, Romania, Moldova, Ukraine, Russia, Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan) met in Istanbul on 3 February 1992. On 25 June 1992, the

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<sup>154</sup> *Cumhuriyet*, 6 October 1998.

<sup>155</sup> <http://www.ntvmsnbc.com/news/190325.asp> (Accessed on 18.05.2004).

<sup>156</sup> *Cumhuriyet*, 1 June 2003.

Istanbul Declaration was signed; Albania and Greece also participated in this process. The Secretariat became active on 15 March, 1994. In 1998, the Yalta Summit; BSEC Charter was signed, converting it into a regional organization. The main aim of the BSEC is to reduce the obstacles to trade of all kinds and to reach joint projects in transport, energy, mining and tourism.<sup>157</sup>

However, Turkey stated the necessity of stability and democracy for enhancing the BSEC, while other countries gave the priority to the establishment of economic cooperation in the BSEC framework. Furthermore, some of them (e.g. Bulgaria, Greece and Russia) vetoed the establishment of a Parliament because this would close the way for Europe. Another indicator of this attitude was the Bulgarian rejection of the membership of Central Asian republics and its insistence that Sofia be the location for the Black Sea Bank. The MRF supported the formation of BSEC and it worked hard for the rapprochement between Turkey and Bulgaria in a BSEC framework.<sup>158</sup> The biased attitude mainly derives from the past, the problems of making the transition by former Eastern Bloc members, and their serious economic difficulties, all of which limited the efficiency of the BSEC. In 1997, BSEC sustained its activities at intergovernmental, inter-parliaments levels, in the business sector, banking and finance and academic areas.<sup>159</sup> The centre of the organization is in Istanbul and the Development Bank is in Thessalonica.

Turkey put the initiative for a Black Sea Force (BLACKSEAFOR) on the agenda at the second Meeting of Naval Forces Commanders in Bulgaria, 1998. The six countries (Bulgaria, Georgia, Romania, Russia, Turkey and the

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<sup>157</sup> William Hale, "Turkish Foreign Policy After the Cold War," *Turkish Review of Balkan Studies*, 1, Annual 1993, p. 244.

<sup>158</sup> Özgür, pp. (365-368).

<sup>159</sup> Nurver Nureş, "KEİ: Sorunlar ve Fırsatlar," in *Çağdaş Türk Diplomasisi: 200 Yıllık Süreç*, edited by İsmail Soysal (Türk Tarih Kurumu: Ankara, 1999) p. 590.

Ukraine) on the Black Sea coast signed the BLACKSEAFOR Agreement in Istanbul on 2 April, 2001. This builds cooperation among the naval forces of the coastal states. In the framework of the agreement, the Call Force is established for search-and-rescue, humanitarian aid and provisions for mines. Command of the force was given to Turkey and manoeuvres will be held every year. The Agreement does not include the Straits.<sup>160</sup>

The SEECP was established at Bulgaria's initiative in 1988 at a meeting in Sofia in which the states of South-Eastern Europe laid foundations for regional cooperation aimed at creating a climate of trust, good neighbourliness and stability. The members are Albania, Bulgaria, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Greece, Macedonia, Romania, Turkey and Yugoslavia. SEECP tries to grow into a cooperative process that will complement the SP, SECI or the EU Stabilisation and Association Process for the states in the region. "It is a forum for political consultations at highest level comprises all SEE countries. Its charter is a comprehensive Code of Conduct on the model of the CSCE Final Document."<sup>161</sup> Many projects in the SEECP framework could not be achieved due to the lack of funding and some of these have been transferred to the SP. Turkey gives utmost importance to SEECP because it is the only organization that formed by regional countries. The SEECP encompasses the strengthening security and political cooperation, intensification of economic relations, expanded cooperation in human dimension, democracy, judiciary and struggle against illegal activities for enhanced regional cooperation.

The SEECP strives to bring its members closer to the Euro-Atlantic structures through transformation of the region into an area of peace and

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<sup>160</sup> Uzgel, "Balkanlarla İlişkiler...", p. 522.

<sup>161</sup> Alp, "Balkan Region in Turkey's...", p. 197.

stability.<sup>162</sup> The third Summit of the Head of State and Government of the SEECP countries was held in Bucharest on 11-13 February, 2000. The Balkan Charter (A Charter on Good Neighbourly Relations, Stability, Security, Cooperation in South-eastern Europe), which was proposed by Turkey in Antalya Summit in 1998, was signed. The Charter included the integration of regional countries to Euro-Atlantic institutions such as NATO and the EU.<sup>163</sup>

The South-Eastern Europe Brigade (SEEBRIG) was established by seven participating nations in order to contribute to the regional security and stability in the Euro-Atlantic area and to foster co-operation among South-eastern European countries. There are seven participating and three observer countries. Turkey is a member of this organization. The SEEBRIG is to be employed, on a case-by-case basis, following a political decision in accordance with its own procedures. The brigade will be available for possible employment in the UN or OSCE-mandated NATO or WEU-led conflict prevention and other peace support operations, including peacekeeping, peace-building and humanitarian operations. It can also participate in “Coalition of the willing” type international initiatives. The brigade will also function “within the spirit” of the Partnership for Peace (PfP). Units allocated to the SEEBRIG will remain at their permanent home base locations and will be committed under a task force principle for exercises and operations upon the decisions of the participating nations and appropriate joint direction and coordination of the “Politico–Military Steering Committee (PMSC)”. SEEBRIG Headquarters are located in Constanta, Romania. Until June 2003,

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<sup>162</sup> [www.seecp.org](http://www.seecp.org) (Accessed on 10 November 2003).

<sup>163</sup> *Cumhuriyet*, 11 February 2000.



it was in Plovdiv, Bulgaria. It will be then deployed to Istanbul, Turkey, in 2007, and Kilkis, Greece, in 2011.<sup>164</sup>

The SECI was established in December 1996. It was formed by the USA in the framework of the OSCE and it is an economic cooperation. The Participating States of the Southeast European Cooperative Initiative held an inaugural meeting in Geneva on December 5-6, 1996 and formally adopted the SECI Statement of Purpose on December 6, 1996. The SECI Participating States include: Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Greece, Hungary, Moldova, Romania, Slovenia, FYROM and Turkey and, as of December 2000, the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. SECI aims to develop regional cooperation in economic and environmental problems. The impetus behind SECI is encouraging cooperation among its Participating States and facilitating their integration into European structures. SECI is not an assistance program. It does not interfere with, but rather complements existing initiatives. SECI endeavours to promote close cooperation among the governments of the region and to create new channels of communication among them.<sup>165</sup> Furthermore, SECI attempts to emphasize and coordinate region wide planning, identify needed follow-up and missing links, provide for involvement of the private sector in regional economic and environmental efforts, help to create a regional climate that encourages the transfer of know-how and greater investment in the private sector, and assist in harmonizing trade laws and policies.

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<sup>164</sup> [www.seebrig.pims.org/index.htm](http://www.seebrig.pims.org/index.htm) (Accessed on 10 November 2003).

<sup>165</sup> [www.secicenter.org](http://www.secicenter.org). (Accessed on 13 October 2004).

## **CHAPTER 6**

### **CONCLUSION**

The effect of the collapse of the Eastern Bloc on Turkish Foreign policy was profound. The analysis strongly points out that the changes occurred in Turkish policy emerged from external dynamics rather than internal ones. In this regard, the dissolution of Yugoslavia has a significant role in reformulation of Turkish Balkan policy. For this reason, in this study Turkish policy towards this region is analysed separately in four categories. The starting point for this categorization is the crisis, wars and changes that took place in the region since both the West and Turkey necessitated to undergo some considerable changes in their attitudes towards the region after every crisis. The second category is pointed out the reasons for stagnancy in Turkey's Balkan policy. The revision of the EU's Balkan policy is the determining factor for the other category. Finally, in the last category, it is concluded that the Turkish Foreign policy towards the Balkans will be reformulated in the EU context.

Notwithstanding Turkey avoided establishing a precise attitude at the beginning of the dissolution of Yugoslavia, upon realizing that the dissolution was inevitable, it recognized the newly independent states and tried to establish close ties with these states in order to prevent Greece from gaining hegemony in the region and in order not to lose its influence in the Balkans. In this study, it is stated that Turkish relations with the countries in the region are primarily based on defence, military education and cooperation due to Turkey's entrance to the Balkans with the USA. It is obvious that Bosnian War is a significant factor, which caused Turkish attitude towards the Balkans to gain impetus for being precise. In this context, it is pointed out that the

policy maintained by Turkey during the war period was harmonious with its power and capacity in international arena, and consistent and effective in itself. Furthermore; it is put forward in this study that in contrast to different approaches and ideas emerged in political, academic and intellectual parts of the society; Turkish foreign policy proves that a break off from the traditional Western tendency is not under consideration also in the post-Cold War period.

That Balkans is significant for Turkish foreign policy for several reasons is obvious. In addition to the economic and security value of the region, and Turkish minorities; the emergence of new actors influencing the Balkan policy is also a very significant factor for the formulation of Turkish regional policy. It is also stated that as a consequence of the active role undertaken by Greece in the EU context especially after the mid 1990s, the attitude of Turkey has changed. For this reason, Turkey tries to participate actively in both NATO and the EU initiatives and the constructions commenced by the countries in the region. However, the countries in the region are reluctant to take part in the constructions except for the initiatives commenced directly by NATO or the EU since they believe that their participation in those kinds of constructions will undermine their integration process with the EU and NATO. This situation puts Turkey in a hard position which actively supports these kinds of initiatives for the sake of balancing Greece in the Balkans.

In this study, it is concluded that Turkey can maintain a more flexible policy towards Turkish minorities in the region since security concerns will decrease as a result of the integration of regional countries with Euro-Atlantic organizations. In this regard, Bulgaria example can be given and the steps that this country has taken in NATO and the EU membership process. Moreover; it is mentioned that Turkish minority has commenced to be a factor that makes Turkish-Bulgarian relations closer rather than tense as a result of the change in the international economic situation. However, Greece example has

underscored that the EU or NATO membership does not always cause improvements in the situation of minorities. For this reason, it is also emphasized that Turkey attempts to gain an active role in the membership period of the countries in the region to NATO and the EU for the sake of following the regulations being made for Turkish minority closely.

Every new crisis and development in the region necessitated the reformulation of not only Turkey's but also all international actors' policies. Even though Turkey supported the multilateral interference led by an international organization in Bosnian War actively, and NATO interference in Kosova crisis reluctantly; it is not so pleased with the new regulations especially for minorities that are carried out by Western organizations and countries.

Furthermore, it is tried to be pointed out that Turkey's regional policy will be reformulated in the EU framework owing to the increase in the EU's activities in the Balkans and its newly formulated policy towards this region. In the light of the information presented above, it can be concluded that: after the integration with Euro-Atlantic organizations, the strengthening of stability and democracy will cause some improvements in human rights and minority policies of these countries as well. Turkey will welcome this situation; however, Turkey will lose its effectiveness in regional constructions because of not being an EU member. Since a policy, which prevents integration with Europe cannot be followed; Turkey aims to be a EU member and seeks for opportunities in order to participate in every initiative in the Balkans.

It is easily noticed that Neo-Ottomanist ideas put forward by some parts of the society in Turkey at the beginning of the post-Cold War period were really far away from the international realities. The period following this displayed that people who shared these ideas could not make shifts in Turkish Foreign policy upon coming to power. This study shows that the neo-Ottomanist debate lost its ground and significance as the process of the EU's

incorporation of the Balkans started. The Balkans is the least affected subject of consideration in Turkish Foreign policy when some changes of power in internal politics happen. After signing the Dayton Agreement, the only reason for the stagnancy of Turkish Foreign policy towards the region was not internal dynamics. It is obvious that the socialist leaders who came to power and who had distant relations with Turkey in Bulgaria and Albania have negatively affected Turkish policy towards the region. At this point, it is significantly emphasized that the weak and short-term governments, which had some disagreements within themselves, served as an obstacle in Turkish Foreign policy.

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