

TURKEY’S RELATIONS WITH SOUTHERN CAUCASUS
STATES SINCE 2008 RUSSIAN GEORGIAN WAR

EYLEM YAŞAM CİNDİ

FEBRUARY 2013

TURKEY’S RELATIONS WITH SOUTHERN CAUCASUS STATES SINCE
2008 RUSSIAN GEORGIAN WAR

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO
THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
OF
MIDDLE EAST TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY

BY

EYLEM YAŞAM CİNDİ

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR
THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF SCIENCE
IN
THE DEPARTMENT OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

FEBRUARY 2013

Approval of the Graduate School of Social Sciences

Prof. Dr. Meliha
ALTUNIŞIK

I certify that this thesis satisfies all the requirements as a thesis for the degree of Master of Science.

Prof. Dr. Hüseyin
BAĞCI

This is to certify that we have read this thesis and that in our opinion it is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a thesis for the degree of Master of Science.

Assoc. Prof. Dr.Oktay F.
TANRISEVER

Examining Committee Members

Assist. Prof. Dr. Vakur Sümer (SELCUK U. IR) _____

Assoc. Prof. Dr. OktayF. Tanrısever (METU IR) _____

Assist. Prof. Dr. Abdullah Yuvacı (MELIKSAH U.POLS) _____

PLAGIARISM

I hereby declare that all information in this document has been obtained and presented in accordance with academic rules and ethical conduct. I also declare that, as required by these rules and conduct, I have fully cited and referenced all material and results that are not original to this work.

Name, Last name :Eylem Yaşam Cindi

Signature :

ABSTRACT

TURKEY’S RELATIONS WITH SOUTHERN CAUCASUS STATES SINCE 2008 RUSSIAN GEORGIAN WAR

Cindi, Eylem Yaşam

Department of International Relations

Supervisor : Assoc. Prof. Dr. Oktay F. Tanrısever

February 2013,139 pages

This thesis analyzes Turkey’s relations with Southern Caucasus States after 2008 Russian Georgian War. Providing a historical background of Turkish policy towards Caucasus after the breakup of Soviet Union and during 2008 Russian Georgian war, it aims at giving a comprehensive framework of Turkey’s approaches to Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia and the thesis will also discuss how the Turkish foreign policy evolves in its stance towards Caucasus. It also seeks to examine the impacts of Russian-Georgian War in 2008 on Turkey’s influence in Caucasus. The thesis argues that contrary to the views of some scholars who consider Turkey’s influence is very limited due to the increasing Russian influence in the region, the evidences show that Turkey has enhanced its influence by promoting regional stability and through its view such as ‘Caucasus Stability and Cooperation Platform’ and Turkish-Armenian normalisation process.

Keywords: Turkey, Southern Caucasus states, Caucasus, Turkish foreign policy

ÖZ

2008 RUSYA GÜRCİSTAN SAVAŞI SONRASI TÜRKİYE’NİN GÜNEY KAFKASYA ÜLKELERİYLE İLİŞKİLERİ

Cindi, Eylem Yaşam

Yüksek Lisans, Uluslararası İlişkiler Bölümü

Tez Yöneticisi: Doç Dr. Oktay F. Tanrısever

Şubat, 2013, 139 sayfa

Bu çalışmada, 2008 Rusya Gürcistan Savaşı sonrası Türkiye’nin Güney Kafkasya ülkeleriyle ilişkileri incelenmiştir. Türkiye’nin Sovyetler Birliği’nin dağılmasından sonraki dönemde ve özellikle 2008 Rusya Gürcistan Savaşı’nı bir dönüm noktası olarak değerlendirip devam eden süreçte yürüttüğü bölge politikası tartışılmıştır. Türkiye’nin Ermenistan, Azerbaycan ve Gürcistan’a karşı yaklaşımlarının Türk dış politikasının geçirdiği dönüşümler çerçevesinden ele alınması amaçlanmıştır. Çalışmada temel olarak 2008 Rusya-Gürcistan Savaşı’nın Türkiye’nin bölgedeki etkinliği üzerindeki etkileri incelenmiştir. Türkiye’nin bölgedeki rolünün, artan Rusya etkisi sebebiyle, oldukça sınırlı olduğu görüşünün aksine, kanıtların da gösterdiği gibi Türkiye-Ermenistan ilişkilerinin normalleşmesi süreci ve Türkiye’nin bölgesel istikrarı artırmaya yönelik ‘Kafkasya İstikrar ve İşbirliği Platformu’ önerisiyle birlikte giderek arttığı görüşü savunulmuştur.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Türkiye, Güney Kafkasya Ülkeleri, Kafkasya, Türk Dış Politikası

To my adorable mother and father

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The author wishes to express her deepest gratitude to her supervisor Assoc. Prof. Dr. Oktay Tanrıseven for his guidance, advice, criticism, encouragements and insight throughout the research.

All the assistance of Assist. Prof. Dr. Abdullah Yuvacı and Assist. Prof. Dr. Vakur Sümer are gratefully acknowledged.

The author would also like to thank her family members and colleagues for their understanding and patience during the whole process.

TABLE OF CONTENT

PLAGIARISM	iii
ABSTRACT.....	iv
ÖZ	v
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	vii
TABLE OF CONTENT	viii
CHAPTER	
1. INTRODUCTION	1
2. TURKEY’S POLICY TOWARDS CAUCASUS UNTIL THE WAR BETWEEN RUSSIA AND GEORGIA	9
2.1. The Effects Of Demise Of Soviet Union On Caucasus And Turkey	9
2.2. Turkey’s Stance Towards Caucasus And Its Caucasus Policy	13
2.3. Geopolitical Position And Geostrategic Importance Of Caucasus	15
2.4. Turkey’s Azerbaijan Policy.....	18
2.5. Turkey’s Armenia Policy	20
2.6. Turkey’s Georgia Policy	23
3. TURKISH POLICY TOWARDS CAUCASUS DURING RUSSIAN GEORGIAN WAR	26
3.1. On The Verge Of A War: Causes Of 2008 Russian-Georgian War.....	26
3.2. Causes Of War.....	30
3.3. Turkey In Russian-Georgian War And Its Policies Towards Conflicts	36
3.4. Turkey’s Offer: Caucasus Stability And CooperationPlatform	41
3.5. The War’s Reflections On Turkish Foreign Policy	47
4. TURKEY-AZERBAIJAN RELATIONS	50
4.1. Diplomatic Relations	50
4.2. Economic Relations.....	52

4.2.1. “Project Of The Century”	56
4.3. Nagorno Karabakh Conflict And Turkey	59
4.3.1. Before Russian Georgian War	59
4.3.2. After Russian Georgian War	61
4.4. Cultural Relations	67
5.TURKEY-ARMENIAN RELATIONS	73
5.1. Diplomatic Relations	73
5.2. Football Diplomacy	77
5.3. 2009 Protocols	83
5.3.1.Turkey’s And Armenia’s Expectations From Protocols	87
5.3.2. Final Situation Of Protocols	89
5.4. Cultural Relations	89
6.TURKEY-GEORGIA RELATIONS	92
6.1. Diplomatic Relations	92
6.2. Georgia And Multidimensional Turkish Foreign Policy	96
6.3. Role Of Turkey And Georgia In Regional Security	100
6.4. Georgia’s Ethnic Problems And Their Reflections On Its Relations With Turkey	104
6.4.1. South Ossetia	104
6.4.2. Abkhazia	109
6.5. Economic Relations	111
6.5.1. Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan Oil Pipeline As A Driver In Turkey-Georgian Relations	113
6.6. Cultural Relations	115
CONCLUSION	118
REFERENCES	124
APPENDIX: TEZ FOTOKOPİSİ İZİN FORMU	139

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

B/D	Per/ Day
BLACKSEAFOR	The Black Sea Naval Force
BOTAŞ	Turkish Petroleum Pipeline Corporation
BSEC	Organization of Black Sea Economic Cooperation
BTC	Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan Oil Pipeline
BTE	Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum Natural Gas Pipeline
CIS	Commonwealth of Independent States
CSCP	Caucasus Stability and Cooperation Platform
EU	European Union
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
KEK	Joint Economic Cooperation
KM	Kilometer
MAP	Membership Action Plan
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
OSCE	Organization of Security and Cooperation in Europe
PfP	Partnership for Peace
SAM	Center for Strategic Research
SOCAR	State Oil Company of Azerbaijan Republic
TANAP	Trans Anatolian Natural Gas Pipeline Project
TDFR	Transcaucasus Democratic Federative Republic
TGNA	Turkish Grand National Assembly
TIKA	Turkish International Cooperation and Development Agency

TUPTC	Turkey Partnership for Peace Training Center
USD	Unites States Dollar
UN	United Nations
US	United States
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

In this study, geographical, historical, economic and political tendencies shaping Turkey's South Caucasus policy and its relations with states in the region, ethnical conflicts, the struggle over Caucasus by global and regional powers, its geopolitical and geostrategical significance and the factors determining the fragile and volatile structure of the region have been tried to examined. In this framework, Turkey's interests and objectives in the region are evaluated. The scope of this study is composed of the effects of changing balances in world politics after the end of Cold War on South Caucasus and Turkish foreign policy, the conflictual issues in South Caucasus, the interpretation of these conflicts from the point of both Turkey and states in the region and Turkey's relations with Southern Caucasus states.

The purposes of this study are:

To present the existing conflictual issues in the region in the framework of factors determining the geopolitical significance of the region,

To analyze the changing parameters of world politics in post-Cold War era and post-Russian-Georgian war, its reflections on Turkish foreign policy and provide the framework of Turkey's policies toward Caucasus,

To present the political, economic, and cultural relations of Turkey with Southern Caucasus states,

To determine Turkey's policies towards Southern Caucasus states in the framework of reflections and effects of 2008 Russian-Georgian war and to present the policies that are required by Turkey in terms of regional stability and security.

In this thesis, main questions are determined as what the reasons of Caucasus significance in world politics are, how Turkey approached to Caucasus after the end of the Cold War, what Turkey's stance towards 2008 Russian-Georgian war is, how Turkey-Azerbaijan relations are shaped after the war, what reflections of the war on Turkey-Armenia relations are, what developments in Turkish-Georgian relations are, what are the implications of Russian-Georgian war on Turkish foreign policy.

Caucasus has been on the position of extensional and supplemental part of Anatolia, which is situated at the crossroad of Europe, Asia and Africa. Caucasus is one of the North-South connection points of geographical continuum comprising the continents. It provides an access to Europe through the Black Sea, to Asia through the Caspian Sea. By this way, it does not provide a connection only on the North-South direction, but also on the West-East direction. The South Caucasus played a pivotal geopolitical role in the Asian continent, and this role has been enriched with new political, security and economic motives after the fall of the Soviet Union. For its nature and geographical location, the region has historically been a route for nomadic tribes and states as a bridge between the South and the North, between the East and the West. Caucasus, with its geographical position and natural gas and oil resources has been in the interest area of world powers. To have dominance in this region means to have a base on the axes of Asia, Europe and Middle East.

Beginning from the late 20th century the South Caucasus has been an arena for confrontation among the states claiming to be regional and world powers. Situated between the Black and Caspian seas, the South Caucasus is of great importance because it is an area where Southern-Northern and Western-Eastern energy and

transport lines intersect, a place rich with energy resources of the Caspian basin. The geopolitical importance of the South Caucasus is also based on the presence of energy resources. These resources have become more significant as a geo-strategic objective at a time of growing demand. Stability in the Caucasus is a vital requirement for the uninterrupted transport of Caspian oil and gas. The Caspian Sea region (the South Caucasus and Central Asia) contains about 3-4 percent of the world's oil reserves and 4-6 percent of the world's gas reserves.¹ The importance of the region has also grown as a result of energy policies by consumer states in the West that want to decrease their dependence on resources from Russia and Middle East. transport of Caspian and Central Asian energy supplies to the West via the Caucasus has gained vital importance.

Turkey has its east borders on Caucasus, and also has historical, ethnical, cultural, national and religious ties with the region. For Turkey, the significance of Caucasus does not only stem from its energy resources. Having close ties and relations with newly-independent Turkish republics through highways and railways is equally important. Closure of this road to Turkey will cause great losses in every conditions. In such a scenario, other power centers (Russia, US, Iran and EU) will be stronger as they will have more influence in the region and the situation would turn against Turkey. Stability in Caucasus will create an environment of mutual confidence between Turkey and the states in the region and by this way, economic activities will increase, trading volume will broaden. Economic relations between states will be also accompanied by political cooperation.

In addition to external powers such as Russia, the unique geographic locations of the three states of the Caucasus (Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia) have had considerable impact on their own foreign policy constraints and opportunities—

¹ Baran, Zeyno, "The Caucasus: Ten Years After Independence", Washington Quarterly, Vol:25, Issue: 1, Winter 2002, p.221

Armenia and Azerbaijan as land-locked states, and Georgia as a key transit state for the Caucasus and Central Asia. In the post-Soviet period, the three independent states of the Caucasus adopted different foreign policy orientations. Armenia chose to develop close cooperation with Russia, as well as good ties with Iran. Azerbaijan attempted a balanced policy of cooperation with the United States and Russia while maintaining stable and cooperative relations with Turkey and Iran. Georgia, especially after President Saak'ashvili's rise to power in 2003, chose to ally with the United States and its NATO partners. Other former Soviet states located adjacent to the open seas have aspired to join European and US-oriented economic and security structures, while landlocked states have given larger consideration to Russia in their foreign policy orientations.

Locating between main crisis regions, Turkey should attach great importance to this oil-rich region which is the attention center and competition area of many states. As of geographical position, Caucasus is like an extension of Turkey and is accepted to be two integral parts of a continuum. Definitions of Anatolia and Caucasus such as 'Asia Minor' or 'Lesser Asia' are indicators of this perception. This proximity also determined historical, cultural, demographical and political evolution of the region. Therefore, these ties which make development of relations with the region a requirement gained much more importance because of the conditions occurred after Soviet Union in respect of new formations in the region.

In Caucasus near history, 2008 Russian-Georgian war has been a turning point in both regional and international arena. It put Caucasus into the core of international politics. This war between Russia and Georgia also showed the fragility of the region due to the frozen nature of the conflicts. These conflicts kept in the freezer for a long time in region history creates a kind of an instable situation which has the potential of turning into an act of violence. Russia did not hesitate to apply military options to preserve its geostrategic interests in the area that has been defined as its

sphere of influence. This has proved that balances in Caucasus is so sensitive and any reasons can lead to instability in the region.

2008 Russian-Georgian war has also directly influenced the relations of states in the region with each other and with the outside world. In this context, Turkey, avoiding being a side, tried to mediate in the settlement of conflict through some regional initiatives that can serve as a platform for the development of regional stability and peace with the participation of all relevant parties. All the attempts of Turkey to resettle the conflictual issues can be evaluated as an instrument of its reorienting foreign policy dynamics. In line with its new foreign policy objective and method, meanly, ‘zero problems with its neighbors’ and ‘rhythmic diplomacy’ adopted by Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu², Turkey has tried its best to follow the path of increasing its credibility as a regional power in world politics.

Modeled as a ‘model country’ for its region by the West after the end of Cold War,³ Turkey had lots of difficulties to play this role because of economic crisis and domestic turmoil that it had experienced. The vacuum appeared in the region after the end of Cold War was largely filled by Russian Federation. The newly emerged independent states in South Caucasus found themselves under the domination of Russia in their post-independence period. The economic and political leverage of Russia in the region continued in this period. However, Turkey’s rise as an active and influential actor with its pro-active diplomatic initiatives in past ten years, has created a new opportunity for both Turkey and the region itself. Turkey no longer situates itself as ‘model’ but rather as a ‘central country’ claiming to have the strength to influence the regional policies despite some arguments that Turkey has

² Davutoglu, Ahmet, ‘Turkey2s Foreign Policy Vision: An Assessment of 2007’, Insight Turkey, Vol: 10, Issue: 1, 2008, p.77-96

³ Bal, İdris, ‘Soğuk Savaş Sonrası Türk Dış Politikası İçin Türk Cumhuriyetleri’nin Önemi’, 21.Yüzyılda Türk Dış Politikası, (Ed.) İdris Bal, Agam, Lalezar Kitabevi, 3th Edition, 2006,Ankara, p. 398.

lost its importance in this process. Turkish leaders have begun referring to Turkey as not only a regional, but also a global power.⁴

The thesis argues that contrary to views of some scholars who consider Turkey's influence is very limited due to the increasing Russian influence in the region, the evidences show that Turkey has enhanced its influence by promoting regional stability through its views such as 'Caucasus Stability and Cooperation Platform' and Turkish-Armenian normalisation process. Turkey, no longer situating itself as 'model' but rather as a 'central country' claims to have the strength to influence the regional policies despite some arguments that Turkey has lost its credibility in Caucasus politics.

The thesis takes the realist approach as its theoretical perspective. The developments following the military conflict between Russia and Georgia has proved that basic realist understanding assessing military options as an instrument of relations between states is still valid. Russia, not hesitating to apply military force for the purpose of preserving its national interests has showed that in the settlement of conflict, parties evaluate the military intervention as a required way. War is seen as a legitimate instrument of statecraft as realism supports. *Raison d'état* tells the statemen what they must do to preserve the health and the strength of state. As the key actor of international politics, state must pursue power and it is its duty to calculate the most appropriate steps that should be taken for the survival of state in a hostile and threatening environment.⁵ That is how Russia sees its national interests and the balances in Caucasus.

After Russian-Georgian war, Turkey tried to stay in the same distance to both parties. Avoiding taking a side, it followed a cautious and equidistance policy not

⁴ Davutoglu, *ibid.* p. 78

⁵ Tim Dunne, Brian Schmidt, 'Realism', *The Globalization of World Politics*, (Ed.) John Baylis, Steve Smith, Second Edition, Oxford University Press, 2001, p.142

supporting any party with concrete discourse. The Turkish leaders have explained this policy by basing it on preservation of Turkish national interests. Realism focuses on interests rather than ideology.⁶ Denying that universal moral principles exist, Realism warn state leaders against sacrificing their own self-interests to adhere to some indeterminate notion of ethical conduct. That is the exact stance of Turkey following Russian-Georgian war towards the two sides.

Topics examined in a chronological order, have been tried to be analysed in a objective way by detailing via subheadings. As the subject matter includes both past and present time implications, literature review and archive survey method have been used. Periodicals and current press and news agencies have been examined. Because of the fact that the subject matter is still a current issue, books and articles published in both Turkey and abroad, the newspapers and internet resources have been surveyed. Periodicals in the libraries in Turkey are scanned.

The content of the study is composed of introduction part, six chapters and conclusion part. Introduction part includes subject, purpose, method, importance and content of the study.

The second chapter interprets Turkey's policy towards Caucasus until 2008 Russian-Georgian war. In this chapter, the effects of demise of Soviet Union on Caucasus and Turkey are tried to be assessed. Some developments in the world and Turkish foreign policy after 1991 are discussed. Caucasus's geopolitical and geostrategical significance is also interpreted in this chapter. This chapter also involves Turkey's objectives and interests in Caucasus and Turkey's policies towards Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia.

The third chapter evaluates Turkish policy towards Caucasus after Russian-Georgian War. It starts with background of the conflict and continues with the

⁶ Ibid, p.142

conditions leading to the war. It touches upon the emergence and the causes of the war. The chapter involves Turkey's stance during the war and its reactions to the newly emerged conditions in the Caucasus. Reflections of the war on Turkish foreign policy is assessed on the ground of Caucasus Stability and Cooperation Platform initiative.⁷

The fourth chapter analyses Turkish-Azerbaijani relations on political, economic and cultural bases. It provides a historical background of bilateral relations. It touches upon economic relations between two states by emphasising the importance of pipeline projects. Turkey's stance against Nagorno Karabakh conflict is also assessed. In the last part of the chapter, cultural relations, cultural closeness between two states and educational activities are portrayed.

In the fifth chapter, Turkey-Armenian relations are examined with a specific emphasise on the political, economic and cultural relations. The process of normalisation between two states, starting with 'Football diplomacy', and leading to 2009 Protocol is elaborated. Protocol process, the expectations and reactions of both sides are examined in detail.

In the sixth chapter, political, economic and cultural relations between Turkey and Georgia are tried to be assessed. The place of Georgia in multidimensional Turkish foreign policy and the role of Turkey and Georgia in regional security is dwelled up on. Georgia's ethnic issues and their reflections on its relations with Turkey are assessed with special emphasise on South Ossetia and Abkhazia.

⁷ Caucasus Stability and Cooperation Platform is an initiative proposed by Turkey after 2008 Russian-Georgian War for the settlement of conflicts in Caucasus through mutual confidence and participation of Russia, Azerbaijan, Armenia, Georgia and Turkey.

CHAPTER 2

TURKEY’S POLICY TOWARDS CAUCASUS UNTIL THE WAR BETWEEN RUSSIA AND GEORGIA

The second chapter interprets Turkey’s policy towards Caucasus until 2008 Russian-Georgian war. In this chapter, the effects of demise of Soviet Union on Caucasus and Turkey are tried to be assessed. Some developments in the world and Turkish foreign policy after 1991 are discussed. Caucasus’s geopolitical and geostrategical significance is also interpreted in this chapter. This chapter also involves Turkey’s objectives and interests in Caucasus and Turkey’s policies towards Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia

2.1. The Effects Of Demise Of Soviet Union On Caucasus And Turkey

International system in post Cold War era has created both some opportunities and on the other hand some question marks about security issues for Turkey especially after the demise of Soviet Union on the point of its relations with West.⁸ The end of bipolar international system in Cold War era gave regional powers prominence and provided them with lots of opportunities to become more active in their region. Caucasus is the most affected region by this ambiguity⁹. But with the end of bipolar structure, conflicts between small states easily grew and it reached a point affecting

⁸ Kamer Kasım, Soğuk Savaş Sonrası Kafkasya, Usak Yayınları, Ankara, 2009, p.91

⁹ Armağan Kuloğlu, “Rusya Federasyonu’nun Yeni Kafkasya Politikası”, Stratejik Analiz, Vol: 1 Issue: 5, September 2000, p.38

all parties. In this period, Caucasus became a region in which intense international competition is experienced.¹⁰

Disintegration of Soviet Union had also some implications for Turkey's strategical calculations in the region.¹¹ It was thought that Turkey's position would lose its significance with disappearance of Soviet threat and changing role of NATO.¹² Another significant effect was arising necessity for Turkey to deal with regional conflicts and crisis.¹³ It paved the way for some new calculations in its foreign policy especially towards the region. Turkey's strategical influence claimed to decrease started to form a new basis completely different from that of Cold War era.¹⁴ Turkey unexpectedly had a chance of having a new vision beyond its determined role in Cold War era.¹⁵

After the dissolution of USSR, Turkey changed its foreign policy's shape, content and scope, and welcomed the appearance of new independent states in Caucasus and Central Asia with enthusiasm. The new geopolitical environment created an opportunity for perception of Turkish identity. In this context, its cultural, historical and national adjacency to the region came into prominence. Appearance of new Turkish Muslim states after the demise of USSR and Turkey's demand to increase its influence caused tension between Russia and Turkey. The discourse of 'Turkish

¹⁰ Sinan Oğan, Kamil Ağacan, 'Güney Kafkasya'da Yeniden Başlayan veya Bitmeyen Savaş', Stratejik Analiz, Vol: 2 Issue: 12 May 2004, p.26

¹¹ Kasım, ibid. p.91

¹² İdris Bal, 'Soğuk Savaş Sonrası Türk Dış Politikası için Türk Cumhuriyetleri'nin Önemi', 21. Yüzyılda Türk Dış Politikası, (Ed.) İdris Bal, Lalezar Kitabevi, Ankara, 3th Edition, 2006, p 394

¹³ Kasım, ibid

¹⁴ Graham E. Fuller and J. Arquilla, 'The Intractable Problem of Regional Power' Orbis, Autumn, 1996, p.609-617

¹⁵ Bal, ibid p.395

World from Adriatic to Chinese Wall' and acceptance of Turkish alphabet in Turkish Republics disturbed Russia.¹⁶

Although it was thought that Turkey's role in the eyes of Western World as a castle against Soviet Union decreased with the end of East-West conflict, following events like First Gulf War, ethnic oriented conflicts in Balkans and independence of Turkish republics with the demise of Soviet Union proved that Turkey was still an important ally for West and US.¹⁷ It was started to emphasise that with the emergence of these new states and opportunities Turkey kept its position and gained chance for undertaking some new influential roles in regional politics. In this context, understanding Turkey's position and determinant role in the First Gulf War and evaluating sensitive conditions in Caucasus and Central Asia, Western World started to see Turkey as an indispensable ally to promote regional stability and to prevent the export of Islamic fundamentalism of Iran to the region.¹⁸ In these developments republics in Caucasus and Central Asia and cultural, economical and geopolitical conditions of the region were determinant. While Turkey was looking for new arguments to prove its significance even after the end Cold War, West and US was worried about the new developments in Caucasus. Owing to multidimensional proximity of Turkey with the region and perception as a confidential ally in Western bloc, 'Turkish Model' was encouraged by US and the West and constituted its policies towards the region on the axes of cooperation with the West.¹⁹

¹⁶ Mithat Çelikpala, "From A Failed State to a Weak One? Georgia and Turkish-Georgian Relations" The Turkish Yearbook of International Relations, No: 36,2005, p.174, Erel Tellal, "SSCB'yle İlişkiler", Türk Dış Politikası Kurtuluş Savaşından Bugüne Olgular, Belgeler, Yorumlar,(Ed). Baskın Oran, İletişim Yayınları, İstanbul, 2001, p.543

¹⁷ Bal, ibid, p.394

¹⁸ Bal, ibid, p.398

¹⁹ Bülent Aras, Pınar Akpınar, "Relations between Turkey and the Caucasus", Perceptions, Autumn 2011, Vol: 16 Issue: 3 p.53

Power and influence struggle in Caucasus mainly center upon three main areas: energy, geopolitic position and region's control. Due to the September 11 process, US starting to be more active and enthusiastic in the region compared to 1990s demand to have the biggest share from Caspian Basin energy resources. Demanding to take hold in the region, US have the acceptance from Georgian government and with its support for Saakashvili it gained an important area of influence in the region. Georgia has been the strategic partner of US. Abkhasian and South Ossetian conflicts have been supported by Russia who approaches Azerbaijan in a pragmatic way with Putin and take a more constructive stance in Minsk Group.²⁰

The main competition area between Russia and Turkey is the matter of transfer of Caspian energy resources to the markets. Turkey demands that the main route should be East-West energy corridor which is also supported by US with an idea that it could decrease Russian sphere of influence and increase its own position as a political actor. A safe and free trade center Caucasus without military bases is the most appropriate one for Turkey. Power balance should not be deteriorated in favor of any parties. Russia, in the struggle of being accepted as strong regional power, follow some determinant policies basing on traditional sphere of influence and near abroad principle. In "Near Abroad Doctrine" declared in 1993, members of Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) are defined as near abroad and Russian policies towards old USSR sphere are explained.²¹ Through this doctrine, it has been stated that the only country that has the right of intervention is Russian Federation who is also defined as responsible for regional security and stability.²²

²⁰ Minsk Group was created in 1992 by Organisation For Security and Cooperation in Europe to encourage a peaceful settlement of conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan over Nagorno Karabakh.

²¹ Armağan Kuloğlu, "Rusya Federasyonu'nun Yeni Kafkasya Politikası", *Stratejik Analiz*, Vol: 1, Issue: 5, September 2000, p.38

²² Ibid, p.38

2.2. Turkey's Stance Towards Caucasus And Its Caucasus Policy

For Turkey to be an influential actor, it was required to get actively involved in regional events. It was not just important for Turkey's desire to increase its strategical influence and take advantages of international developments but also to be more active in achieving its economic goals with the region.

To be able to respond new conditions in post Cold War era, Turkey taking into account the changing parameters in the region became in quest of new enterprises to defend its national interests. Keeping these goals in mind, Turkey started to take the lead in regional cooperation and initiated some projects.²³

Turkey's approaches to Caucasus are shaped by its desire to establish comprehensive cooperation with three Transcaucasus states. Within this scope, Turkey support security perceptions and cooperation by promoting the consolidation of these states' independence, protection of their territorial integrity, accomplishment of their economic potential and their integration with the West.

On the center of Turkey's Caucasus policy, Azerbaijan is the biggest partner with existing ethnical, historical and cultural ties. Despite some ups and dows in bilateral relations experiencing some challenging issues like Turkey's normalisation process with Armenia, Azerbaijan Turkey relations continues with the high expectations of both sides.

Turkey's Georgia policy has been founded on promotion of mutual relations based on principle of non-interference in internal affairs, respect for territorial integrity, independence and sovereignty of each other, and immunity of borders.²⁴Turkey

²³Kamer Kasım, Soğuk Savaş Sonrası Kafkasya, Usak Yayınları, Ankara, 2009. P.92

²⁴ Kamil Ağacan, ‘‘Soğuk Savaş Sonrası Türkiye-Gürcistan İlişkileri’’, 21. Yüzyılda Türk Dış Politikası, Ed. İdris Bal, Lalezar Kitabevi, Ankara, 3th Edition, 2006, p. 458

reflected its stance on Georgian side regarding its territorial integrity, and tried to support the peaceful settlement of separatist movements that Georgia witnessed. Specifically, in Abkhasian conflict, Turkey took a stand that seeks for settlement of this conflict by protecting Georgian border integrity accepted in international arena.

On the other hand, after the independence of Georgia, Turkey became the biggest trade partner of it in a short time. Along with its political and financial support, Turkey provided military assistance to establishment of Georgian national army in the framework of NATO Partnership for Peace.²⁵ Turkey and Georgia also cooperated in transfer of Caspian Basin energy resources to international markets. Georgia supported Baku- Tbilisi-Ceyhan as main pipeline project.²⁶

Another Caucasian state with whom the mutual relations could not be achieved on a desired level is Armenia. Turkey Armenian relations could not make any progress because of some reasons like historical problems and Nagorno Karabakh conflict. While trying to promote its political relations with Transcaucasian states, it followed a moderate policy in North Caucasus with Russia with whom it did not want to encounter in an antagonistic way. Officially, Turkey does not provide support for independence movements in North Caucasus and evaluate them as internal affairs of Russia.²⁷

Turkey turned its steps towards Caucasus in line with having its share from region's energy resources and being an effective regional power in the region. It wants to take its place in development and marketing of energy resources. Through the pipelines, satisfaction of its energy needs, and achievement of economic income with these pipeline installment process have been targetted.

²⁵ Ibid, p.460

²⁶ Emmanuel Karagiannis, "The Turkish-Georgian Partnership and the Pipeline Factor", Journal of Southern Europe and the Balkans, Vol: 6 Issue: 1, April 2005, p. 20

²⁷ Ibid, p.206

Turkey should do its best to make Transcaucasus a region of cooperation and peace. On this way, laying of a foundation on which regional cooperation initiatives can be continued and regional organising can be achieved is of great importance. It should support democratization process and market transition in each Transcaucasus states and assist in improvement of their independence. Relations with Georgia and Armenia constitutes great importance in terms of Turkey's interests in the region. For achievement of these goals, Turkey needs a developed, trouble-free Azerbaijan which recovered from Russian influence and establish its own national unity. Normalization of relations with Armenia depends on withdrawal from Nagorno Karabakh and other Azeri territory and abandonment of their claims against Turkey. Armenia's priority in its relations with Turkey is the development of economic relations and its weakest point is its geographical position being surrounded by lands. Its connection with the Black Sea is only possible through Turkey.

2.3. Geopolitical Position And Geostrategic Importance Of Caucasus

Geographically, the North Caucasus locating on the the North of Caucasus Mountain ranges is situated in European continent, and Transcaucasus locating on the South part of this mountain range is situated in Asian continent. Politically, the whole of Caucasus is a part of Europe.²⁸

‘Caucasus has quite an ordinary position on hemisphere. In north of it is situated Russia; in the South, Turkey and Iran; in the West, Black Sea divides it from Eastern Europe, and in the East, the Caspian Sea from Central Asia.’²⁹

²⁸ Hasan Kanbolat, ‘Kafkasya’nın Jeopolitiğinde Değişim Sinyalleri’, Stratejik Analiz Dergisi, No: 60 Ankara April 2005 ,p.88

²⁹ Kavtaradze, Giorgi Leon, ‘The Geopolitical Role of the Caucasus Mountains from the Historical Perspective’, Causes of War-Prospects for Peace, Metropolitan Ananya Japaridze, Tbilisi, 2009, p:214

Caucasus is significantly important in terms of three main reasons. Geographically, it is the entrance gate to Central Asia, with regards to Central Asia, it is a passageway to Western markets and it has a significant number of oil and natural gas reserves.³⁰

For Turkey, having its east borders on Caucasus, and having historical, ethnical, cultural, national and religious ties with the region Caucasus is of great importance. Geographical proximity, economical cooperation opportunities with the region and its natural resources put Caucasus on a geopolitically significant position for Turkey.

The Caucasus has been at the crossroads of major ethnic migratory waves, and has been an area of great power rivalries since ancient times. These facts have contributed to the patchwork pattern of its ethnic groups and to its cultural diversity.³¹ The South Caucasus is a vital region because of its geopolitical position, especially as a crossing point between the Middle East, Europe and Central Asia. Hegemonic powers have used this region as a base from which they could influence neighbouring areas³². Russia regards the South Caucasus as its traditional backyard of influence and counters increasing involvement in this region by the West. For the USA, it is likely to seek strong points in the Caucasian area in support of its global geo-strategy.³³

History and geopolitical position of the region also increase its geostrategic importance. This significance comes parallel with its place in the history. It has

³⁰ Hakan Kantarcı, *Kısaçtaki Bölge Kafkasya*, IQ Kültür Sanat Yayıncılık, İstanbul, 2006 p. 59-60

³¹ Shireen Hunter, ‘‘Conflict in the Caucasus and the Black Sea Region: Causes and Prospects for the Resolution’’, Hellenic Foundation for European and Foreign Policy, 1997, p.4

³² Marcel de Haas, *Geostrategy in the South Caucasus; Power play and energy security of states and organisations – The Hague*, Netherlands Institute of International Relations Clingendael, 2006, p. 11

³³ Ibid, p. 11

been an arena of struggles of some great powers. A look at a map illustrates the strategic importance of the Caucasus region for Russia and other powers. Not only is the Caucasus adjacent to Russia's southern border, but it is the essential outlet of the landlocked Caspian region to open seas. Control of Georgia determines the flow of trade patterns and venues of infrastructures for all of the Caucasus and Central Asia. The Caucasus is also the physical meeting ground of a number of powers: Russia, Turkey, and Iran. Moreover, it serves as an important air corridor from the United States and Europe to destinations in the Middle East and Asia, including Afghanistan.³⁴

A transit zone between East-West and North-South, Caucasus locates on the crossing point of energy and transportation corridor in Eurasia. With this increasing strategical position, it has been of vital importance for the establishment of stability and prosperity in the region. Along with its international strategical dimension, as a neighbour of Turkey, stability and welfare in Caucasus means a lot for Turkey's own security and stability. It is a natural gate opening to Central Asia for Turkey. Cultural, political, economical and social ties between Turkey and Caucasian nations create various opportunities for further cooperation and stability in the neighbouring region.

It is impossible to think Turkey separately from Caucasus.³⁵ It acts as a bridge between Central Asian Republics and Turkey. As well as its influence on Turkish foreign policy, Caucasus plays a vital role on Turkish internal policy by means of presence of Turkish components in the region. Caucasus is a region that can provide advantages for Turkey by providing the security and defense of Eastern

³⁴ Brenda Shaffer , ‘‘The Geopolitics of the Caucasus’’, The Brown Journal of World Affairs, Spring/Summer 2009, Volume:14 Issue: II p.131

³⁵ Savaş Yanar, Türk- Rus İlişkilerinde Gizli Güç Kafkasya, IQ Kültür Sanat Yayıncılık, İstanbul, Ağustos 2002, p.75

Anatolia, by communicating and improving relations with Turkish and Muslim states and communities in Central Asia, by establishing socio-economic and political relations with region's states who feels closeness with Turkey, by having raw material and market opportunities because of the existence of underground resources and oil reserves and by preventing accession of Russian Federation to the south and to get rid of this threat.³⁶

2.4. Turkey's Azerbaijan Policy

Cultural, ethnic and linguistic proximity of Azerbaijan and its energy resources put this country into the core of Turkey's Caucasus policy. It is evaluated as the most strategical Turkish republic in the region owing to its position as a bridge between Turkey and Central Asia and its energy resources. While close relations with Azerbaijan in Turkey's Caucasus policy regarding energy issues are advantages, Nagorno Karabakh conflict and long instable period that Azerbaijan experienced after its independence create some difficulties for Turkey.³⁷

Nagorno Karabakh is one of the most long lasting regional conflicts both affecting Azerbaijan and Turkey at the same time. Despite the fact that Turkey demands to be a strong regional power, it is not in favor of a military conflict in the region.³⁸ Turkey followed a policy that aims at receiving international society's support to end Armenian occupation of Azerbaijani territory. During the Soviet period, Turkey's stance towards the conflict was to evaluate it as an internal affair of

³⁶ Yanar, *ibid* p.76

³⁷ Kamer Kasım, *Soğuk Savaş Sonrası Kafkasya*, Usak Yayınları, Ankara, 2009, p.95

³⁸ Mustafa Gökçe, "Yukarı Karabağ Sorunu ve Türkiye Ermenistan İlişkileri Üzerine bir Değerlendirme", *Turkish Studies*, Vol. 6 Issue: 1 Winter 2011, p. 1120

USSR. But the disintegration of USSR and independence of Azerbaijan required a new approach to the conflicts.³⁹

Parameters in Turkey's Azerbaijan policy did not change on a large scale, but it evolved in the process within some periodical fluctuations in line with internal instability and confrontations in Azerbaijan.⁴⁰ With Ebulföz Elçibey coming into power some changes and developments aroused in Azerbaijan foreign policy. It became a period in which Azerbaijan tried to release from Russian sphere of influence, integrate with West and follow a more independent foreign policy. He regarded Turkey as the biggest strategical partner and put Turkey into the center of its foreign policy.⁴¹

Turkey continued its close relations with Azerbaijan during the presidency of Haydar Aliyev. He was welcomed with enthusiasm during his visits to Turkey as President of Azerbaijan. He made a speech in Turkish Grand National Assembly and signed 16 agreements and protocols with Turkey.⁴² This official visit was also importance in terms of Aliyev's statement supporting Baku-Tbilisi- Ceyhan Pipeline (BTC).⁴³ In 1996, relations between two states started to improve again. They signed a military cooperation agreement in same year. On all occasions, Aliyev emphasised the uniqueness of Azerbaijan Turkey relations in the world.⁴⁴

Turkey's Azerbaijan policy was influenced by international environment and domestic affairs of Azerbaijan. After terrorist attacks on September 11, the fact that

³⁹ Kamer Kasım, Soğuk Savaş Sonrası Kafkasya, Usak Yayınları, Ankara, 2009 s. 96

⁴⁰ Ibid, p.97

⁴¹ Nazim Cafersoy, 'Azerbaycan'da Bağımsızlığın Diğer Adı: Ebulföz Elçibey', Stratejik Analiz, Vol: 1, Issue: 5, September 2000, p.21

⁴² Elizabeth Fuller, 'Aliyev in Turkey', RFE/RL News Briefs 3, Issue: 7, 7-11 February 1994

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Kasım, ibid, p.99

US turned towards Caucasus and cooperated with region's states in the field of regional security increased Turkey's interests to cooperate with Azerbaijan and Georgia in security matters.⁴⁵ In Turkey's agenda, after the ceasefire in Nagorno Karabakh Conflict, energy project was placed on the top. Opening of BTC Pipeline has been seen as the success of Turkey's Azerbaijan energy policy.

Now, Turkey is trying to increase and intensify its economic and political relations with the South Caucasian countries. In this context, close cooperation with Turkey and South Caucasian countries in the energy sector will make a vital contribution to accelerate the transition of countries within the South Caucasus region toward a market economy. But, security is a main problem in the region.⁴⁶ Ethnic problems, territorial claims and "frozen conflicts" combine to make this a volatile region. These conflicts are a source of instability and a significant obstacle to regional cooperation. The BTC and BTE pipelines have given Turkey the opportunity to enhance its relations with Caucasian and Central Asian states, and to contribute to peace and stability in these regions.⁴⁷ Furthermore, the BTC and BTE pipelines not only encourage the South Caucasian states to be more independent from Russia in terms of foreign policy, they also reduce the Caucasian and Central Asian states' dependence on Russia, and have led to the breakdown of Russia's gas monopoly over regional resources and transportation routes.

2.5.Turkey's Armenia Policy

Turkey's policy towards Armenia is of great importance not only because it is the most problematic relationship but also it affects Turkey's policy of other actors in

⁴⁵ Kamer Kasım, "11 Eylül Sürecinde Kafkasya'da Güvenlik Politikaları", Orta Asya ve Kafkasya Araştırmaları, Issue: 1, 2006 , p. 19-35

⁴⁶ Haydar Efe, "Turkey's Role as an Energy Corridor and its Impacts on Stability in the South Caucasus", OAKA, Vol: 6 Issue: 12, 2011, p.119

⁴⁷ Efe, ibid, p .120

the region. After the dissolution of USSR Turkey recognised Armenian independence like the other states of the region. But diplomatic relations could not be established between two states. This is caused by Armenian stance to propose genocide issue for the international agenda and to evaluate it as its most important item of its foreign policy.

Nagorno Karabakh is the other dead end in Turkey-Armenia relations. In Armenian Declaration of Independence it is stated that ‘The Republic of Armenia stands in support of the task of achieving international recognition of the 1915 genocide in Ottoman Turkey and Western Armenia’.⁴⁸ In Armenia, violability of Turkish-Armenian borders stemming from 1921 Kars Agreement is frequently brought into question.⁴⁹

Turkey closed its borders with Armenia after the occupation of Kelbecer in 1993.⁵⁰ Although Turkey followed a policy aiming at having good relations with Armenia, Nagorno Karabakh conflict did not make it possible. Turkey also supported Armenia’s membership to The Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization (BSEC). It was invited to this organization as a founding member by Turkey in 1992.⁵¹ It also provided humanitarian aid to Armenia who experienced some economic problems after its independence.⁵² Turkey also allowed the transport of

⁴⁸ Susae Elanchenny, Narod Maraşlıyan, Breaking the Ice: The Role of Civil Society and Media in Turkey-Armenia Relations, Global Political Trends Center, Istanbul Kultur University p. İstanbul, April 2012, p. 8

⁴⁹ Ibid. p.8

⁵⁰ Kamer Kasım, ‘‘Turkey-Azerbaijan-Armenia Triangle’’, Journal of Turkish Weekly,December 2012

⁵¹ Fatih Özbay, Türkiye Ermenistan İlişkileri’’, Blgesam Raporu, No: 25, İstanbul, 2011 p. 3

⁵² Ibid, p.3

international humanitarian aid through its lands even during the time of Nagorno Karabakh conflict.⁵³

Armenia did not give up its irredentist and aggressive policy and its linkage with radical elements of diaspora despite Ter-Petrosyan's struggle with radical groups. Diaspora's effects on its foreign policy continued.⁵⁴ Since its independence, Armenia receives great economic support from diaspora. Diaspora's national solidarity bases on 'Haydat', Armenian national ideology. Haydat has a three main unchangeable goals: to take back historical Armenian territory, and establish national states of Unified Armenia (b.c 95-55), to come back to the mainland and to establish the social state.⁵⁵

Nonattendance of Armenia to the efforts of resolving Nagorno Karabakh conflict constitutes an obstacle before the normalisation of Turkey-Armenian relations. Turkey proposed to establish a history commission for the solution of this long lasting historical problem. It did not receive a positive response from Armenian side. Genocide claims become a part of diaspora's identity. They demand Armenia not to behave in a way that creates any question marks about this issue. Although Armenia leaned towards Turkish-Armenian Reconciliation Commission, but with the influence of diaspora it took a distant stance.⁵⁶

As a prerequisite in front of opening of the borders, a solution environment is also for the benefit of Armenian side. Some regional developments also forced Armenia to revise its relations with Turkey. Closure of its Georgian border during Russian

⁵³ Paul B. Henze, "Turkey and Armenia: Past Problems and Future Prospects", Eurasian Studies, Vol: 3 Issue: 1 Spring 1996 p.45

⁵⁴ Kamer Kasım, "Armenian Foreign Policy: Basic Parameters of the Ter-Petrosyan and Kocharian Era", Review of Armenian Studies, Vol: 1 Issue: 1 2002, p.90-104

⁵⁵ Nazmi Gül, "Yirmibirinci Yüzyılın Başlangıcında 'Haydat' (Ermenilerin Davası)", Stratejik Analiz, Vol: 1 Issue: 2, June 2000, p.25

⁵⁶ Kamer Kasım, "Turkish Armenian Reconciliation Commission: A Missed Opportunity", Armenian Studies, Issue:4 December 2001 p. 256-273

Georgian War in 2008 put it in a difficult position. Both US and EU wanted Turkey to normalise its relations with Armenia in order to be able to support Turkey. These are the results of effective attempts of diaspora on the way to persuade US and EU countries for accepting genocide. Another reason of US and EU's insist on normalisation of relations is its intent to have Armenia in Western system. In Armenia, there exists Russian military bases and Russia keeps its military presence in the region through these bases.⁵⁷

Called as 'football diplomacy', the process which began with Abdullah Gül's visit to watch a football match between Turkey and Armenia on Sarkisyan's invitation was thought to be a new phase in Turkey-Armenian relations.⁵⁸ Later on, it was announced that a road map in mutual relations was agreed on. It caused some tensions in Armenian internal affairs and proved to be an ineffective initiative. On 31 August 2009, Armenia and Turkey initialised two protocols called Protocol on the Establishment of Diplomatic Relations between Republic of Armenia and Republic of Turkey, and Protocol on Development of Relations between Republic of Armenia and Republic of Turkey.⁵⁹

2.6. Turkey's Georgia Policy

Georgia has been an important country in Turkey's Caucasus policy in terms of its position providing transfer of Azerbaijan energy resources and transportation to Central Asia at a time when the borders with Armenia are closed. After the demise of Soviet Union, gaining its independence, Georgia, with its demographic structure

⁵⁷ Enver Börüsoy, "Ermenistan ve Gürcistan Arasındaki Sorunlar", *Stratejik Analiz*, Vol: 3 Issue: 22 February 2002 p.97

⁵⁸ Alexander Jackson, "The Limits of Good Intentions: The Caucasus as A Test Case for Turkish Foreign Policy", *Turkish Policy Quarterly*, Vol:9 Issue: 4, p. 88

⁵⁹ These protocols will be discussed in detail in Chapter 6.

and geographical position open to external influence had to deal with the threads against its territorial integrity and stability.⁶⁰

South Ossetia, Abkhazia and Adjara problems have been the most important constraints in Georgia's relations with other countries. Georgian foreign policy and its relations with other states are shaped by Abkhazia, South Ossetia and Adjara conflicts. Throughout its history Georgia has been occupied with struggling for stability in its territory. The most current thread for its territorial integrity is declaration of independence by Abkhazia and South Ossetia after 2008 Russian-Georgian War and recognition of it by Russia. Turkey took a stance which supports a solution within the recognition of territorial integrity principle in these conflicts. Georgia locates on the transit zone of energy lines coming to Turkey. This makes it a geostrategically significant country for Turkey. Existence of Caucasus origin people in Turkey and their expectations to see Turkey as a side in conflicts makes this issue a sensitive internal affair. It was clear especially during Abkhazian conflict.⁶¹

In Georgian foreign policy, Turkey has been the friendliest neighbour among regional powers in Caucasus. Turkey's stance attaching importance to stability and territorial integrity of Georgia which is a transit country for transfer of Caspian energy resources through Turkey paved the way for further improvements. Georgia evaluates Turkey as a balance factor together with US against Russia. While being accepted as an influential actor, Turkey prioritised Azerbaijan in its policy towards Caucasus. Along with cooperation between Turkey and Georgia in transfer of Caspian energy resources, there is an initiative to be connected through a railway line. The first concrete step for realization of project between Turkey, Georgia and

⁶⁰ Kamer Kasım, Soğuk Savaş Sonrası Kafkasya, Usak yayınları, Ankara, 2009, p.112

⁶¹ Elizabeth Owen, 'Abkhazia's Diaspora: Dreaming of Home', Eurasia Insights, <http://www.eurasianet.org/departments/insightb/articles/eav030909b.shtml> (14.11.2012)

Azerbaijan was taken in 2008 at a ceremony through the participation of President and Prime Minister of Turkey, President of Azerbaijan and Georgia.⁶² The project was originally scheduled to be completed by 2011.⁶³ With the completion of Marmaray Project, Baku-Tbilisi-Kars Railway project will provide transportation from Europe to China.

Turkey, with the end of Cold War, found itself in front of some new opportunities stemming from its cultural proximity with the region and some economic big scale projects. As it is seen, Turkey's policy towards Caucasus is shaped by its relations with three regional states. Taking advantage of its geographical closeness with the region, Turkey followed the path of increasing its credibility both in regional and global level.

⁶² Hasan Kanbolat, "Güney Kafkasya'da Yeni Bir Demiryolu Hattı: Kars-Iğdır-Nahçıvan", *Stratejik Analiz*, Vol: 8, Issue: 94, February 2008

⁶³ Kanbolat, *ibid.*

CHAPTER 3

TURKISH POLICY TOWARDS CAUCASUS DURING RUSSIAN-GEORGIAN WAR

The third chapter evaluates Turkish policy towards Caucasus after Russian-Georgian War. It starts with background of the conflict and continues with the conditions leading to the war. It touches upon the emergence and the causes of the war. The chapter involves Turkey's stance during the war and its reactions to the newly emerged conditions in the Caucasus. Reflections of the war on Turkish foreign policy is assessed on the ground of Caucasus Stability and Cooperation Platform initiative.

3.1. On The Verge Of A War: Causes Of 2008 Russian-Georgian War

The independence of three Caucasus states with the end of Cold War opened a new era in terms of Caucasus place in World politics. While the transfer of Caspian energy resources was brought to agenda, regional conflicts kept the region in the center of discussion in international politics. Terrorist attacks of September 11 paved the way for further developments in Caucasus resulting from US's increasing role in the region.⁶⁴ US military presence in the region increased its influence and along with Azerbaijan, Georgia became an important actor for the fight against terrorism. Stability in Georgia had become more significant for US. After September 11, military cooperation between Georgia and US increased which

⁶⁴ Kamer Kasım, Soğuk Savaş Sonrası Kafkasya, Usak Yayınları, Ankara, 2009, p. 209

bothered Russia a lot. According to the US- Georgia military agreement in 2003, US military personnel were allowed visa-free entrance to Georgia.⁶⁵

One one hand, Russia has accelerated its sphere of influence policy towards Caucasus and Central Asia since 1993 and started to intervene with the internal affairs of newly-independent states. This policy had an impact on Russian-Georgian relations as Russia pursued an aggressive foreign policy towards those states who rejected Russia's aim to recreate a sphere of influence in its 'near abroad'.⁶⁶ On the other hand, states gaining their independence after the dissolution of USSR were in a struggle to strengthen their independence and had to deal with some internal problems within the process.⁶⁷ Georgia as a state rejecting to be a member of CIS and Russian military presence in its territory and trying to cope with the South Ossetia and Abkhasia conflicts, was faced with serious threats against its territorial integrity. With the rise of Saakashvili to power with 'Rose Revolution', Georgia's rapid approximation to the West annoyed Russia. The integration process including Georgia's attempt to become a NATO member was tried to be prevented or delayed by Russia.⁶⁸

A prospective NATO membership of Georgia meant weakening of Russia's defense capabilities. Georgia's potential entry into NATO provided Russia with an interest in continuation of Georgia's ethno-territorial disputes given NATO's rule requiring nonexistence of any border disputes and secessionist issues to be a member. For this reason, Russia made use of the continuation of secessionism in Georgia's

⁶⁵ Kamer Kasım, "The August 2008 Russian- Georgian Conflict and its Implications: A New Era in the Caucasus?", OAKA, Vol: 5 Issue: 9,2010, p. 65

⁶⁶ Graham E. Fuller, "Russia and Central Asia: Federation of Fault Line?", Michael Mandelbaum (Ed.), Central Asia and the World, New York, Council on Foreign Relations Books, 1994, p .100-110

⁶⁷ Mohiaddin Mesbahi, "Russian Foreign Policy and Security in Central Asia and the Caucasus", Central Asian Survey, Vol: 50 Issue:2 1993, p.181-215

⁶⁸ Kamer Kasım, Soğuk Savas Sonrası Kafkasya, Usak Yayınları, Ankara, 2009, p.210

breakaway republics as a way of blocking Tbilisi's membership of NATO. West's willingness to arm and its verbal support for Saakasvili's intentions to reintegrate South Ossetia and Abkhazia and possible NATO military installments in Georgia in future alerted Russia for this worst security scenario.

The conflict between Tbilisi and Tskhinvali and Sukhumi remained frozen for the negotiations failed repeatedly. South Ossetia remained a de facto independent but internationally unrecognised state. These conflicts became more frequent after Saakasvili who tried his best to reintegrate the republics with Georgia came into power with 'rose revolution'. Then, Moscow issued Russian passports to the breakaway republics' citizens and South Ossetians voted for seceding from Georgia in a referendum.⁶⁹

Placement of Russian railway forces to Abkhazia on grounds of maintenance of railways caused concerns in Georgia.⁷⁰ Placement of Russian troops was evaluated as a military intervention by Georgian Foreign Minister Tkeshelashvili.⁷¹ He also moved troops and equipments into both conflict zones. Both sides' forces occasionally opened fire on other sides' villages. In such a crisis environment two presidents Saakasvili and Medvedev came together on 6 June 2008.⁷² On June 5th, 2008, European Parliament also declared that Russia lost its position as a neutral peacekeeping and approved a draft resolution requiring changes in structure of existing peacekeeping forces.⁷³

⁶⁹ Jim Nichol, "Russia-Georgia Conflict in South Ossetia: Context and Implications for US Interests", CRS Report for Congress, RL34618, 24 October 2008, p. 1-35

⁷⁰ Kamer Kasım, "The August 2008 Russian- Georgian Conflict and its Implications: A New Era in the Caucasus?", OAKA, Vol: 5 Issue: 9, 2010, p. 67

⁷¹ Ibid p. 212

⁷² Nina Akhmeteli, "Georgia: Saakasvili and Medvedev Meet, Nothing Happens", Eurasia Insight, <http://www.eurasianet.org/departments/insight/articles/eav060608a.shtml> 06.06.2008

⁷³ Akhmeteli, Ibid

On the first of August, confrontation between Georgia and South Ossetia fiercely started. Georgia accused Russia of undermining intensified international conflict resolution efforts.⁷⁴ Georgian forces entered Tskhinvali and declared that it was under its control.⁷⁵ Russian forces attacked Georgian forces and Georgians in South Ossetia started to flee to Georgia. Later, although Georgia declared to withdraw its troops from South Ossetia, Russia continued to bomb Georgian territory, Tbilisi airport and Gori.⁷⁶ Georgia claimed that Russia entered South Ossetia on the night of August 9 and 10 with 6000 troops, 90 tanks, 150 armed personnel carriers, and 250 artillery gunships.⁷⁷

On behalf of European Union, French President Nicholas Sarkozy mediated to stop the conflicts between Russia and Georgia and French Foreign Minister Bernard Kouchner proposed a document composed of six principles for a possible permanent agreement between these two states.⁷⁸ These principles included non-use of force by all parties, an immediate end to hostilities, free access to humanitarian aid, the retreat of Georgian and Russian forces to their earlier position.⁷⁹ Russia disregarded this document and continued to advance within Georgian territory to destroy its military infrastructure.⁸⁰

⁷⁴ Kasım, *ibid*, 213

⁷⁵ Kasım, *ibid* p.214

⁷⁶ Kasım, *ibid* p.214

⁷⁷ Elizabeth Owen, Giorgi Lomsadze, "Georgian Troops Withdraw From South Ossetia, Russia Bombs Tbilisi Airport", Eurasia Insight <http://www.eurasianet.org/departments/insight/articles/eav081008.shtml> 10 August 2008

⁷⁸ Oksana Antonenko, "A War With No Winners", *Survival: Global Politics and Strategy*, Vol: 50, Issue:5, 2008, p.27

⁷⁹ Kasım, *ibid* p.214

⁸⁰ Kasım *ibid*, p.215

3.2. Causes Of War

‘A centuries old inter-ethnic conflict became on 7th of August 2008 a war between Russia and Georgia, fuelled by Russia’s determination to demonstrate that it is prepared to use force to defend its national interests in post-Soviet Eurasia.’⁸¹ The nature of this conflict has lots of significant implications in terms of both regional and international powers.⁸² The war was a tool for Russian control over geopolitically crucial South Caucasus that has been important because of its position enabling the transportation of Caspian energy resources to the West.

Since the demise of Soviet Union in 1991, territorial struggles have been an important constraint of region’s policies. These conflicts were driven by quest for independence and showed themselves as gradual fighting for territorial borders. The breakaway regions, South Ossetia and Abkhazia, situated within Georgian territory, declared independence in early 1990s.⁸³

Issued passports and Russian citizenship, South Ossetians and Abkhazians became politically aligned with Russia.⁸⁴ The relations between these two breakaway regions and Georgia remained unsolved despite the efforts of United Nations Secretary-General, EU and OSCE. Tensions escalated since 2004 election of President Saakashvili who defined his top priorities as furthering reforms and

⁸¹ Antonenko, *ibid* p. 24

⁸² Igor Torbakov, *The Georgia Crisis and Russia-Turkey Relations*, The Jamestown Foundation, Washington DC, 2008, p.7

⁸³ Kosta Dzugaev, “Ossetia: The Conflict With Georgia and Problems of Survival”, Caucasus Institute, Caucasus Neighborhood. Turkey and the South Caucasus, (Ed.) Alexander Iskandaryan, Yerevan, 2008, p. 110

⁸⁴ Marcel De Haas, “Geo-strategy in South Caucasus: Power Play and Energy Security of States and Organisations”, Clingendael Institute, The Hague, November 2006, p 21

making Georgia a NATO member.⁸⁵ He increased his pressure on South Ossetia by sending police, military and intelligence personnel in South Ossetia. He claimed that the purpose of this move was to bolster the peacekeeping force established by previous peacekeeping agreement.⁸⁶

At this point, it may be useful to look at the process resulting in a full-fledged war in a chronological way. 'In July 2006, Under what is officially a law enforcement operation, Georgia takes control of the Kodori Gorge in Abkhazia, previously run by a local (Georgian)warlord.'⁸⁷

In September 2006, Georgia expels six Russian intelligence agents accused of espionage. Russia responds with a full economic embargo of Georgia, including the severance of all transportation and communication links, including rail, road, sea, air, postal, and banking ties.'⁸⁸

Meetings for reconciliation in October 2007 were not any success as Russian foreign Ministry claimed that Georgians demands were not reasonable for they aimed at sabotaging the outcomes of the meetings.⁸⁹

'Tbilisi accuses Russia of improving the infrastructure in Abkhazia in preparation for a military intervention. On July 3th, a South Ossetian police chief was killed by an explosion and Dimitriy Sanakoyev, the head of the pro-Georgian government in South Ossetia escaped injury in a mine attack. During the night, both sides launched artillery attacks on each others' villages killing and injuring dozens. On June 15, Russia launches a large-scale military

⁸⁵ Alexander Cooley, 'No Way to Treat Our Friends: Recasting Recent US-Georgian Relations', Washington Quarterly, January 2009, p. 30

⁸⁶ Svante E. Cornell, Johanna Popjanevski, Niklas Nilsson 'Russia's War in Georgia: Causes and Implications for Georgia and the World', Policy Paper August 2008, Central Asia-Caucasus Institute, Silk Road Studies Program p.29

⁸⁷ Cornell, *ibid*, p. 9

⁸⁸ Cornell, *ibid* p.6

⁸⁹ Mohammed Sajjadur Rahman, 'Georgia and Russia: What Caused the August War?', Identity, Culture and Politics: An Afro-Asian Dialogue, Vol: 10 Issue: 1, July 2009 p.132

exercise, “Kavkaz-2008”, in 11 regions in the vicinity of the Georgian border.’⁹⁰

‘On 1st and 2nd of August, tensions in South Ossetia escalated when a military vehicle carrying six Georgian police officers was hit by two remote-controlled explosive devices while travelling on a bypass road linking Georgian villages in the conflict zone with Georgia’s interior. Violence continued in the evening and overnight on August 2. The South Ossetian side reported that six persons, including a member of the North Ossetian peacekeeping battalion, were killed and 15 injured in shelling and sniper attacks from the Georgian side.’⁹¹

On the evening of August 7, South Ossetia accused Georgia of launching a massive bombardment against Tskhinvali. On the same evening, Saakashvili pronounced a unilateral ceasefire and affirmed that Georgia would give South Ossetia maximum authority within Georgia as part of a peace settlement.⁹² But on the morning of August 8, Georgia officially responded with military force, claiming that South Ossetian forces continued to destroy Georgian villages. Georgian troops soon controlled most of South Ossetia, including Tskhinvali. Russian military, as a response, advanced with a massive counter attack, which led to five days of intense fighting in the region. In the aftermath, Russia destroyed Georgian airfields near Tbilisi, recaptured Tskhinvali and occupied most of South Ossetia.⁹³ Russia extended the attacks including Gori situated in Georgian territory, and occupied it on August 11th.⁹⁴

⁹⁰ Cornell, Ibid p.11

⁹¹ Cornell, ibid, p.12

⁹² Giorgi Lomsadze, “Georgia: Tensions Flare over Breakaway South Ossetia”, Eurasia Net, http://www.eurasinet.org/departments/insight/articles/eav080408_pr.shtml 04.08.2008

⁹³ Lomsadze, Ibid .p 136

⁹⁴ Cornell, ibid p.19

‘On August 17th, President Medvedev promised President Sarkozy a withdrawal of Russian troops in Georgia to commence on August 18. German Chancellor Angela Merkel arrived in Tbilisi after talks with President Medvedev in Moscow and stressed the urgency of immediate Russian withdrawal from Georgia and a German preparedness to contribute peacekeepers to the conflict zones.’⁹⁵ On August 26th, Russia formally recognised the independence of both South Ossetia and Abkhazia ‘by linking the conflicts in Georgia to Western recognition of Kosovo’s independence.’⁹⁶

But, It can hardly be said that Sarkozy’s leading role with his efforts for creation of a six point plan was influential.

As this chronological way of understanding shows, causes of Russian Georgian War in 2008 were far deep-rooted rather than being instant. Under Russian self confidence, there might be an idea of a quick victory which can improve Russia’s image as a resurgent power.⁹⁷ Putin’s desire to resurge Russia’s image in global politics is an indicator of the motivations that paved the way for the decision to go to war with Georgia. To be able to understand the motives and objectives of Russia leading to this five-day war is of great importance for the assessment of causes of war. Any of these assessments needs to bear the timing and form of Russian attacks in South Ossetia in mind.⁹⁸ Furthermore, Russia claimed that the war was in fact a peace coercion operation.⁹⁹ This truth suggests that Russia must have had other deep-rooted reasons to engage in a war with Georgia. Russia’s idea of war could be

⁹⁵ Ibid p. 21

⁹⁶ Svante E. Cornell, ‘‘War in Georgia, Jitters All Around’’, *Current History*, Vol: 107 Issue: 711 October 2008, p.12-28

⁹⁷ Zbigniew Brzezinski, ‘‘Putin’s Choice’’, *The Washington Quarterly*, Vol: 31 Issue: 2 Spring 2008, p.98

⁹⁸ Roy Allison, ‘‘Russia Resurgent? Moscow’s Campaign to coerce Georgia to Peace’’, *International Affairs*, Vol: 86 Issue: 6 November 2008, p.1145-1171

⁹⁹ Ahmet Öztürk, ‘‘Rusya-Gürcistan Krizi: Yerel Bir Çatışma, Küresel Yansımalar, OAKA, Vol: 4 Issue:7, 2009, p.9

based on a number of geopolitical interests leading to its decisive stance towards a war. 'The Russo Georgian War has significantly changed the overall geopolitical balance in the entire South Caucasus and Caspian region.'¹⁰⁰

Additionally, Russia considers that any eastward expansion of NATO and increasing military presence of US in the region constitutes a threat for Russian interests. Moscow also knows that any fresh conflict will act as a deterrent against construction of any further pipelines along Azerbaijan- Georgia- Turkey route which is not its best interest. This war also strengthened Russian hand to halt the process of Georgian NATO membership which was declared as one of the top priorities of Saakashvili. The war and Russia's determination for a military operation gave a signal to another candidate for NATO membership, Ukraine.¹⁰¹

It is widely accepted that Russia's stance ending in its recognition of South Ossetia and Abkhazia independence was a reaction and a response to recognition of Kosovo by Western powers. It can be argued that with a military operation against a US-backed Georgia in its region Russia wanted to consolidate its strategic influence paving the way for the role of a potential global power.¹⁰² It, on the other hand, had also some side effects. It caused other states in the region, like Ukraine and Poland act more closely with EU and NATO.

'Russia's negligence of international organizations and law may result in international isolation. So, it can be said that Russia in some points miscalculated the outcomes of a war and its effects on other states behaviour towards the West. However, Russia's lust for

¹⁰⁰ Igor Torbakov, *The Georgia Crisis and Russia-Turkey Relations*, The Jamestown Foundation, Washington DC, 2008, p.11

¹⁰¹ Stephen Sestanovich, 'What has Moscow done?', *Foreign Affairs*, Vol: 87 Issue: 6 November-December 2008, p.3

¹⁰² Charles King, 'The Five-Day War', *Foreign Affairs*, Vol: 87 Issue: 6 November-December 2008, p.10

power and prestige and its desire for recognisiton as a global power can be regarded as an ultimate cause of war.¹⁰³

Saakashvili's national rhetoric regarding the status of South Ossetia and Abkhasia was one of his most influential tool for having support for his government. Saakashvili's anti-Russian approach provided him with support from masses. When we look at the other side of the coin, Putin's rhetoric about Russian identity and his decisiveness to protect Russian citizens no matter where they live increased the tension as well.¹⁰⁴

As it is seen, the causes of 2008 Russian-Georgian war are rather complex than being unidimensional.¹⁰⁵ Both sides have their own reason to wage a war stemming from their regional and global perspective. From Russian point of view, the reasons behind the war can be attributed to its desire to advance its geostrategic interests on the way to a status as a global power. From Georgian point of view, the war did not bring the expected outcomes which constituted the motives of Saakashvili for a war against Russia. 'The West failed in their limited initiatives to deescalate the tension having far reaching reflections for security and stability in Caucasus.'¹⁰⁶

¹⁰³ Rahman, *ibid* p.1

¹⁰⁴ Kathryn Stoner-Weiss, 'It Is Still Putin's Russia', *Current History*, Vol: 107, Issue: 711, 2008, p.315-321

¹⁰⁵ Oksana Antonenko, 'A War With No Winners', *Survival*, Vol: 50 Issue: 5 October-November 2008, p. 23-26

¹⁰⁶ Alexander Cooley and Lincoln Mitchell, 'No Way to Treat Our Friends: Recasting Recent US-Georgian Rleations'', *The Washington Quarterly*, Vol: 32 Issue: 1 January 2009, . 27-41

3.3. Turkey In Russian-Georgian War And Its Policies Towards Conflicts

Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu has had an enormous impact on Turkish foreign policy. He bases it on five pillars.¹⁰⁷ First, Turkey needs to balance security and liberty at home. Second is the zero- problems with neighbours policy. Third is the aim of developing and strengthening relations with neighbouring regions. Fourth is adopting a multidimensional foreign policy which makes Turkey consider its membership to EU, its good neighbourhood policy with Russia and its policy in Eurasia. The last pillar is ‘rhythmicdiplomacy’ which requires an increased intensity of Turkish diplomatic activity.’¹⁰⁸

Today, Turkey’s interests in Caucasus can be evaluated economically, strategically and ideationally.¹⁰⁹ Turkey’s main economic interest in Caucasus is energy and region’s role as a transit corridor for Caspian energy resources to the West.¹¹⁰ Turkey’s strategic goal has been to transform the country into a major energy transit hub thorough which Caspian fuel would be transported to Europe and other markets.¹¹¹ It attaches much importance to the construction of multiple oil and gas pipelines traversing Caucasus transit corridor and bringing Caspian energy

¹⁰⁷ Ahmet Davutoğlu, ‘‘ Turkish Foreign Policy Vision: An Assessment of 2007’’, Insight Turkey, Vol: 10 Issue: 1 p.79.83

¹⁰⁸ Davutoğlu, *ibid*, p.82

¹⁰⁹ Alexander Jackson, ‘‘The Limits of Good Intentions: The Caucasus as A Test Case for Turkish Foreign Policy’’, Turkish Policy Quarterly, Vol:9 Issue: 4 , p. 83

¹¹⁰ Yusuf Yazar, ‘‘Turkey’s Role and Priorities in Enhancement of Security if Oil and Gas Supplies’’, SETA Policy Brief, November 2010, p .6

¹¹¹ Emre İşeri, Oğuz Dilek, ‘‘The Limitations of Turkey’s New Foreign Policy Activisim in the Regional Security Complexity’’, Routledge Taylor and Francis Group, Turkish Studies, Vol: 12, Issue: 1, March 2011, p.42

resources to the World market while bypassing Russia who wants to deactivate Turkey in oil issues.¹¹²

Strategically, Turkey is in favor of stability in the region. ‘Turkey aims at strengthening of regional countries’s political sovereignty, countering the growth of Russian influence and consolidating the development of closer ties between South Caucasus and Euro-Atlantic organizations.’¹¹³ However, the shape of this stability and the role of outside powers is still a question mark. In terms of cultural ties of Turkey with the region, the main ideational interests include Turkey’s notion of solidarity. It can be associated with fraternal relations with Azerbaijan and nonexistence of diplomatic relations with Armenia stemming from the events of 1915 and Armenian irredentism in Nagorno Karabakh conflict.

The outbreak of war between Russia and Georgia, starting with Georgian attempt to control breakaway region, South Ossetia posed new challenges for Turkish interests.

‘The instability and unpredictability beyond its northeastern border between two states one of which is Russia with whom Turkey has grown economic ties and Georgia with whom it has been cooperating in energy transfer through pipelines created a new thread for Turkey. It also put Turkey in a difficult position not only between two neighbour states but also between Russia and United States.’¹¹⁴

¹¹² Armağan Kuloğlu, ‘Rusya Federasyonu’nun Yeni Kafkasya Politikası’, *Stratejik Analiz*, Vol: 1, Issue: 5, September 2000, p.39

¹¹³ Igor Torbakov, *The Georgia Crisis and Russia-Turkey Relations*, The Jamestown Foundation, 2008, p.5

¹¹⁴ Bülent Alirıza, ‘Turkey and the Crisis in the Caucasus’, *CSIS Commentary*, 9 September 2008 p.1

On the other hand, Georgia is of great importance as one of the legs of Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline transferring Caspian energy to Western markets and Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum gas pipeline carrying Azeri gas to Turkey. But, Turkey- Russia relations has entered a new phase with high level economic cooperation which also includes energy projects on Turkish territory.

During 2008 Russia-Georgia War, Turkey followed a policy of equidistance to all parties of the conflict.¹¹⁵ Behind this stance, there might be an attempt to avoid any complications with the pipelines and alienation of its partners, Georgia, the US and Russia. Former Foreign Minister Ali Babacan stated that overcoming the tension between Russia and Georgia is of great importance. He also asserted that ‘‘One of the sides is our closest ally, the United States. The other side is Russia, with which we have an important trade volume. We would act according to what Turkey’s national interests require.’’¹¹⁶ Turkey tried to behave in a cautious way, while on the other hand desired to strengthen its own role and to integrate the Caucasus in to the West. Taking into account Turkish foreign policy principle ‘zero problems with neighbours’, the war was a real test case for it. Turkey found itself in the middle of a position between Russia and Georgia. It attempted to find a balance between traditional security allies and its economic partner.¹¹⁷

Turkey did not allow US to send ships through the Bosphorus to Georgian ports with reference to the Montreux Convention governing the status of the straits as the

¹¹⁵ Eleni Fotiou, ‘‘Caucasus Stability and Cooperation Platform: What is at stake for Regional Cooperation’’, ICBSS Policy Brief, No: 16, June 2009, p.6

¹¹⁶ Richard Giragosyan, ‘‘Redefining Turkey’s Strategic Orientation’’, Turkish Policy Quarterly, Vol: 6 Issue: 4 Winter 2007

¹¹⁷ Alexander Jackson, ‘‘The Limits of Good Intentions: The Caucasus As a Test case for Turkish Foreign Policy’’, Turkish Policy Quarterly, Vol: 9 Issue: 4, p.85

tonnage of the ships exceeds the limits stated in Convention .¹¹⁸ United States expected Turkey to show flexibility, but Turkey chose to adhere to the convention. Then, smaller US ships were sent through the straits. Turkish Foreign Ministry confirmed that Turkey would be insistent on the application of all relevant provisions of the convention.¹¹⁹

On the 8th of August, Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan gave a call to Georgian President Mikhail Saakashvili to state support.¹²⁰ Three days later, Erdoğan proposed Turkey's initiative Caucasus Cooperation and Stability Pact including both parties as well as Azerbaijan, Armenia and Turkey.¹²¹ The timing was meaningful. At this time, Russian troops were advancing into Georgia.

On August 13th, Erdogan came together with Russian President Dimitri Medvedev in Moscow and shared his plan with Russia who were receptive to the idea.¹²² Georgia, on the other side, showed lesser enthusiasm to participate in a platform which also includes the state occupying a part of its territory. It was then expressed to Armenian President during Turkish President Abdullah Gül's visit to Yerevan on the 6th of August.¹²³

¹¹⁸ Gareth Winrow, 'Turkey, Russia and the Caucasus: Common and Diverging Interests', Chatham House Briefing Paper, November 2009, p. 6

¹¹⁹ Marianna Vindimian, 'Evolution of Turkish Foreign Policy towards Georgia', ISPI Policy Brief, No: 196, September 2010, p. 7

¹²⁰ Muharrem Ekşi, 'Kafkasya İşbirliği Platformundan Türkiye-Ermenistan İlişkilerinin Normalleşmesi Sürecine', Stratejik Analiz, Vol: 9, Issue: 106, February 2009, p.18

¹²¹ Ekşi, Ibid, p.18

¹²² Hasan Kanbolat, 'Balkanlar Örneğinde Kafkasya İstikrar ve İşbirliği Platformu ve Türkiye'nin Kafkasya'da İşbirliği Arayışları', , Stratejik Analiz, Vol: 9 Issue: 101, September 2008

¹²³ Bülent Aras, Fatih Özbay, 'Turkish-Armenian Relations: Will Football Diplomacy Work', SETA Policy Brief- No: 24, September 2008

Turkish Prime Minister stated that Turkey would not participate in a policy of confrontation with its economic partner and neighbour Russia.¹²⁴ This stance was an indication of the general approach to the crisis in Turkey. There were not a particular tendency to neither Russia nor Georgia in Turkey. In an interview by Turkish Prime Minister, he said:

‘It would not be right for Turkey to be pushed toward any side. Some certain circles want to push Turkey into a corner either with the United States or Russia after Georgian incident. United States is our closest ally and Russia is an important economic partner of Turkey. It would be wrong to be closer to any side.’¹²⁵

‘Like Russia, Turkey has Caucasian, Balkan, Middle Eastern, and European identities and different interests at stake in all of these regions. The changes that have occurred during the nine years of the current decade are dramatic at both societal and state levels. Officials on both sides have signed several agreements that are likely to facilitate the establishment of a more constructive relationship. These include trade and investments by Turkish and Russian businesspeople, tourism, natural gas purchases, joint pipeline projects, and Russian arms sales.’¹²⁶

Preservation of status quo in South Caucasus which is in parallel with Turkish purposes in the region, maintenance of regional stability and balance of power fit Turkey’s goals well. The war disrupted the pre-August status quo destroying Turkey’s two main pillars of regional policy. But, a new situation appeared with Russian invasion of Georgia. To respond to this new emerging situation in the region and pursue its vulnerable economic and political interests, Turkey came up with the proposal of Caucasus Stability and Cooperation Platform. Turkey shifted its focus

¹²⁴ Aliriza, *ibid* p.2

¹²⁵ Aliriza, *ibid*, p.2

¹²⁶ Bülent Aras, ‘Turkey and Russian Federation: An Emerging Multidimensional Partnership’, SETA Policy Brief, No: 35 August 2009, p.8

from its role as a NATO member to a regional power.¹²⁷ But after the war, alignment of both countries national interests in the same region, Caucasus, became an increasingly complicated task.¹²⁸

Turkey tried to find solutions for the unsolved problems by advancing a regional security framework within which Russian assertive remarks could be constrained and regional conflicts could be solved.¹²⁹ Russia has been cautious about Turkey's proposal Stability Pact with an idea that this platform could enhance Turkey's strategic posture in South Caucasus. The venue for unveiling of this regional pact was Moscow.'

3.4. Turkey's Offer: Caucasus Stability And Cooperation Platform

The initiative for a "Caucasus Stability and Cooperation Platform" (CSCP) was announced on 13 August 2008 by Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan in Moscow.¹³⁰ However, this proposal is a revised version of an older proposal by Turkish President Suleyman Demirel on 16 January 2000 as the establishment of a "Stability Pact for the Caucasus" under the aegis of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).¹³¹

¹²⁷ Richard Gregosyan, "Redefining Turkey's Strategic Orientation", Turkish Policy Quarterly, Vol: 6 Issue: 4, 2007 p.35

¹²⁸ Igor Torbakov, The Georgia Crisis and Russia-Turkey Relations, The Jamestown Foundation, Washington DC, 2008, p.6

¹²⁹ Gareth Jenkins, "Turkey Caught in a Dilemma over South Ossetia", Eurasia Daily Monitor, August 11, 2008.

¹³⁰ Eleni Fotiou, "Caucasus Stability and Cooperation Platform: What is at stake for Regional Cooperation", ICBSS Policy Brief, No. 16 June 2009 p.3

¹³¹ Hasan Kanbolat, "Balkanlar Örneğinde Kafkasya İstikrar ve İşbirliği Platformu ve Türkiye'nin Kafkasya'da İşbirliği Arayışları", Stratejik Analiz, Vol: 9 Issue: 101, September 2008

With Caucasus Stability and Cooperation Platform, Turkey aimed at addressing two main strategic concerns. First, it knows that instability in Caucasus is not in line with its national security concerns. This initiative seeks to lower the current level of confrontation by providing such a regional forum where all sides can communicate for the resolution of local conflicts. Its objective is to facilitate the dialogue between five countries which would lower the tensions and strengthen stability and support regional relations. Second, it is certain that instability in Caucasus is also an obstacle for the security of energy routes. The Georgia war revealed the vulnerability of energy transit routes passing through Georgian territory.¹³² CSCP is meant to find a solution to this obstacle. The stability of energy transit is one of the biggest aspirations for Turkey's CSCP initiative. Turkish President Abdullah Gül stated that:

The Caucasus are key as far as energy resources and the safe transportation of energy from the east to the west. The transportation goes through Turkey. That is why we are very active in trying to achieve an atmosphere of dialogue, so there is the right climate to resolve the problems. If there is instability in Caucasus, it would be sort of like a Wall between the east and the west; if you have stability in the region, it could be a gate.¹³³

Turkey's role in South Caucasus is largely dependent on its relations with region's states. Caucasus Stability and Cooperation Platform has been the main example of Turkey's addressing the region as a whole following the August 2008 armed conflict between Russia and Georgia.¹³⁴ Turkey also stated that Russia should be a

¹³² Igor Torbakov, *The Georgia Crisis and Russia-Turkey Relations*, Jamestown Foundation, Washington, 2008, p. 22

¹³³ Rana Foroohar, 'Pulled From Two Directions', *Newsweek*, 13 October 2008

¹³⁴ George Khelashvili, "Towards a Strategic Respite in the Black Sea Area", in *Transformations in the Black Sea Region*, PONARS Eurasia Policy Memo, no. 42 (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University, December 2008).

part of this initiative.¹³⁵ With this alternative platform, Turkey aimed at facilitating communication between the region's states and providing a framework to promote stability, confidence and cooperation.¹³⁶ Despite the fact that initiative was rejected by Azerbaijan and Georgia, one of the by-products of this project has been the beginning of Turkey's stance towards Armenia in the shape of a road map, enhanced by football diplomacy, before the signature of both sides to two protocols for the normalisation of relations. Although this initiative was proposed in the aftermath of 2008 Russian Georgian War, the main objective was to assist in finding a solution to the Armenia-Turkey and Armenian-Azerbaijan conflicts.¹³⁷ Gül's visit to Yerevan on 6th of September should be evaluated in this context. With the opportunity provided by hostilities in Georgia, Turkey sought to find a ground on which Turkey and Armenia can proceed on the way of normalisation of relations. Armenia responded to this initiative in a positive way. Its high dependence on Russia economically and militarily, its supply of its energy and transportation through Iran and Georgia is effective in this stance.¹³⁸

The August 2008 conflict showed that Russian military intervention was still a concrete threat for the region. Since the end of Cold War, Turkey has tried to have a presence in post-Soviet space, but it can be said that it has not been so willing in South Caucasus. One of the reasons for it is Turkey's cautious stance about stepping on Russia's toes. The conflicts between Turkey-Armenia and Azerbaijan-Armenia had a negative effect on Turkey's attempt for presence in the region. With

¹³⁵ Hasan Kanbolat, "Balkanlar Örneğinde Kafkasya İstikrar ve İşbirliği Platformu ve Türkiye'nin Kafkasya'da İşbirliği Arayışları", *Stratejik Analiz*, Vol: 9, Issue: 101, September 2008,

¹³⁶ Ali Babacan, "Turkish Initiatives, Calming the Caucasus", *New York Times*, September 23, 2008.

¹³⁷ Aybars Görgülü, Onnik Krikorian, "Turkey's South Caucasus Agenda: The Role of State and Non-state Actors", *TESEV Foreign Policy Programme*, Eurasia Partnership Foundation, p.4

¹³⁸ Yıldız Deveci Bozkuş, "Kafkasya Krizinin Ardından Türkiye-Ermenistan-Azerbaycan İlişkileri", *Stratejik Analiz*, Vol: 9 Issue:102, November 2008, p.51

the second term of Justice and Development Party in office, owing to the current challenges in its neighbourhood Turkey wants to play the role of energy hub between East and West and a regional 'soft power' in Caucasus. This initiative can be interpreted as an alternative foreign policy option to the European Union or rather as a communication tool towards the West.¹³⁹ Turkey demands to be an effective regional power who has a voice in regional conflicts. Turkey's positions have recently strengthened perceptibly in the political processes surrounding the Caucasus region. As President Abdullah Gül says: "There are a lot of frozen conflicts, but it would be wrong to attempt to keep them in the freezer forever."¹⁴⁰

Turkey's offer, CSCP, is in line with its foreign policy priorities to have a more pro-active policy in the region, taking into account its "zero-problems with the neighbours" and the "maximum cooperation" approach. The CSCP can be described as an ambitious attempt to actualise its zero problem with neighbours concept. It was also an attempt to reshape the geopolitical discourse in the region. This approach can also be associated with Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu's 'rhythmic diplomacy' and 'Strategic Depth' within the context of new forming in foreign policy for more independence.¹⁴¹ It is certain that recognition of Turkey as an influential regional player can help to balance Russia's place in Caucasus resulting in reinforcement of Turkey's international position.

During 2008 August War, Turkey preferred to have an equidistance policy towards all parties of the conflict, with an effort to avoid any complications with pipeline

¹³⁹ Richard Giragosyan, "Redefining Turkey's Strategic Orientation", Turkish Policy Quarterly, Vol: 6 Issue:4 Winter 2007

¹⁴⁰ Aris Ghazinyan, "Shifting Neighbourhood : What are Turkey's Intentions as New Movement Stirs in Caucasus", ArmeniaNow, 20 February 2009

¹⁴¹ Ahmet Davutoğlu, "Turkey's Foreign Policy Vision: An Assessment of 2007", Insight Turkey, Vol: 10, Issue: 1 p.83

and alienation of its partners, Georgia, US, and Russia.¹⁴² Former Foreign Minister asserted: ‘‘one of the sides is our closest ally, US. The other side is Russia with whom we have an important trade volume. We would act according to what Turkey’s national interests require.’’¹⁴³ One of the objectives of this CSCP initiative was to reconfirm the good state of Russian Turkish relations which has a significance in terms of Turkey’s energy dependence on Russia. Economic relations between two states, specifically speaking, foreign trade, tourism and energy dependence necessitate development of relations outside the framework of Armenia-Iran-Russia axis. ‘The warming of Russian-Turkish relations that has been progressing since the beginning of this decade and the resulting boom in bilateral cooperation in the economic and political spheres were based on the two countries’ tacit understanding that they would refrain from pursuing overly assertive policies in the regions where their strategic interests overlap.’¹⁴⁴

Regarding Turkey’s position toward Russia, in a commentary, in 2008 while he was the chief foreign policy adviser to Prime Minister Erdogan, Ahmet Davutoğlu pointed out that Turkey, a member of NATO and candidate for EU membership does not have problems with its international identity and has chosen its place.¹⁴⁵ He stated that:

Turkey is a part of Western blocs, there is no question about it. But you can’t say that Turkish -Russian relations can be like Danish-Russian relations, or Norwegian-Russian relations, or, Canada-

¹⁴² Fotiou, p.6

¹⁴³ Bülent Alirıza, ‘‘Turkey and Crisis in Caucasus’’, CSIS Commentary, Washington, 2008. Available at <http://csis.org/publication/turkey-and-crisis-caucasus> (15.11.2012)

¹⁴⁴ Igor Torbakov, The Georgia Crisis and Russia-Turkey Relations, Jamestown Foundation, Washington, 2008, p.30

¹⁴⁵ Ekrem Eddy Güzeldere, ‘‘Turkish Foreign Policy: From ‘Surrounded by Enemies’ to ‘Zero Problems’ ‘, CAP Policy Analysis, No: 1, 2009, p.5

Russia relations. Any other European country can follow certain isolationist policies against Russia. Can Turkey do this? I ask you to understand the geographical conditions of Turkey. If you isolate Russia, economically, can Turkey afford this? Unfortunately, we have to admit this fact. Turkey is almost 75-80 percent dependent on Russia for energy. We do not want to see a Russian-American or Russian-NATO confrontation. We don't want to pay the bill of strategic mistakes or miscalculation by Russia, or by Georgia.¹⁴⁶

Along with its importance for Turkey-Russia relations, CSCP provided Turkey with an opportunity to restore stability in the region and confirm the significance of Georgian-Turkish relations. Georgia is the unique corridor for Caspian energy resources and Turkish Republics in Central Asia. As one of its biggest energy partner, Georgia is crucial taking into account Turkey's increasing domestic energy needs, viability of BTC and BTE pipelines and Baku-Tbilisi-Kars railway connecting China with Europe and its aspiration for being an energy transit state indispensable for Europe. The bilateral relations developed in the 1990s, mainly driven by the idea of establishing transport routes for Caspian energy resources. The oil-pipeline Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan (BTC, the first oil arrived in Ceyhan on May 28th, 2006) and the natural gas pipeline Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum (BTE, the first deliveries started on December 15th, 2006) are the central pillars of this cooperation. That is why Turkey has an interest in a stable and secure Georgia: not to endanger these important energy supplies.¹⁴⁷ Georgia's instability is more of a thread to Turkey than a Georgia without territorial integrity.¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁶ Güzeldere, ibid p. 5

¹⁴⁷ Güzeldere, İbid, p. 16

¹⁴⁸ Mitat Çelikkpala, "Kafkasya'da Son Gelişmeler, Küresel Hakimiyet Mücadelesi ve Türkiye", ASAM Stratejik Analiz VoL: 9 Issue: 101, Ankara, September 2008

‘Apart from its original objectives, CSCP also serves a number of Turkish foreign policy goals. As a “blind shot”,¹⁴⁹ or a potential manoeuvre, prestige seeking or result oriented initiative, it has tried to fulfill the efforts of Turkey to raise its prestige and to support its pro-active foreign policy as a part of an overall approach for a soft power regional leadership.’¹⁵⁰

But, CSCP initiative did not suggest a multidimensional conception of Turkish foreign policy as it excluded other actors. It showed that enthusiasm is not enough to solve regional problems alone.¹⁵¹ Political will of all parties is essential for an overall solution. It is clear in the repeated failure of the Geneva talks.

3.5. The War’s Reflections On Turkish Foreign Policy

It is certain that The Russia-Georgia war has significantly changed the geopolitical balances in Caucasus. Russia showed its determination for the pursue of its strategic objectives with all possible methods including military force. West had a voice in region’s affairs, but they acted only in the areas approved by Russian and within the limits set by it.¹⁵²

During the war, the attempt of US to sent warships into the Black Sea to transport humanitarian aid to Georgia, was rejected by Turkey in accordance with Montreux Convention stating that ships belonging to non-littoral countries may not remain in the Black Sea for a period longer than 21 days.¹⁵³ Russia warned Turkey that if

¹⁴⁹ Yasemin Congar, “Caucasus Plan Void without Yerevan”, Turkish Daily News, 18 August 2008.

¹⁵⁰ Fotiou, *ibid* p. 9

¹⁵¹ Alexander Jackson, “The Limits of Good Intentions. The Caucasus as a Text Case for Turkish Foreign Policy”, Turkish Policy Quarterly, Vol: 9 Issue: 4 Winter 2010 p. 87

¹⁵² Krzysztof Strachota, “The Southern Caucasus and Central Asia after the Russian-Georgian War: The Geopolitical Consequences”, CES Commentary, Vol:10,2008, p.3

¹⁵³ Gareth Winrow, ‘Turkey, Russian and the Caucasus. Common and Diverging Interests’, Chatham House Briefing Paper, November 2009, p.6

deadline expired,¹⁵⁴ Russia would hold Turkey responsible for the situation.¹⁵⁵ The discussion about US naval presence in the Black Sea coincided with a trade row between Russia and Turkey at a time when thousands of Turkish tracks were stopped at Russian border. Actually, this problem started in mid-June but grew worse with beginning of the war.¹⁵⁶

In Russia-Turkey economic relations, there exists a paradox arising from the fact that Turkey and Russia have been intense economic partners including cooperation in energy field while at the same time they have been competing with each other in the same energy field. According to most analysts, Georgia war caused Turkey's energy ambitious to hit the wall.¹⁵⁷ Bigger question marks appeared for the plans for future pipeline routes through South Caucasus because of Georgian vulnerability.¹⁵⁸ It undermines Turkey's aspiration to play the role of a key transit country through the diversification of energy supplies.¹⁵⁹ Both Georgia and Turkey has been an individual part of functioning energy corridor, BTC and BTE.¹⁶⁰

It can be argued that Turkey tried its best to stay in the same distance to both parties during 2008 Russian-Georgian war with the aim of pursuing its national interests.

¹⁵⁴ Winrow, *ibid*, p.6

¹⁵⁵ Abbas Djavadi, "Russia Turns Up the Pressure on Turkey", RFE/RL, 1 September 2008

¹⁵⁶ Sinan Ogan, "Crisis over Customs Procedures with Russia Risks and Opportunities" Today's Zaman, 7 September 2008

¹⁵⁷ Bruce Pannier, "Russia-Georgia Conflict Raises Concerns About Caspian Energy Exports", RFE/RL 13 August 2008

¹⁵⁸ Jad Mouawad, "Conflict in Georgia Narrows Oil Options for West", New York Times, 13 August 2008 <http://www.nytimes.com/2008/08/14/world/europe/14oil.html>

¹⁵⁹ Mitat Çelikpala, "Caucasus: The New Battle Zone", Bridge, 28 February 2009 http://www.bridge-mag.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=478:caucasus-the-new-battle-zone&catid=35:turquoise-2009&Itemid=40

¹⁶⁰ John Roberts, "The Southern Corridor: Baku-Tbilisi- Ceyhan's Gas Legacy", Turkish Policy Quarterly, Vol: 11 Issue: 2 p.78

During this process, Turkey, coming up with its proposal for promoting regional stability and security, proved that it has a strong voice in regional issues regarding its neighborhood.

CHAPTER 4

TURKEY-AZERBAIJAN RELATIONS

The fourth chapter analyses Turkish-Azerbaijani relations on political, economic and cultural bases. It provides a historical background of bilateral relations. It touches upon economic relations between two states by emphasising the importance of pipeline projects. Turkey's stance against Nagorno Karabakh conflict is also assessed. In the last part of the chapter, cultural relations, cultural closeness between two states and educational activities are portrayed.

4.1. Diplomatic Relations

'One nation, two states' was the motto to describe the relations between Turkey and Azerbaijan throughout 1990s.¹⁶¹ Following the collapse of the Soviet Union, Azerbaijan declared its independence on 30th of August 1991.¹⁶² On November 9th 1991, Turkey became the first country to recognise independence of Republic of Azerbaijan who is described as its kinship brother.¹⁶³ The diplomatic relations were set up after signing of a Protocol on 14 January 1992.¹⁶⁴ In later process, Turkey continued to provide political, economical, humanitarian and military assistance to

¹⁶¹ Mesimov, *ibid*, p.275

¹⁶² Nazim Cafersoy, 'Azerbaycan'da Bağımsızlığın Diğer Adı: Ebülfez Elçibey'', *Stratejik Analiz*, Vol: 1 Issue. 5, September 2000 p. 6

¹⁶³ Svante E. Cornell, 'Turkey and the Conflict in Nagorno Karabakh: A Delicate Balance'', *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol: 34 Issue:1, January 1998, p. 59

¹⁶⁴ <http://www.mfa.gov.tr/turkiye-azerbaycan-siyasi-iliskileri.tr.mfa> (16.12.2012)

Azerbaijan. Major economic projects materialised furthering the connections between two countries.

When we look at the last two decades, it can be inferred that relationship between these two countries can be described on the axis of mutual convenience. Both side has benefits from the each other. Turkey's position as a transit route for Azeri energy resources to the world markets is a significant benefit for both sides. It also provides Azerbaijan with the diplomatic support in its standoff with Armenia over Nagorno Karabakh including closure of its land border with Armenia.¹⁶⁵

Ilham Aliyev, elected as President of Republic of Azerbaijan in 2003, attached great importance to promotion of relations with Turkey. He made his first official visit to Turkey on 13th of April, 2004.¹⁶⁶ His second official visit to Turkey was paid on 5-6th November 2008 with the invitation of Turkish President Abdullah Gül. This was his first foreign travel after his reelection as President.¹⁶⁷

Today, bilateral relations between Turkey and Azerbaijan remain high. Within this context, President of Turkey Abdullah Gül paid an official visit to Azerbaijan on 16-17 August 2010 and an 'Agreement on Strategic Partnership and Mutual Assistance' was signed between them.¹⁶⁸ On the occasion of 10th Summit of the Head of State of Turkic-Speaking Countries which was held in Istanbul on 15-16 September 2010, a 'Joint Statement on the Establishment of High Level Strategic

¹⁶⁵ Muharrem Ekşi, 'Türkiye-Azerbaycan İlişkileri Çalıştay Raporu', SETA, Kafkasya Çalışmaları 2, July 2009, p. 8

¹⁶⁶ Kasım, Kamer, Soğuk Savaş Sonrası Kafkasya, Usak Yayınları, Ankara, 2009, p.98

¹⁶⁷ <http://www.tccb.gov.tr/haberler/170/47613/azerbaycan-cumhurbaskani-ilham-aliyev-turkiyede.html>

¹⁶⁸ Hasan Kanbolat, 'Turkish-Azerbaijani Relations', Today's Zaman, 18 August 2010

Cooperation Council was signed by President İlham Aliyev and Turkish Prime Minister Tayyip Erdoğan.¹⁶⁹

4.2. Economic Relations

Turkey-Azerbaijan economic relations gained impetus in the period after the independence of Azerbaijan. Approximately 150 cooperation agreements and protocols providing the legal bases of trade and economic relations between two states have been signed although some of these have not been brought into force.¹⁷⁰ Economic and commercial relations with Azerbaijan have been conducted within the framework of Commercial and Economic Cooperation Agreement dated 1 November 1992.¹⁷¹ With this agreement, both side decided up on the status to be given to both side as the most favored state.¹⁷² There are also two other significant agreements for the development of economic relations. Agreement Regarding Mutual Promotion and Preservation of Investors came into force on 31st July 1996 and Agreement to Prevent the Double Taxation Between Turkey and Azerbaijan has been functional since the 1st January 1998.¹⁷³ These agreements contributed to the bilateral economic relations between Turkey and Azerbaijan who were in need of foreign investment during its transitional period to market economy.¹⁷⁴

¹⁶⁹<http://www.mfa.gov.tr/turkiye-azerbaycan-siyasi-iliskileri.tr.mfa>

¹⁷⁰ Sinan Ogan, ‘‘Azerbaycan’ın Tanımlanamayan Ekonomisi ve Türkiye ile Ekonomik İlişkiler’’, Avrasya Dosyası, Azerbaycan Özel, İlkbahar 2000 Vol: 7 Issue: 1 p.75

¹⁷¹ Ali Mesimov, ‘‘Bağımsızlık Yıllarında Azerbaycan-Türkiye İlişkileri’’, Avrasya Dosyası, Vol: 7 Issue: 1, Azerbaycan Özel, Spring 2001, p.276

¹⁷² Yaşar Kalafat, Araz Aslanlı, ‘‘Türkiye Azerbaycan İlişkileri’’, İdris Bal (Ed.) 21.Yüzyılda Türk Dış Politikası, Agam Yayınları,Ankara, 2006, p.422

¹⁷³ Kalafat, ibid, p.423

¹⁷⁴ Kalafat, ibid p. 423

Since the declaration of its independence in 1991, Azerbaijan has been an attracting investment center for Turkish companies. Cultural and social common values and similarities are effective in the promotion of mutual investment in both countries. Over 800 Turkish companies operating in Azerbaijan are estimated to have invested 3 billion USD to the Azerbaijani economy.¹⁷⁵ The total figure of Turkish investments in Azerbaijan rises to 6 billion USD when investments to the energy sector, mostly done by the Turkish Petroleum Corporation are also added.¹⁷⁶ Commercial and economic relations have developed in two directions. While export and import volume increases within the scope of foreign trade sanctions, Turkish companies initiated direct commercial and industrial activities in Azerbaijan.

Another significant structure for the development of bilateral economic relations between Turkey and Azerbaijan is Joint Economic Commission (KEK).¹⁷⁷ It is a platform in which commercial and economic issues envisaged by industrial and economic cooperation agreements signed between two parties have been dealt at a comprehensive and high level. KEK meetings held at ministerial level are of great importance to remove the trade barriers before the promotion of economic relations between two states. The first meeting between Turkey and Azerbaijan was held on 25th February 1997.¹⁷⁸

‘Oil and natural gas has a crucial role in Azerbaijan economy. Gross domestic product as of 2010 is 52 billion dolar and per capita income is 5.979 dolar. In 2010, Azerbaijan produced 50.8 billion ton oil and 27 billion cubic meter natural gas. The total oil export in 2010 is approximately 42.5 billion ton. As of the same year’s first period, amount of oil carried through BTC pipeline is

¹⁷⁵ Ogan, ibid

¹⁷⁶ <http://www.mfa.gov.tr/relations-between-turkey-and-azerbaijan.en.mfa> (15.10.2012)

¹⁷⁷ Ogan, ibid. p.75

¹⁷⁸ Ogan, ibid. p. 75

37 billion ton and the amount transported from Ceyhan port to the world markets is 37.3 billion ton. The growth rate of Azerbaijan economy is 5% in 2010. Total foreign exchange reserve as of 1st of January 2010 is 29.1 billion dolar. According to the figures announced by Customs office of Azerbaijan foreign trade volume is 27.9 billion dolar composed of 21.3 export and 6.6 billion dolar import rate in 2010. Sales of petroleum and its byproducts constitutes the biggest share in export rate.¹⁷⁹

Economic relations between Turkey and Azerbaijan have been in a progress.¹⁸⁰ Turkey's exports and imports to Azerbaijan have reached respectively 1.5 billion and 865 million USD in 2010, constituting a trade volume of 2.4 billion USD and 86.9% of Turkey's exports to Azerbaijan is composed of industrial goods (machines, equipment, plastics, electrical devices, cars, steel commodities) and 9.3 % is composed of agricultural goods. 93.2% of Turkey's imports from Azerbaijan is mining products including oil and natural gas.¹⁸¹

Within economic cooperation context, the first meeting of High Level Strategic Cooperation Council was held in İzmir on 25th October 2011.¹⁸² The second of these meetings was held in Gebele on 11 September 2012 under the presidency of Turkish Prime Minister and Azerbaijani President with the participation of ministers from both side.¹⁸³ In this meeting, State Oil Company of Azerbaijan and Turkey's Turcas Oil Company agreed to build a refinery, which entails 5 billion USD investment, scheduled to finish in 2015.¹⁸⁴ During this meeting, two agreement

¹⁷⁹<http://www.mfa.gov.tr/azerbaycan-ekonomisi.tr.mfa> (18.10.2012)

¹⁸⁰ Ali Mesimov, "Bağımsızlık Yıllarında Azerbaycan-Türkiye İlişkileri", Avrasya Dosyası, Vol: 7 Issue: 1, Azerbaycan Özel, Spring 2001, p.279

¹⁸¹<http://www.mfa.gov.tr/relations-between-turkey-and-azerbaijan.en.mfa> (18.11.2012)

¹⁸² Bülent Aras, Pınar Akpınar, "The Relations Between Turkey and The Caucasus", Perceptions, Vol: 16, Issue: 3, Autumn 2011, p.57

¹⁸³<http://www.trtge.com/trtworld/en/newsDetail.aspx?haberkodu=df991409-c537-4079-9181-3234f60a7c2a> (18.11.2012)

¹⁸⁴ Aras, *ibid*, p. 59

were also signed for the sale of gas from Shah Deniz II in 2017 to Turkey and for transit of gas from Shah Deniz II through Turkey in the period of 2017-2042.¹⁸⁵ These projects also strengthen Turkey's hand for the projection of itself as a regional hub, as well as justifying the feasibility of Nabucco pipeline.¹⁸⁶

At the second meeting of High Level Strategic Cooperation Council, Azerbaijani President Aliyev noted that cooperation in the energy sphere is of traditional character and added that 'Cooperation in the economical sphere is the priority as always. Following our İzmir meeting, some important events occurred. We signed the TANAP (Trans Anatolian Gas Pipeline project. During the next 5 years, we will achieve the implementation of this project. Azerbaijan will be the significant gas supplier for Turkey. At the same time, Azerbaijan's gas will be transported to Europe via Turkey'.¹⁸⁷

On Turkish Prime Minister Erdogan's agenda, bilateral economic relations and the natural gas trade, specifically TANAP project during his official visit to Azerbaijan were on the top. 'Two countries agreed in June, 2012 to build this pipeline, transporting Azerbaijani gas to Europe via Turkey. The Trans Anatolian pipeline has been planned to have an initial capacity of 16 million cubic meters a year, and is expected to cost 7 billion dolar. The construction is set to start in 2014, and is estimated to be completed by 2018.'¹⁸⁸ 'Economic cooperation and the trade volume between Turkey and Azerbaijan are on the rise. The Trans Anatolian gas pipeline project has received high attention from the world.' said Aliyev at the press

¹⁸⁵ Aras, *Ibid*, p.58

¹⁸⁶ Şaban Kardaş, 'Turkey Clears the Way For Azerbaijani Gas Transfer', Eurasia Daily Monitor, Vol: 8 Issue: 2011 November 2011

¹⁸⁷ <http://www.news.az/articles/official/68007> (04.12.2012)

¹⁸⁸ Lamiya Adilgızı, 'Turkey- Azerbaijan ties crucial for regional stability', Today's Zaman 16 September 2012

conference by adding that TANAP is an important step in reformulating world's energy politics.¹⁸⁹

4.2.1. “Project Of The Century”

Oil and gas export line of Azerbaijan goes through Russia and reach to the international markets. This is a big disadvantage and obstacle before the secure and uninterrupted transfer of energy resources to the world markets which is manipulated by Russia effectively against these countries. Export of oil and gas to the international markets through non-Russian routes will facilitate development and economic independence of these states. Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline is a cornerstone that can fulfill this aim.¹⁹⁰ The Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan (BTC) which would make Turkey an important economic bridge between Central Asia, the Caucasus, and the world markets oil pipeline defined as the ‘Silk Road of 21st century’ and Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum (BTE) natural gas pipeline constitute the two significant dimension of economic relations.¹⁹¹ BTC has been operational since 10 May 2005.¹⁹² BTC pipeline, and BTE are of crucial importance for the transportation of Azerbaijani oil and natural gas to Europe. The total daily capacity of BTC is 1 million barrels and annual capacity is 50 million tons.¹⁹³ By the

¹⁸⁹ Ibid

¹⁹⁰ Nejdettin Pamir, ‘‘Türkiye’nin Enerji Gereksinimi, Uluslararası Boruhatları ve Jeostratejisi’’, Stratejik Analiz, Vol:1, Issue: 5, September 2000, p.48

¹⁹¹ Kamer Kasım, ‘‘The Transportation of Caspian Oil and Regional Stability’’, Journal of Southern Europe and the Balkans, Vol: 4 Issue: 1, 2002, p. 38

¹⁹² Cenk Pala, Hasan Kanbolat, ‘Bakü-Tiflis-Ceyhan 21. Yüzyılın İpek Yolu’’, Stratejik Analiz, June 2005, p.18

¹⁹³ Bülent Aras, Pınar Akpınar, ‘‘The Relations Between Turkey and the Caucasus’’, Perceptions, Vol: 16 Issue: 3 Autumn 2011, p.57

agreement, which is valid for 15 years, Turkey will receive 6.6 million cubic meters of natural gas from the field of Shah Deniz I in Azerbaijan.¹⁹⁴

The emergence of new independent states with the dissolution of Soviet Union created both cultural and economical opportunities in Eurasia for Turkey. The leading opportunities were the composition of regional cooperation and gaining a status of bridge in the transporting Caspian energy resources to the Western markets. Closeness of Turkish-Armenian land border required the construction of a railway connecting Turkey- Azerbaijan and Georgia by bypassing Armenia.¹⁹⁵ Within this context, Baku-Tbilisi-Kars railway project scheduled to complete in 2013 is as significant as BTC and BTE. It includes the construction of a direct line between Turkey and Georgia and linkage of this line to the existing line in Azerbaijan.¹⁹⁶ By this project, Turkey will have the chance of opening to Central Asia within a new corridor. It will also increase Azerbaijan and Georgia's integration by fostering both countries' economy. Democracy and free market economy are not totally internalized values in Caucasus yet. Turkey shown as model in the region is in search of strategic partnership by making use of its long lasting cultural ties with the region..

As one of the most important projects which contributes to European Energy Security, the Nabucco pipeline project was signed by the Prime Ministers of Turkey, Romania, Bulgaria, Hungary and Austria on 13th July 2009.¹⁹⁷ Supported by several EU countries and the United States, the Nabucco pipeline is a planned

¹⁹⁴ Ibid, p.57

¹⁹⁵ Oya Eren, "Türkiye-Ermenistan İlişkilerinde 2008 Yılına İlişkin Beklentiler", Stratejik Analiz, No: 94, February 2008, p. 12

¹⁹⁶ Hasan Kanbolat, "Güney Kafkasya'da Yeni bir Demiryolu Hattı: Kars-Iğdır-Nahçıvan", Stratejik Analiz, Vol: 8, Issue. 94, February 2008

¹⁹⁷ Bülent Aras, Emre İşeri, "The Nabucco Natural Gas Pipeline: From Opera to Reality," SETA Policy Brief, No: 34, July 2009, p.3

natural gas pipeline from Turkey to Austria diversifying the current natural gas suppliers and delivery route for Europe. Azerbaijan is considered as one of the possible supplier and transit countries. As Turkey is located between the energy rich areas and the consumer markets that need energy, Turkey's role as a transfer point for energy diversification and supply security becomes more important than ever.¹⁹⁸ If the Caspian-EU gas corridor can be developed, Azerbaijan, together with Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan might play a more significant geo-economic role in the system of global energy security.¹⁹⁹

These projects have elevated Turkey-Azerbaijan relations to higher levels. Two countries are being bonded not only politically and geostrategically, but also economically. The main feature of these projects is that they have connected Turkey and Azerbaijan forever. From now on, Azerbaijan's independence is firmer than ever and its security is tied to the security of Turkey.²⁰⁰

Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan oil pipeline, Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum gas pipeline and Baku-Tbilisi-Kars railway projects constitute security and cooperation line in Caucasus. But, due to the Russian-Georgian war, the middle leg of these projects has been broken. So, Turkey-Georgia-Azerbaijan axis should be repaired and relations should be promoted on the level of strategic partnership. Participation of Armenia to this axis which reflects regional cooperation and security line will be beneficial for all sides.

¹⁹⁸ Christian Dolezal, "Nabucco will Serve Energy Demand in Turkey and Europe", *Hurriyet Daily News*, 11 April 2012 <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/nabucco-will-serve-energy-demand-in-turkey-europe.aspx?pageID=238&nID=18156&NewsCatID=449>

¹⁹⁹ Elkhan Nuriyev, "Azerbaijan's Geo-Strategic Role in the EU's Energy Security", *Caucasus Analytical Digest*, No: 3 19 February 2009, p.16

²⁰⁰ Fariz İsmailzade, "Turkey-Azerbaijan: The Honeymoon is Over", *Turkish Policy Quarterly*, Vol: 4 Issue:4 Winter 2005, p. 5

4.3. Nagorno Karabakh Conflict And Turkey

4.3.1. Before Russian Georgian War

Significance of geo-economic parameters of region and particularly of oil-rich Azerbaijan deepened for both regional and non-regional actors as a result of a demand for oil products starting from 1880s. ‘Thus, through the years of independence Azerbaijan has evolved from an economically weak, internationally isolated, and unknown country into a dynamic economy, a regional leader and an important strategic partner.’²⁰¹ This is very in line with Zbigniew Brzezinski’s analysis: ‘Despite its limited size and small population, Azerbaijan, with its vast energy resources, is also geopolitically critical. It is also geopolitically critical. It is the cork in the bottle containing the riches of Caspian Sea basin and Central Asia’²⁰²

In this context, Turkey with the aspiration of becoming an energy hub serves as a bridge to West. Being supported by US, it strives for strengthening its political and economic influence in South Caucasus. Building an export pipeline from Baku to Turkish port Ceyhan was its national priority. In September 1994, after signing ‘The Contract of Century’, Azerbaijan, Turkey and Georgia put into operation the two major pipeline, BTC and BTE, which will change the economic landscape of the entire region and laid the foundation for a new international energy security architecture.²⁰³ Along with economic partnership, Turkey has been a major strategic ally of Azerbaijan. Along with these rich oil and energy resources, Azerbaijan inherited the unresolved conflict with neighbouring Armenia over Azerbaijan’s

²⁰¹ Mahmud Mammadgulyev, ‘‘Azerbaijan’s Foreign Economic Relations’’ Azerbaijan in Global Politics Crafting Foreign Policy, Baku, 2009, p.203

²⁰² Zbigniew Brzezinski, The Grand Chessboard, Basicbooks, New York, 1997 p.129

²⁰³ Nejdet Pamir, ‘Türkiye’nin Enerji Gereksinimi, Uluslararası Boru Hatları ve Jeostratejisi’, Stratejik Analiz, Vol: 1 Issue: 5 , September 2000. P.47

Nagorno Karabakh autonomous region.²⁰⁴ Nagorno Karabakh, as the longest unresolved conflict between two South Caucasian states has gained an international status with the presence of international organizations taking part in the initiatives for the resolution of the conflict.

The opening of Turkish- Armenian land border depends on the solution of this conflicts which seems difficult. Negotiations under the aegis of OSCE Minsk Group have not produced a positive result and conflict has continued to be frozen since the cease fire in 1994.²⁰⁵ Although this organization has reaffirmed the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan, most recently in its Lisbon Summit of December 1996, 21, it has done little to uphold or protect it, refraining from threatening Armenia with international sanctions or even from accusing it of involvement in the conflict.²⁰⁶ The occupation of Azerbaijani territory and military acts for changing recognised borders of Azerbaijan constitutes an apparent violation of Helsinki Final Act, the UN Charter, Charter of Paris and OSCE decisions.²⁰⁷

In 1993, UN Security Council adopted four resolutions regarding Nagorno Karabakh. They emphasised the need for the end of military activities and hostile acts and unconditional withdrawal of occupying forces from all occupied regions of Republic of Azerbaijan.²⁰⁸ In 2005, Parliamentary Assembly of Council of Europe adopted another resolution 1416 entitled ‘The conflict over Nagorno Karabakh

²⁰⁴ Araz Aslanlı ‘‘Tarihten Günümüze Karabağ Sorunu’’, Avrasya Dosyası, Vol: 7 Issue: 1 Ankara, 2001, p.414

²⁰⁵ Yıldız Deveci Baykuş, ‘‘Karabağ’da Çözüm Bir Başka Bahara Kaldı’’, Stratejik Analiz, No: 87, July 2007

²⁰⁶ Svante E. Cornell, ‘‘Turkey and the Conflict in Nagorno Karabakh: A Delicate Balance’’, Middle Eastern Studies, Vol: 34 Issue:1 , January 1998, p. 57

²⁰⁷ Kamer Kasım, ‘‘Turkey-Azerbaijan-Armenian Triangle’’, Journal of Turkish Weekly, International Strategic Research Organisation, 29 May 2009

²⁰⁸ Kasım, İbid

region dealt by OSCE Minsk Group'.²⁰⁹ It reaffirmed the occupation of a considerable part of Azerbaijan territory. It was clearly stated that occupation of a foreign territory by a member state is a violation of that state's obligation as a member of Council of Europe.²¹⁰ It urged the parties concerned to comply with the relevant resolutions of UN Security Council. It again supports the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan within its internationally recognised borders and demands the withdrawal of all Armenian military forces from the occupied territories of Azerbaijan.

Since 1999, there has been attempts to engage the President of Armenian and Azerbaijan in bilateral talks and at the beginning of 2006 a settlement seemed near. However, subsequent meetings between two presidents ended in failure including the Ramboulillet peace negotiations in early February 2006 and the Bucharest in June 2006.²¹¹

4.3.2. After Russian Georgian War

South Caucasus, considered as a Russian sphere of influence for almost two hundred years, has become a region of global interests because of its geopolitic and geostrategic importance. In the region, three independent states pursued divergent foreign policies. While Georgian leader after Rose Revolution followed a pro-Western approach with an idea of integration into Europe and Euro-Atlantic structures, Armenia is closer to Russia having Russian military bases on its soil.²¹²

²⁰⁹Kasım, İbid

²¹⁰ Ömer Engin Lütem, "Karabağ Sorununun Çözümü Yakın mı?", Stratejik Analiz, Vol: 9 Issue: 104, December 2008, p.17

²¹¹Liz Fuller, Richard Giragosian, "Nagorno Karabakh: What is the Sticking Point in Peace Talks?", RFE/RL Newslane, Vol: 10 Issue: 106 Part 1, 12 June 2006

²¹² Hasan Kanpolat, "Rusya Federasyonu'nun Güney Kafkasya'daki Askeri Varlığı ve Gürcistan Boyutu", Stratejik Analiz, Vol: 1 Issue: 3, July 2000, p. 46

In contrary, Azerbaijan pursued a more balanced foreign policy balancing between regional and non-regional actors.

With the outbreak of Russian-Georgian War, it has been widely understood that the frozen conflicts put the stability of South Caucasus region at risk. ‘‘In fact, Russian-Georgian war followed by annexation of the part of Georgian territory by Russia changed the very basis of the international order emerged in the part of the World after the year 1991. Certain international consensus and rules, which were a milestone of stability and security in the Eastern Europe does not exist anymore.’’²¹³ In this context, unilateral recognition by Russia of Abkhasia and South Ossetia, the breakaway regions of Georgia proved this and verified that this frozenness of the unresolved conflicts in South Caucasus can easily be transformed into act of violence. For this reason, Russian invasion of Georgian territory brought new implications not only for Georgia, but also for the whole region.

Turkey’s immediate reaction in the aftermath of Russia-Georgia war was its proposal for a multilateral diplomatic initiative called Caucasus Stability and Cooperation Platform (CSCP) in Moscow on 13 August 2008.²¹⁴ It aimed at promoting peace, stability and cooperation in Caucasus among three South Caucasus states, Russia and Turkey. The motive for Turkey’s initiative has been its proactive diplomacy targetted to achieve zero problems and maximum cooperation with countries in the region.²¹⁵ Turkish policymakers stress the need to create a

²¹³ Oleksandr Sushko, *The End of International Order-1991: Impact of 2008 Russia Georgia War on Ukraine*, Heinrich Böll Stiftung, Warsaw, 2008, p.1

²¹⁴ Hasan Kanbolat, ‘‘Balkanlar Örneğinde Kafkasya İstikrar ve İşbirliği Platformu ve Türkiye’nin Kafkasya’da İşbirliği Arayışları’’, *Stratejik Analiz*, Vol: 9, Issue: 101, September 2008.

²¹⁵ Eleni Fotiou, ‘‘Caucasus Stability and Cooperation Platform: What is at Stake for Regional Cooperation?’’, *International Centre for Black Sea Studies, (ICBSS), Policy Brief*, No: 16 2 June 2009, p.18

confidence and trust-building mechanism to foster a regional understanding of security²¹⁶

‘On July 2009, a Joint Statement on Nagorno Karabakh conflict was reached by the Presidents of OSCE Group’s co-chair countries which are France, Russian Federation and the United States. On the same day, Foreign Ministers of these countries presented the preliminary version of Basic Principles for a Settlement to Armenia and Azerbaijan of November 2007 in Madrid called Madrid Principles.’²¹⁷

These principles stipulated the return of territories under occupation to Azerbaijan and interim status for Nagorno Karabakh, future determination of final status of this region through a legally binding expression of will and right of all internally displaced persons and refugees to return to their residence.²¹⁸

Turkey’s relations with Azerbaijan play a determining role in its relations with the other countries in the region. It is for certain that the content and shape of its relations with Azerbaijan has a direct impact on relations with Armenia especially regarding Nagorno Karabakh conflict. The war between Armenia and Azerbaijan caused the loss of Nagorno Karabakh region for Azerbaijan and almost one fifth of Azerbaijani territory was annexed by Armenia.²¹⁹ The situation in Nagorno Karabakh is considered in different ways by parties. Armenia thinks that Armenian presence in Karabakh is legitimate while Azerbaijan deems it an occupation. The official stance taken by Turkey and EU is in parallel with Azerbaijan. Turkey

²¹⁶ Bülent Aras, ‘Davutoglu Era in Turkish Foreign Policy’ SETA Policy Brief, No: 32 May 2009, p.13

²¹⁷ Gulshan Pashayeva, ‘The Nagorno Karabakh Conflict In The Aftermath of Russia-Georgia War’, Turkish Policy Quarterly, Vol 8, Issue:4, p. 64

²¹⁸ ‘Joint Statement on the Nagorno Karabakh Conflict’ The White House Press Office, 18 June 2012 <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2012/06/18/joint-statement-nagorno-karabakh-conflict>

²¹⁹ Kamer Kasım, ‘The Nagorno Karabakh Conflict From its Inception To The Peace Process’, Armenian Studies, Issue 2, June-July-August, 2001, p. 170-185.

insists that the Nagorno Karabakh conflict should be settled by two countries on a diplomatic plane through the use of international efforts. The Caucasus Stability and Cooperation Platform formed by Turkey after Georgia-Russia war aims at realising this goal. However, it is not possible to think that Minsk process, as one of the most significant attempt at diplomatic level so far, has been a success. Despite the fact that both parties came together on various platform, no progress has been done regarding the dispute. It is widely accepted that frozen conflicts in South Caucasus are obstacles increasing region's fragility and regional instability.²²⁰ In an interview, Turkish Prime Minister Erdoğan noted that 'We, as Turkey, desire the issue to be resolved in a peaceful way. We support all the efforts in this regard; however, it is concerning that the Minsk Group has not been able to resolve the issue in the past 16 years. The recent conflicts in the region illustrate just how fragile the situation in the South Caucasus is.'²²¹

The Turkish-Armenian rapprochement taking place after the Russia-Georgia War, significantly changed geo-political structure in the region. Taking its first step with the so called 'football diplomacy' in September 2008, relations between Turkey and Armenia started to walk on the way of normalisation. During these meetings, both parties have reached an agreement on a framework for the normalisation of their diplomatic relations and within this framework a road map has been determined.²²² Armenia and Turkey advanced on the negotiations for two protocols, on the establishment of diplomatic relations and on the development of bilateral

²²⁰ Hasan Kanbolat, 'Kafkasya Jeopolitiğinde Değişim Sinyalleri'', Stratejik Analiz, No: 60, April 2005 p.89

²²¹ 'Kafkasya İşbirliğine Aliyev Desteği'', Radikal, 20 August 2008 <http://www.radikal.com.tr/Radikal.aspx?aType=RadikalDetayV3&ArticleID=894659&CategoryID=81> (08.11.2012)

²²² Stephen Kinzer, 'The Turkey-Armenia Road Map'', the Guardian. 30 April 2009 <http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/cifamerica/2009/apr/27/turkey-armenia-genocide-road-map-obama> (13.12.2012)

relations. By this protocols, a framework for normalisation of bilateral relations within a set schedule is aimed for contributing to regional peace and stability.

This developments on the way of normalisation of relations between Turkey and Armenia caused some reservations on Azerbaijan side. The most prominent reaction of Turkey against Armenia concerning Nagorno Karabakh was the closure of its borders with Armenia in 1993. However, by the protocol on the development of bilateral relations, Turkey and Armenia agreed to open the common border within 2 months after entry into force of this protocol.²²³

In his visit to Azerbaijan together with Ahmet Davutoglu, Erdoğan told the press that ‘Azerbaijan-Turkey fraternal relations have never been the subject of discussions. The Turkey-Armenia border has been closed due to Nagorno-Karabakh’s occupation and will not be solved until it is liberated.’ He continued, “Occupation of Karabakh is the cause here and closing the border is the effect. It is impossible for us to open the border unless the occupation ends.”²²⁴ Erdoğan emphasized the principle of one nation and two states during his address to the Azerbaijan Grand National Assembly on May 13. “The current situation in Nagorno-Karabakh cannot be accepted and will never be accepted,” Erdoğan said. “I want to repeat once more that until the occupation ends, the border gates with Armenia will remain closed.”²²⁵ Erdoğan explained that Turkey was showing

²²³ David, L. Philips ‘Diplomatic History: The Turkey-Armenia Protocols’, The Institute for the Study of Human Rights, Columbia University, March 2012 p. 49

²²⁴ Emil Danielyan, ‘Armenia Chides Turkey’s Erdogan over Karabakh Linkage’, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, 14 May 2009, <http://www.armenialiberty.com/content/article/1731879.html> (21.12.2012)

²²⁵ ‘Erdogan Pledges Continued Support for Azerbaijan’ 13 May 2009 <http://asbarez.com/62270/in-baku-erdogan-pledges-continued-support-for-azerbaijan/> (21.12.2012)

“goodwill” to restore ties with Armenia. “We are trying to boost our relations with Armenia in a way that will cause no hard feelings for Azerbaijan.”²²⁶

Azerbaijan, in 2012, is a very different country from ten years ago. Developed by revenues from energy, it is now much more self-confident. Its election as a non-permanent member of UN Security Council in October 2011, can be described as a sign of success of its foreign policy.²²⁷ Turkey, on the other hand, is also a much more self-confident country than it was ten years ago. It sees its role as that of a regional and in some ways even global power. So, both countries should manage their bilateral relations very carefully if they want to maintain a strategic element of the relationship. This only possible through economic cooperation. We can say that economies of Turkey and Azerbaijan complement each other. Azerbaijan has natural resources and financial liquidity and needs infrastructure to be built. On the other side of the coin, Turkey has skilled labour force, access to world markets and it needs for investment for its growing economy.

Today, one-fifth of Azerbaijan territory including all of Nagorno Karabakh and seven adjacent Azerbaijani districts located outside the autonomous region are under Armenian occupation. Totally, over 20 per cent of the territory of the country remains under occupation.²²⁸ Over a million Azeris have been forced to leave their homes in Armenia, Karabakh or its surrounding areas since the beginning of the conflict in 1988.²²⁹ These occupied districts are evaluated as a security guarantee

²²⁶ “After Dispute Turkey, Armenia Sign Pact”, CBS News, 4 March 2010 <http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2009/10/10/world/main/5376076.shtml> (18.12.2012)

²²⁷ <http://www.ntvmsnbc.com/id/25291802/> (18.12.2012)

²²⁸ Svante E. Cornell, “Turkey and the Conflict in Nagorno Karabakh: A Delicate Balance”, *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol: 34 Issue:1, January 1998, p. 51

²²⁹ Cornell, *Ibid*, p.51

against Azerbaijan by Armenia. Armenia is trying to use the current status quo as an instrument of political pressure for a solution in a way that it desires.

4.4. Cultural Relations

Culture in its broadest sense is cultivated behavior; that is the totality of a person's learned, accumulated experience which is socially transmitted, or more briefly, behavior through social learning. In this framework, cultural closeness constitutes a significant importance in relations between nations and states. Turkish culture, for this reason, has been a considerable instrument in its relations with the Caucasus region. This common ground attaches the relations a new dimension.²³⁰

One of the most significant element of culture is language. Turkish is divided in two in itself as Anatolian Turkish and Asian Turkish Dialect. Turkish states in Central Asia and Caucasus adopted Cyrillic alphabet in Soviet period.²³¹ ‘The first Turkish group adopting Latin Alphabet was Yakuts. In 1922, Azeris established a new language committee and start to use new Turkish alphabet in all schools in 1925-1926 academic year.’²³² This trend also influenced other members of Caucasus Federation, and the new alphabet spread among Turks living in Armenia and Georgia after Azerbaijan.²³³ Some language congress was held among Soviet states. In Baku Congress, ‘united new Turkish Alphabet ‘ was accepted.²³⁴

²³⁰ Ali Faik Demir, *Türk Dış Politikası Perspektifinden Güney Kafkasya*, Bağlam Yayıncılık, İstanbul, 2003, p.196

²³¹ Cem Karakılıç, Oğuzhan Aydın, ‘‘Azerbaycan’daki Latin Alfabeti Tartışmalarına Türkiye’deki Azerbaycan Matbuatının Bakışı’’, *A.Ü Türkiyat Araştırmaları Enstitüsü Dergisi*, No: 43, 2010

²³² Demir, *ibid*, p.197

²³³ Şimşir, Bilal, *Azerbaycan’da Türk Alfabeti Tarihçe*, Türk Dil Kurumu Yayınları, No: 563 Ankara, 1991 s.8.12

²³⁴ Demir, *ibid*, p.197

Islam, constructs another common ground between Turkey and Caucasus. The only Muslim state in the region is Azerbaijan. The fact that Azerbaijanis are Shi'i and Turkishs are Sunni does not create a big apartness. Along with this, there are also Sunni Muslims in North Caucasus, too. Islam had undeniable effect in the definition of nations' identity, in protection of national rights and in their struggle of independence. In the region, there are some nations who are not Turks but Muslim. For example, Chechens gives much importance to its relations with Turkey. Principle of lack of boundaries in Islam and its effects of promoting cooperation between communities is of importance for Turkey to have close relations with the region. Turkey conducts its religious policies through Directorate of Religious Affairs, this practise is also applied in Caucasus and Central Asia, and Turkey constitute a role model for religious practices.²³⁵ Turkey tries to be effective in Islamic understanding in the region and reach a determinant position. The first step was taken in 1993 by the meeting of six Central Asia and Caucasus states' religious representatives in İstanbul. This meeting was the first sign of Turkey's effect in religious affairs.²³⁶

History is another factor bringing Turkish world and its neighbours together. Anatolia and Caucasus always lived in a harmony by living together throughout the history, struggling against common enemies, supporting each other in hard times. This common stance made them closer and provide a peaceful environment among them. With the exception of problems between Armenia and Turkey, there is no a conflict zone between the region and Turkey. The events between Armenia and Turkey experienced during the last period of Ottoman Empire, has been affecting

²³⁵ Demir, *ibid*, p.199

²³⁶ Demir, *Ibid*, p.201

the relations of two states.²³⁷ The thing is that the necessary lessons should be taken from history and hostilities of the past be evaluated in common sense.

Cultural intimacy has a leading role in establishing rapid relations with Transcaucasus and promoting and sustaining it with the same acceleration. Turkey feels a close proximity with the nations living in this region. Cultural intimacy is also effective for the existence of a confidence environment, cooperation and solidarity. Public opinion among Caucasus origin communities in Turkey is also influential on the future of relations. These communities do their best to promote the relations. Turkey's official support within the framework of respect for sovereignty in their struggle, and close feelings for them paves the way for further ties. There are some official and non governmental organizations to promote our cultural ties in Turkey. Along with Ministry of Culture, some associations of Caucasus origin communities make efforts to develop the connections between Turkey and Caucasus.²³⁸

Our educational relations with Azerbaijan who gained its independence on 18 October 1991, starts with the sign of heads of terms specifying the content for cooperation titles during the official visit of Ministry of National Education to Turkish Republics at the beginning of 1991.²³⁹ Yet, Turkish Republics gained their independence in an unprepared way.²⁴⁰ Between 28 February-6 March 1992, a delegation including the ministries, with the intention of reaching an agreement on the common steps, paid visits to Baku and signed a memorandum of understanding.

²³⁷ Demir, *ibid*, p. 202

²³⁸ Demir, *Ibid*, p. 202

²³⁹ <http://yeogm.meb.gov.tr> (14.01.2007)

²⁴⁰ Sadettin Gömeç, "Türkiye- Türk Cumhuriyetleri İlişkileri Üzerine bir Değerlendirme", *Uluslararası Sosyal Araştırmalar Dergisi*, Vol: 1 Issue: 1, Fall 2007, p.115

With these memorandums, Turkey declared that she would do her part in supporting their educational reform, establishing Turkish-medium instruction schools, giving materials and books and providing opportunities to Azeris to study in Turkey.²⁴¹

It is possible to evaluate Ministry of National Education policies to Caucasus in two stages.²⁴² Firstly, organisational works accelerated, Turkey opened educational consultancies and lots of schools in these republics. For example, Baku Turkish Anatolian High School opened by Turkey in Azerbaijan is in compliance with European standards and provides a good level of education in Baku. It started education on 24 January 1994. Apart from this, there are two Turkish Language Teaching Centers in Azerbaijan. In these centers, especially diplomats and army officers are educated. They were made administratively autonomous in 2006. They reach to large mass of students.’

The second stage in Ministry’s educational policy is student exchange programs. In 2010-2011 academic year, there are 3.540 Azeri students having higher education in Turkey.²⁴³ It is estimated that there have been over 13 thousand students coming to Turkey to study from Turkish Republics and Georgia.²⁴⁴

Common values and similarities that two countries share in culture, language and history creates a big potential for cultural cooperation. Bilateral cultural relations

²⁴¹Türkiye ile Türk Cumhuriyetleri ve Türk Toplulukları Arasında Yapılan Anlaşmalar, İlişkiler ve Faaliyetler, 1. Kitap, T.C Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı Talim Terbiye Kurulu Başkanlığı Türk Cumhuriyetleri ve Türk Toplulukları Dairesi No: 1/1, Ankara, 1993, Sayı: 21284, ²⁴¹ Svante E. Cornell, ‘Turkey and the Conflict in Nagorno Karabakh: A Delicate Balance’, Middle Eastern Studies, Vol: 34 Issue:1, January 1998, p. 60

²⁴² DEMİR, ibid, p.205

²⁴³<http://www.mezun.com/egitim-haberleri/universite/yabanci-ogrencilerin-yeni-adresi-istanbul.html> (28.10.2012)

²⁴⁴ DEMİR, ibid, p.206

between Azerbaijan and Turkey are regulated within the framework of ‘Agreement on Scientific, Technical, Social, Cultural and Economic Cooperation’ signed in Ankara on 9 February 1994, and ‘Protocol Regarding Cooperation in the field of Culture and Fine Art’.²⁴⁵

Ministry of Culture and Tourism conducts mutual cultural activities. Some of the cultural activities held in Turkey are the 6. International Turkish Olympiads happened between May 22nd and June 2nd in 2008 in Istanbul, Turkey. Chaired by Hon. Prof. Mehmet Sağlam the organizational leadership seeks to “bring the cultural values in the common denominator of a language” in their statement of purpose.²⁴⁶ Between 24th and 25th November, 2010, 28. Meeting of Ministers of Culture of Turkic Speaking Countries was held in Ankara.²⁴⁷

‘Every year, Turksoy organizes lots of activities. As of 2008, Turksoy which attaches great importance to the UNESCO and its mission statement as well as achievements, initiated its activities concerning the preservation of intangible cultural heritage. The activities of Turksoy organized in 2011 were marked by the celebrations of the 20th anniversary of our countries’ independence. On this occasion, many events were realized. Among these, the most significant one was the festival organized in Ashgabat. This festival which was organized upon decision of the heads of states of Turkic speaking countries who gathered at the “10th summit of heads of states of Turkic speaking countries” held in Istanbul under the auspices of Mr. Berdimuhammedov.’²⁴⁸

²⁴⁵ <http://www.baku.emb.mfa.gov.tr/ShowInfoNotes.aspx?ID=121502> (30.10.2012)

²⁴⁶ <http://disiliskiler.kulturturizm.gov.tr/TR,22143/2008-yili-gerceklesen-faaliyetler.html> (31.10.2012)

²⁴⁷ <http://disiliskiler.kulturturizm.gov.tr/TR,22145/2010-yili-gerceklesen-faaliyetler.html> (31.10.2012)

²⁴⁸ 2008-2011 TURKSOY Activity Report available at: <http://www.turksoy.org.tr/EN/belge/2-27231/activities.html>

Taking into account Turkey's diplomatic, economic and cultural relations with Azerbaijan, it can be concluded that relationship between these two countries has reached the level of strategic partnership through the pipeline projects and long lasting historical cultural closeness. Turkey's stance supporting Azerbaijan in conflictual issues like Nagorno Karabakh promotes their brotherhood kind of relations. The high level of Turkey-Azerbaijan relations also contributes their increasing influence both on regional and global level.

CHAPTER 5

TURKEY-ARMENIAN RELATIONS

In the fifth chapter, Turkey-Armenian relations are examined with a specific emphasise on the political, economic and cultural relations. The process of normalisation between two states, starting with ‘Football diplomacy’, and leading to 2009 Protocol is elaborated. Protocol process, the expectations and reactions of both sides are examined in detail.

5.1. Diplomatic Relations

Although Turkey was one of the first countries recognising the independence of Armenia on 16 th December 1991, establishment of diplomatic relations between two states could not be acheived due to some historical and political reasons.²⁴⁹ In the aftermath of Armenian independence, Turkey was eager to provide humanitarian aid to Armenia facing economic difficulties after independence. Turkey also supported the country’s integration with regional and Euro-Atlantic organizations. However, the attempts to establish and develop diplomatic relations have not been realised. Turkey’s stance towards Armenia was in line with the aim of developing political and economical relations and as an effect of this approach, Armenia was invited to Organization of Black Sea Economic Cooperation as a founding member in 1993 by Turkey.²⁵⁰

²⁴⁹ Fatih Özbay, “‘Türkiye-Ermenistan İlişkileri’”, Bilgesam, Bilge Adamlar Kurulu Raporu, No: 25, İstanbul, 2011, p.3

²⁵⁰ Özbay, İbid, p.3

Having energy deficiency, Armenia, in this period, was also provided with electricity from Turkish network when it faced serious energy shortage in 1990s and was also granted with opportunity for border trade.²⁵¹ Turkey expected Armenia to abandon its policy basing on genocide claims, to withdraw from Azerbaijani territory and to accept the current boundaries. However, Armenian reaction to the attempts for the development of bilateral relations was not promising.

In contrast, Armenia continues to put genocide allegations forward in international arena and seeks to corner Turkey with genocide accusation. In their declaration of Independence dated 23 August 1990 Turkey's eastern parts are referred as 'western Armenia'.²⁵² It does not recognise Gumru and Kars Agreement establishing Turkish-Armenian border in 1920 and 1921.²⁵³ This declaration also states that in every opportunity Armenia will struggle for recognition of genocide allegation by international society.²⁵⁴

Turkey's historically and culturally close relations with Azerbaijan constitutes a major element of its relations with Armenia. Azerbaijan whose one fifth of territory is under Armenian occupation now is the major partner of Turkey especially in the field of energy cooperation. The level of relations between Turkey and Azerbaijan is considered as a serious threat to its national interests and territorial integrity by Armenia. Therefore, Armenia pursues a balancing policy towards Russia and Iran by means of close relations with them. Russia, having its military bases in

²⁵¹ Şenol Kantarcı, "ABD-AB Kısacasında Türkiye-Ermenistan İlişkileri", Stradigma, No: 8 September 2003

²⁵² Kamer Kasım, "Türkiye-Ermenistan İlişkileri: Protokollere Giden Süreç ve Sonrası", Ermeni Araştırmaları, Vol: 37-38, 2010-2011, p.85

²⁵³ Yıldız Deveci Bozkuş, "Ermenistan-Türkiye İlişkileri: Sorunlar ve Beklentiler Konulu Toplantının Düşündürdükleri", Stratejik Analiz, February 2008, p.90

²⁵⁴ Bülent Aras, Fatih Özbay, "Turkish-Armenian Relations: Will Footbal Diplomacy Work?", SETA Policy Brief, No: 24, September 2008, p. 2

Armenian land is a complementary part of Armenian security line.²⁵⁵ It appears as a strategic partner of Armenia. Although twenty years have passed since the end of Cold War, concepts like security, threat and competition dominated the vocabulary of Armenian foreign policy and this deep rooted perception results in continuation of problems with Turkey and other neighbouring countries except Iran.²⁵⁶

Along with problems with its neighbours, Armenia has also been excluded from energy supply lines and transportation networks while they generate considerable amount of foreign income for energy-rich Azerbaijan and for Turkey and Georgia as two legs of pipelines opening to world markets. Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan oil pipeline bypasses Armenia and goes through Georgia. It also feels the negative effects of instable domestic political environment, economic difficulties and rising level of unemployment.

Reflections of Turkey's new zero problem with neighbours policy, creating a peace zone in its neighbourhood, on Turkish-Armenian relations started to be felt. In November 2007, Turkish President Abdullah Gül paid an official visit to Azerbaijan and this official visit was concluded with a common statement declaring the need for furthering of a more active cooperation between two states and settlement of Nagorno Karabakh conflict with peaceful means.²⁵⁷ They also noted that both Turkey and Azerbaijan did not have an intention to exclude Armenia from regional initiatives like pipeline projects and Baku-Tbilisi- Kars railway project as long as Armenia took steps to change its irredentist foreign policy towards its

²⁵⁵ Hasan Kanbolat, "Rusya Federasyonu'nun Güney Kafkasya'daki Askeri Varlığı ve Gürcistan Boyutu", *Stratejik Analiz*, Vol: 1, Issue: 3, July 2000, p.44

²⁵⁶ Bülent Aras, Pınar Akpınar, "The Relations Between Turkey and the Caucasus", *Perceptions*, Vol: 16 Issue: 3 Autumn 2011, p. 59

²⁵⁷ Oya Eren, "Cumhurbaşkanı Gül'ün Azerbaycan Ziyareti Heyecan Uyandırdı", *Stratejik Analiz*, Vol: 8 Issue: 92 December 2007, p. 16-17

neighbours.²⁵⁸ After this visit, on 19th of December, a conference called Armenian-Turkish Relations: Problems and Expectations was held by Foreign Affairs Committee of Armenian Parliament. This conference turned into a platform in which Armenian activists from Dashnak Party manifest their demand for redetermination of Turkey-Armenia border and payment of compensation to ‘genocide’ victims.²⁵⁹

In February 2008, it was claimed that Armenia was supporting PKK terrorist organization in some Turkish newspapers.²⁶⁰ There were also some other claims that Armenia, to change the demographic structure in Karabakh to the detriment of Azerbaijan, put Kurdish population in the region. These claims were all rejected by Armenia and this discussion lost its place in the agenda later.²⁶¹ On 19 February 2008, presidential elections causing a great competition between old President Levon Ter-Petrosyan and existing Prime Minister Serzh Sargsyan resulted in Sargsyan’s success.²⁶² Turkey’s expectations from new president and government disappeared with the protests held in Erivan on 24th April. Anti-Turkish atmosphere and the act of burning Turkish flag during these protests caused Turkey to be more distant against Armenia.²⁶³

²⁵⁸ Eren, ibid, p.17

²⁵⁹ Yıldız Deveci Bozkuş, ‘‘Ermenistan-Türkiye İlişkileri: Sorunlar ve Beklentiler Konulu Toplantının Düşündürdükleri’’, Stratejik Analiz, Vol: 8 Issue: 94 February 2008, p.90

²⁶⁰ ‘‘Azeri Basını: PKK Karabağ’a Yerleşiyor’’, Hürriyet, 19 Şubat 2008; ‘Musavat: Karabağ’daki PKK’ya Türk Azeri operasyonu yapılacak’, <http://www.usakgundem.com/haber.php?id=18142> (23.12.2012)

²⁶¹ Yıldız Deveci Bozkuş, ‘‘PKK, Dağlık Katabağ’a Yerleşebilir mi?’’, Stratejik Analiz, Vol: 8 Issue: 93 January 2008, p.8

²⁶² Oya Eren, ‘‘Yeni Ermenistan Hükümeti’nin Önceliği Ekonomik Kalkınma’’, Stratejik Analiz, No: 87, 2007

²⁶³ ‘‘Ankara Condemns Disrespect for Its Flag in Armenian Commemoration’’, Today’s Zaman, http://www.todayszaman.com/newsDetail_getNewsById.action;jsessionid=AF195003521D60EE5E1EBB01D45FAD9F?pageNo=562&category=102&dt=0&newsId=140160&columnistId=0 (28.12.2012)

5.2. Football Diplomacy

After these protests, Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan invited Turkish President Abdullah Gül to watch the World Cup football match held in Yerevan between the national teams of two countries as a historical gesture.²⁶⁴ This invitation created hopes for a breakthrough in relations between Turkey and Armenia. President Gül accepted this invitation and went to Yerevan to watch the football match as a sign of goodwill on 6 September 2008.²⁶⁵ It was evaluated as a turning point in Turkish-Armenian relations.²⁶⁶

Despite the fact that Sargsyan's invitation was made before the conflict in Georgia, the attempt was regarded as an important step toward normalising relations in its aftermath. However, it had a symbolic influence on attempts to normalise relations between Turkey and Armenia. The football diplomacy and Caucasus initiative of Turkey brought Turkish-Armenian relations to the political agenda of two countries and renewed hopes for normalisation of relations in a way.

2008 Russia-Georgia War and Russian invasion of South Ossetia and Abkhazia aggravated the situation for Armenia. The war had important consequences for Armenia, as Georgia serves as a lifeline for land-locked Armenia.²⁶⁷ Instability in Georgia limited Armenia's transport and transit options, and most importantly

²⁶⁴ David L. Phillips, *Diplomatic History: Turkey-Armenia Protocols*, Institute For The Study of Human Rights, Columbia University, March 2012, p. 45

²⁶⁵ Bülent Aras, Fatih Özbay, "Turkish-Armenian Relations: Will Football Diplomacy Work?", SETA Policy Brief, No: 24 September 2008, p.1

²⁶⁶ Yıldız Deveci Bozkuş, "Kafkasya Krizinin Ardından Türkiye-Ermenistan-Azerbaycan İlişkileri", *Stratejik Analiz*, Vol: 9 Issue: 102, November 2008, p. 50

²⁶⁷ Yıldız Deveci Bozkuş, "Kafkasya Krizinin Ardından Türkiye-Ermenistan-Azerbaycan İlişkileri", *Stratejik Analiz*, Vol: 9 Issue: 102, November 2008, p. 53

obstructed trade with Russia.²⁶⁸ Armenia's gate opening to the world was Georgia's Poti port as its border with Turkey and Azerbaijan had already been closed. Armenian foreign trade is overwhelmingly dependent on Georgian ports. Temporary closure of Poti port during Russia-Georgia crisis and state of war in Georgian territory created some new obstacles for Armenia who conducted its trade basically through Georgia. These were the factors that made Armenia consider its rapprochement with Turkey in such an atmosphere. So, a possible normalisation of bilateral relations leading to opening of closed borders between Turkey and Azerbaijan was evaluated as an option to promote suffering Armenian economy and to repair Armenian image on international communities eyes.

President Abdullah Gul accepted the invitation of Sargsyan and declared that he would attend the football match in Yerevan. Via its proposal to establish a joint historians commission for the purpose of researching 1915 events, Turkey created a positive environment and gave the impression to the international public opinion that it was Turkey who behaved willingly in order to develop its relations with Armenia. One of the reasons leading to acceptance of this invitation may be this understanding. Turkey also would be able to support its zero problem policy through normalization of its relations with Armenia which can also reduce pressure from the US and the EU. Both Azerbaijan and opposition in Turkey reacted to participation of a Turkish President to a match held in Armenia.²⁶⁹ Opposition parties in Turkey insisted that without finding a solution to some longstanding problems such as Armenian stance towards Turkey's borders, their aim to urge international community accept 1915 events as genocide and occupation of Karabakh and other Azerbaijani territory, such a high level visit to Armenia could

²⁶⁸ Brenda Shaffer, "The Geopolitics of the Caucasus", *Brown Journal of World Affairs*, Vol: 15 Issue. 2, Spring/Summer 2009, p.140

²⁶⁹ Alexander Jackson, "The Limits of Good Intentions: The Caucasus As a Test Case For Turkish Foreign Policy", *Turkish Policy Quarterly*, Vol: 9, Issue: 4, p.89

be perceived as a concession. Although it did not cause a large-scaled official reaction, Azerbaijani public opinion overreacted to Gul's visit to Yerevan as Armenia had not taken a concrete step for the settlement of Nagorno Karabakh conflict.

Russian-Georgian War became the most influential motives stimulating the negotiations between Turkey and Armenia. The statusquo in Caucasus certainly changed as a result of this war.²⁷⁰ Following the August War, efforts to establish diplomatic relations between two countries received a new impetus.²⁷¹ The outbreak of war showed how fragile the situation is in Caucasus. This impelled Turkey to expand its policy options in neighbouring Caucasus and encouraged it to renew efforts in expanding ties with Armenia.²⁷² From Turkey's point of view, the status quo was no longer sustainable. Gul responded to Sargsyan's gesture in a positive way, but beyond it, Turkey expected Armenia to involve in its initiative Caucasus Stability and Cooperation Platform proposed by Turkey to promote economic and political cooperation among regional states and settle the regional conflicts. CSCP, developed by Turkey after Russian-Georgian conflict, brought about the process of normalisation in Turkish-Armenian relations.²⁷³ The normalisation process gained an impetus after the changing balances in the region with Russian –Georgian war in August.²⁷⁴ Turkey's multilateral diplomatic initiative was an inclusive one as it also involved Armenia in a regional context.

²⁷⁰ Hasan Selim Özerterem ,'' The Limits of Zero Problem Policy in the Caucaus: The Impasse in Turkish-Armenian Relations, OAKA, Vol: 5 Issue: 10, 2010, p. 148

²⁷¹ Kamer Kasım, ''Türkiye-Ermenistan İlişkileri: Protokollere Giden Süreç ve Sonrası'', Ermeni Araştırmaları, Vol: 37-38, 2010-2011, p.86

²⁷² Shaffer, ibid p. 141

²⁷³ Muharrem Ekşi, ''Kafkasya İşbirliği ve İstikrar Platformundan Türkiye-Ermenistan İlişkilerinin Normalleşmesi Sürecine'', Stratejik Analiz, Vol: 9 Issue. 106, February 2009. P.18

²⁷⁴ Ekşi, İbid, p.19

Turkish President's visit aroused positive reactions in international community.²⁷⁵ Both American and European decision makers expressed their appreciations for reconciliation between Turkey and Armenia.²⁷⁶ The normalization of relations is also in the interests of the US and the EU. They think that normalisation of relations will build peace and stability in the South Caucasus, promoting further integration into European structures. So, it can be argued that normalisation process will not create new outcomes only for Turkey and Armenia, but also it will have new global and regional political contexts. It has a potential of influencing Turkey's relations with US and Russia.²⁷⁷ The US's intention to engage Turkey as a player in the region might be seen as a counterbalance to Russia. Georgia, disturbed by continued occupation of its territory and military presence of Russia on its internationally recognised territory, is the most active one in its desire to integrate with Europe. There are also expectations that the normalization of relations between Turkey and Armenia would have a positive effect on resolution of other conflicts in the region.

The positive atmosphere created by these visits was developed by a meeting between Foreign Ministers of these three countries during UN General Assembly held on 26 September in New York.²⁷⁸ In this meeting, Armenia renewed its demand to establish diplomatic relations with Turkey without any preconditions and Azerbaijan asked for withdrawal of Armenian troops from Azerbaijani territory once more. Turkey was trying to convince Armenia that it could be involved in

²⁷⁵ Yıldız Deveci Bozkuş, 'Kafkasya Krizinin Ardından Türkiye-Ermenistan-Azerbaycan İlişkileri', *Stratejik Analiz*, Vol: 9 Issue: 102, November 2008, p.51

²⁷⁶ 'Turkey's President Makes Historical Visit to Armenia', *New York Times*, 6 September 2008, 'Turkish President to Visit Armenia', *International Herald Tribune*, 4 September 2008; 'Turkey, Armenia Mend Ties Through Football', *Associated Press*, 5 September 2008; 'Gul's Yerevan Visit Welcomed by All But Extremist Opposition', *Today's Zaman*, 4 September 2008

²⁷⁷ Ekşi, *ibid* p.19

²⁷⁸ <http://www.eurasianet.org/departments/insight/articles/eav092908.shtml> (11.01.2013)

regional energy and transportation projects if it took concrete steps for the settlement of Karabakh conflict by peaceful means while at the same time it supported Azerbaijan's stance regarding the same issue.²⁷⁹ Turkey pursued a multidimensional foreign policy towards Caucasus in general and endeavors to utilise any opportunities that arise to include Armenia in regional cooperation projects. However, it might not be enough to solve the direct problems between two countries. Armenian and Turkish publics reacted in different ways to the President Gul's visit to Armenia that sought for normalisation of relations. Armenian Tasnaksutyun Party which had strong political and economical links with Armenian Diaspora opposed any rapprochement.²⁸⁰

In Turkey, main opposition parties, Republican People's Party and Nationalist Action Party criticised Gul's visit to Armenia. On the other hand, both Azerbaijani political elite and public opinion view the normalisation process between Yerevan and Ankara as Turkish abandonment of Azerbaijani.²⁸¹ Strong criticism in Azerbaijani opposition for a progress in Turkish-Armenian relations showed that Azerbaijani expect Turkey not to strengthen Armenian hand specifically in Nagorno Karabakh issue. Baku continues to fear that Armenia will harden its position on Karabakh issue if the border is opened. There is also an argument that a rift in Turkey-Azerbaijan relations leads to more leverage to Russia in its neighbourhood. While an open border with Armenia would have some benefits for

²⁷⁹ "Türkiye-Ermenistan-Azerbaycan görüşmeleri", Cumhuriyet, 26 September 2008; "Barış Üçgeni: Ermenistan, Türkiye, Azerbaycan", Yeni Şafak 11 Eylül 2008

²⁸⁰ Aras, *ibid* p. 5

²⁸¹ Hasan Selim Özertem, "The Limits of Zero Problem Policy in the Caucasus: The Impasse in Turkish-Armenian Relations, OAKA, Vol: 5 Issue: 10, 2010 p.149

Turkey, the benefits of normalisation with Armenia does not outweigh the potential damage to its other strategic partnerships.²⁸²

These developments starting with football diplomacy were defined as a ‘new phase’ in Turkish-Armenian relations by Turkish media although they did not reach a conclusion. It was thought that this new period would contribute to the relations between Azerbaijan and Armenia which could have a chance to communicate for resolution of the conflictual issues. But, it would be too optimistic to claim that these historically longstanding problematic issues can be settled in a short term. The regular establishment of normal diplomatic relations highly depends on Armenian stance regarding 1915 events and its acceptance of inviolability of Turkish-Armenian borders.²⁸³ Solution of Nagorno Karabakh conflict is also a prerequisite for opening of borders. Turkey expects Armenia to accept its proposal to establish an international commission to research the 1915 events. This proposal was strongly rejected by Armenian Diaspora and government.²⁸⁴ Instead of a joint commission of scientists and historians, Armenia argues for establishment of a commission between two governments.²⁸⁵ Turkey’s steps for the normalisation of relations were challenged by Armenian responses in favor of talks without any precondition.²⁸⁶ It also called upon Turkey not to emphasize the occupied territories and accept genocide allegations. However, it is Armenia that urgently needs the opening of borders.

²⁸² Aybars Görgülü, Onnik Krikorian, ‘‘Turkey’s South Caucasus Agenda: The Role of State and Non-State Actors’’, TESEV Foreign Policy Programme, Eurasia Partnership Foundation, July 2012, p.5

²⁸³ Ömer Engin Lütem, ‘‘Karabağ Sorununun Çözümü Yakın mı?’’, Stratejik Analiz, Vol: 9 Issue: 104, December 2008, p.17

²⁸⁴ Oya Eren, ‘‘Türkiye-Ermenistan İlişkilerinde 2008 Yılına İlişkin Beklentiler’’, Stratejik Analiz, No: 94, February 2008, p. 13

²⁸⁵ Eren, *ibid*, p. 13

²⁸⁶ Eren, *ibid*, p.13

Realisation of expectations for the establishment of normalised relations seems very difficult under these conditions. It is for sure that there are some improvements on the way of establishment of diplomatic relations between Turkey and Armenia. On the other hand, There are also some obstacles before further promotion of bilateral relations today. Armenian domestic politics and opposition of some political groups for the rapprochement poses a danger for negotiations. Armenian Diaspora is another great factor. It creates a kind of obstacle before normalization of Turkish-Armenian relations.²⁸⁷ Their efforts to get a resolution for genocide allegations from the Congress constitutes another impediment for Turkish-Armenian rapprochement.²⁸⁸ However, It could only be possible in a long term if all parties behave constructively about the solution of Nagorno Karabakh conflict leading to the development of relations not just between Azerbaijan and Armenia but also between Turkey and Armenia.

5.3. 2009 Protocols

‘While discussions were continuing whether the football diplomacy starting with mutual visits of Armenian and Turkish Presidents would work, a Road Map regarding the bilateral relations between two countries was announced on 22 April 2009 which created discussions about the future of politics of Caucasus particularly, security and energy dimension of it. The negotiations between Turkey and Armenia reached a new stage with this ‘Road Map’.’²⁸⁹

‘The conflict between Russia and Georgia had also some implications for Turkey-Armenian relations and tensions between Russia and West stemming from its

²⁸⁷ Kamer Kasım, ‘‘Türkiye-Ermenistan İlişkileri: Protokollere Giden Süreç ve Sonrası’’, Ermeni Araştırmaları, Vol: 37-38, 2010-2011, p.84

²⁸⁸ Kamer Kasım, ‘‘Turkey-Azerbaijan-Armenia Triangle’’ Journal of Turkish Weekly, 27 May 2009

²⁸⁹ Kasım, *ibid*

occupation of Georgian territory forced the states in Caucasus to recalculate their strategic parameters and foreign policies.²⁹⁰ The US also reevaluated its policy towards Armenia after Russian-Georgian War. In US, increasing voices for a rapid integration of Armenia who is under Russian domination to the West accelerated. The key country in this strategy was Turkey.

In order to normalise the bilateral relations between Armenia and Turkey and open the closed borders, both countries signed protocols titled ‘Protocol on the Establishment of Diplomatic Relations between The Republic of Armenia and the Republic of Turkey’, along with ‘Protocol on the Development of Bilateral Relations between the Republic of Turkey and the Republic of Armenia’ under Swiss mediation on 31 August 2009.²⁹¹

‘Through the Protocol on the Establishment of Diplomatic Relations between Turkey and Armenia, both countries agreed to establish diplomatic relations in accordance with the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations of 1961 and to exchange Diplomatic Missions by’:²⁹²

‘Desiring to establish good neighborly relations and to develop bilateral cooperation in the political, economic, cultural and other fields for the benefit of their people,

Reconfirming their commitment, in their bilateral and international relations, to respect and ensure respect for the principles of equality, sovereignty, nonintervention, in internal affairs of other states, territorial integrity and inviolability of borders,

²⁹⁰ Kamer Kasım, ‘‘Turkey-Azerbaijan-Armenia Triangle’’ Journal of Turkish Weekly, 27 May 2009

²⁹¹ David L. Phillips, Diplomatic History: The Turkey Armenia Protocols, The Institute for the Study of Human Rights, Columbia University, New York, May 2012 p. 59

²⁹² <http://www.mfa.gov.tr/protocol-on-development-of-relations-between-the-republic-of-turkey-and-the-republic-of-armenia.en.mfa> (19.12.2012)

Bearing in mind the importance of creation and maintenance of an atmosphere of trust and confidence between two countries, as well as determined to refrain from the threat or the use of force to promote the peaceful settlement of dispute and to protect human rights and fundamental freedoms,

Confirming the mutual recognition of the existing border between two countries as defined by the relevant treaties of international law,

Emphasising their decision to open the common border,

Reiterating their commitment to refrain from pursuing any policy incompatible with the spirit of good neighbourly relations,

Condemning all forms of terrorism, violence and extremism irrespective of their cause, pledging to refrain from encouraging and tolerating such acts and to cooperate in combating against them,

Affirming their willingness to chart a new pattern and course for their relations on the basis of common interests, goodwill, in the pursuit of peace, mutual understanding, and harmony.’

‘Through Protocol on Development of Relations between Turkey and Armenia, both countries agreed to;’²⁹³

1. Agree to open the common border within 2 months after entry into force of this Protocol,

2. Agree to:

Conduct regular political consolidation between the Ministries of Foreign Affairs of the two countries,

Implement a dialogue on the historical dimension with the aim to restore mutual confidence between the two nations, including an impartial and scientific examination of the historical records and archives to define existing problems and formulate recommendations,

²⁹³<http://www.mfa.gov.tr/data/DISPOLITIKA/t%C3%BCrkiye-ermenistan-turkce.pdf> (19.12.2012)

Make the best possible use of existing transport, communications and energy infrastructure and networks between the two countries and to undertake measures in this regard,

Develop the bilateral legal framework in order to foster cooperation between two countries,

Cooperate in the fields of science and education by encouraging relations between the appropriate institutions as well as promoting the exchange of specialists and students, and act with the aim of preserving the cultural heritage of both side and launching common cultural projects,

Establish consular cooperation in accordance with the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations of 1963 in order to provide necessary assistance and protection to the citizens of two countries,

Take concrete measures in order to develop trade, tourism and economic cooperation between two countries,

Engage in a dialogue and reinforce their cooperation on environmental issues,

3. Agree on the establishment of an intergovernmental bilateral commission which shall comprise separate sub-commissions for the prompt implementation of commitments mentioned in operation paragraph.

‘A timetable for the implementation of Protocol on the development of relations between two countries was also decided upon. It is indicated in Protocols that: ‘both parties agree on establishment of an intergovernmental bilateral commission which shall comprise separate sub-commissions for the prompt implementation of commitments mentioned in operational paragraph 2 in this Protocol.’²⁹⁴

After this phase, Protocols were to be submitted to the Parliaments of each country for approval and to come into force after this approval process. According to Armenian laws, it was required that the protocols be presented to Armenian

²⁹⁴ Phillips, *ibid*, p.59

Constitutional Court for supervision in terms of convenience to Constitution.²⁹⁵ It announced its verdict regarding the protocols on 12 February 2010. It issued a statement that the protocols should be interpreted and applied on the condition of being in compliance with the Armenian Constitution and in particular, paragraph 11 of the Declaration of Independence.²⁹⁶ This paragraph states that: "The Republic of Armenia stands in support of the task of achieving international recognition of 1915 genocide in Ottoman Turkey and Western Armenia."²⁹⁷ As a response, Turkey issued a critical statement that the decision contains preconditions and restrictive provisions which impair the letter and spirit of protocols.²⁹⁸

5.3.1. Turkey's And Armenia's Expectations From Protocols

5.3.1.1. Armenian Expectations

After signing the protocols, Armenia appointed a committee of experts, composed of lawyers from France and United States to advise the government for the next steps. 'In Yerevan point of view, commission on historical issues was an opportunity for Turkey to engage in discussion about history. It thought that a dialogue environment within this commission affirming the genocide would provide Ankara with a political base to apologise, while the sub-commission on legal issues paved the way for reparations.'²⁹⁹

²⁹⁵ Kamer Kasım, "Türkiye-Ermenistan İlişkileri: Protokollere Giden Süreç ve Sonrası", Ermeni Araştırmaları, Issue: 37-38, 2010-2011, p.90

²⁹⁶ Şaban Kardaş, "Turkey Reacts to Armenian Constitutional Court's Decision on Protocols", Eurasia Daily Monitor, Vol: 7 Issue: 17, 26 January 2010

²⁹⁷ Kardaş, İbid

²⁹⁸ Kardaş, İbid

²⁹⁹ David Philips, Diplomatic History: The Turkey- Armenia Protocols, Colombia University, The Institute for the Study of Human Rights, New York, March 2012, p. 60

In the protocols, commitment of both sides were clearly announced. But the different expectations and hopes from both sides were not taken into account. Armenia viewed the protocols as a way to end the embargo by Turkey which could boost its economy and facilitate trade between Turkey and itself. By omitting reference to negotiations with Azerbaijan, it expected that the protocols would provide a new dynamic and urgency to the Minsk Group. The historical commission would support validity of genocide advancing to recognition.³⁰⁰

5.3.1.2. Turkey's Expectations

Turkey's goals were different. For Turkey, protocols were an effective way of preempting international attempts at genocide recognition and considered that the historical commission would reach a conclusion that the events in the early twentieth century did not constitute genocide.³⁰¹ It also anticipated that the protocols would catalyze negotiations for return of territories to Azerbaijan, settlement of Nagorno Karabakh conflict. Turkey also expected that Armenian notion for 'Greater Armenia' could be brought to term through the mutual recognition of inviolability of borders. According to Turkey, through the protocols Armenia recognised the present borders and abandoned its territorial claims on Turkey.³⁰² The old order basing on antagonism started to be replaced by a new approach of friendship and cooperation.³⁰³

³⁰⁰ Philips, *ibid*, p.60

³⁰¹ Philips, *ibid*, p. 61

³⁰² "Turkey Wants to Change Karabakh Status Quo", <http://news.az/mobile/articles/2739> (18.12.2012)

³⁰³ "Turkey, Armenia Split on New Ties", BBC News, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/8306641.stm>. (4 October 2009)

5.3.2. Final Situation Of Protocols

In the normalisation process of Turkish-Armenian relations, there are some challenges. First of all, the protocols wait to be brought to parliaments. The other challenge is the psychological barriers in both societies.³⁰⁴ Strong oppositions in both countries and tendency of people to react in a nationalist way obstruct the progress. Starting with the diplomatic negotiations behind closed doors, being accelerated by football diplomacy and revealing determination with Road Map, normalisation process deadlocked. Now, the protocols have been suspended in both parliaments indefinitely. ³⁰⁵

5.4. Cultural Relations

Nations living under the same administration in the same country for many years or as neighbours are influenced by each other's cultures. Cultural exchanges between societies sometimes even occur among those who reside in faraway lands. History plays a combining role rather than a dividing role. Relations between Turks and Armenians increased in 11th century.³⁰⁶

Turks and Armenians for approximately more than a thousand years have lived sometimes as neighbours and sometimes under the roof of the same government. The first encounter between them was undoubtedly when the Abbasid Caliph Mutevekkil appointed the Turkish commander, Boga el-Kebir, to suppress a

³⁰⁴ Bülent Aras, Pınar Akpınar, ‘‘The Relations Between Turkey and the Caucasus’’, Perceptions, Vol: 16 Issue: 3 Autumn 2011, p. 60

³⁰⁵ Bülent Aras, Fatih Özbay ‘‘Türkiye ve Ermenistan: Statüko ve Normalleşme Arasında Kafkasya Siyaseti’’, SETA Policy Brief, October 2009, No: 12

³⁰⁶ Zeki Arıkan, ‘‘Türk-Ermeni Kültür İlişkileri Üzerine’’, Bilim ve Aklın Aydınlığında Eğitim, (Tarihten Bir Kesit-Özel Sayı), (MEB yayını), Yıl: 4, S. 38, (Nisan 2003), s. 52-53.

rebellion that had broken out in the province of Ermeniyye.³⁰⁷ (851-852).³⁰⁸ The Seljuks arrived in the neighbourhood of Lake Van first in the 11th century (1015-1021) and, in the aftermath of the Battle at Malazgirt and their victory there (1071) contacts increased in a short time between the two communities and those who controlled Anatolia.³⁰⁹ With this expansion process, Turkish- Armenian relations reached a new dimension.³¹⁰

During the time of the Ottomans, the Armenians were recognized as the loyal community (*millet-i sâdîka*), and especially from the 18th century onwards they were assigned important duties.³¹¹ They were employed in various ministries. They had their own schools, churches and hospitals.³¹²

The Armenians were traders, artisans and gardeners. In the years following the Küçük Kaynarca Agreement of 1774 and after the Russians established their control over the Crimea, the Greek people there were forced to migrate to Ekaterinoslav by the Tsarist regime, and the Armenians went to eight villages in Nor Nahchevan and its vicinity near Rostov on the shore of the Don River.³¹³ This group which was known as the Kipçak Armenians -if they were not members of the

³⁰⁷ The region consisting of Erzurum, Bitlis, Malazgirt, Ahlat, Erciş and Kemah.

³⁰⁸ Hakkı Dursun Yıldız, “Abbasiler devrinde Türk kumandanları I. Boga el-kebir et-Türki”, Türk Kültür Araştırmaları, Ankara, II (1965), p. 195-203. Cited in Nejat Göyünç, ‘Turkish Armenian Cultural Relations’

³⁰⁹ Nejat Göyünç, “Turkish-Armenian Cultural Relations”, in The Armenians in the Late Ottoman Period, Türkkaya Ataöv (ed.), The Turkish National Assembly, Ankara, 2001, p. 28.

³¹⁰ Zeki Arıkan, “Türk-Ermeni Kültür İlişkileri Üzerine”, Bilim ve Aklın Aydınlığında Eğitim, (Tarihten Bir Kesit-Özel Sayı), (MEB yayını), Year: 4, Issue: 38, April 2003, p. 55.

³¹¹ Göyünç, ibid, p.24

³¹² Halit Gülşen, “Babadan Oğula Güney Kafkasya, Türkiye-Güney Kafkasya İlişkileri Kitap Tahlili, Ermeni Araştırmaları, No. 37-38- 2010-2011- 337

³¹³ Göyünç, ibid. p. 27

Turkish-based Gregorian church remained under the very deep influence of Turkish culture, and, they became a community which kept its religion, alphabet and some Armenian expressions but forgot its mother tongue. Those who migrated to Poland and settled there were catholicized.

Today, there have been some improvements regarding Armenian heritage in Turkey. Many buildings, like Akdamar Church, Armenian Catholic Church in Diyarbakır, historic Armenian houses in Beykoz and Armenian Church in Ordu, having historical and religious value for Armenians have been restored.³¹⁴

Starting as ‘football diplomacy’, enhanced by two protocols signed for establishment and promotion of diplomatic relations and supported by Road Map, bilateral relations between Turkey and Armenia have progressed on the way of normalisation. One of the effects of Russian- Georgian war is the rapprochement between Turkey and Armenia who experienced a lack of diplomatic relations due to the closed borders. In line with new instruments of Turkish foreign policy, it is argued that normalisation of relations between Turkey and Armenia will pave the way for further promotion of stability and prosperity in Caucasus.

³¹⁴ Bülent Aras, Pinar Akpınar, ‘‘The Relations between Turkey and The Caucasus’’, *Perceptions*, Vol: 16 Issue: 3, Autumn 2011, p.61

CHAPTER 6

TURKEY-GEORGIA RELATIONS

In the sixth chapter, political, economic and cultural relations between Turkey and Georgia are tried to be assessed. The place of Georgia in multidimensional Turkish foreign policy and the role of Turkey and Georgia in regional security is dwelled upon. Georgia's ethnic issues and their reflections on its relations with Turkey are assessed with special emphasise on South Ossetia and Abkhazia.

6.1. Diplomatic Relations

After the collapse of Soviet Union in 1991, Turkey was among the first countries to recognise the independence of Georgia.³¹⁵ They signed a Protocol on Establishment of Diplomatic Relations on 21 May 1992 signing the beginning of diplomatic relations between two countries.³¹⁶ Both countries have embassies in Ankara and Tbilisi, in addition to Turkish Consulate General in Batumi, and Georgian Consulate General in İstanbul and Trabzon. Bilateral relations strengthened by high level visits is being carried out on the basis of cooperation in every field and friendship. Turkey could be seen as a bridge connecting Georgia with European Union. Turkey also replaced Russia as Georgia's biggest trade partner.³¹⁷

³¹⁵ Marianna Vindimian, "Evolution of Turkish Foreign Policy Towards Georgia", ISPI Policy Brief, No: 196, September 2010, p.2

³¹⁶ <http://www.mfa.gov.tr/turkiye-gurcistan-siyasi-iliskileri.tr.mfa> (18.12.2012)

³¹⁷ Bülent Aras, Pınar Akpınar, "The Relations between Turkey and The Caucasus", Perceptions, Vol: 16 Issue: 3, Autumn 2011, p.62

Turkey, providing support for political development and restructuring of Georgia, regards it as a close ally which is of great importance for the sustainment of regional stability. Turkish-Georgian bilateral relations not experiencing a serious political problem develop in accordance with principle of equality and non-intervention in internal affairs. Sharing a land border, relations between Turkey and Georgia basing on economic, military and cultural cooperation have made progress in recent years. Despite some challenging issues, Georgia is considered as a success of Turkish foreign policy aiming to achieve the goal of zero problems with neighbours. Turkish Foreign Minister, Ahmet Davutoğlu, noted that relations with Georgia was the most striking example of success of Turkish foreign policy.³¹⁸

Turkey attaches great importance to the promotion of partnership relations and believes in the necessity of development of cooperation in every field from energy to commerce, from defense to security. As a sign of level of cooperation between two countries, a mutual visa free regime has been established through an agreement abolishing visa requirements for both countries' citizens.³¹⁹ They also signed a protocol on 31 May 2011 enabling Turkish and Georgian citizens to travel to each country without their passports.³²⁰ This protocol is under ratification process. Turkey also provided assistance for the modernization of Batumi Airport which has been used jointly by Turkey and Georgia.³²¹

Georgia and Turkey, as customers and transit states, depend on Azerbaijani oil. Although Turkey lacks close ethnic, linguistic or religious ties with majority of

³¹⁸ Ahmet Davutoğlu, "Turkey's Foreign Policy Vision: An Assessment of 2007", *Insight Turkey*, Vol: 10 Issue: 1 p.80

³¹⁹ Ivane Chkhikvadze, "Zero Problem With Neighbours: The Case of Georgia", *Turkish Policy Quarterly*, Summer 2011, p.1

³²⁰ Chkhikvadze, *ibid*, p. 7

³²¹ Aras, *ibid*, p. 62

Georgian people³²², They have a number of interests in common forming the basis for a strategic partnership taking into account Georgia's desire to be a NATO member.³²³

Georgia is an indispensable bridge connecting Turkey to Azerbaijan and Central Asia energy reserves and to Europe.³²⁴ Two countries were closely linked to each other through large-scale energy projects laying behind the strengthening of their bilateral relations. Georgia, as one leg of regional projects of Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan Oil Pipeline, Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum Natural Gas Pipeline, plays a crucial role in transporting Azeri oil to the world markets.³²⁵ In addition to them, Turkey and Georgia, together with Azerbaijan, initiated Baku-Tbilisi- Kars Railway project which will be providing railway transformation from Europe to China when completed in 2013.³²⁶

Bilateral relations have developed since the change in ruling elites in both Turkey and Georgia. Current ruling party, Justice and Development Party (AKP), came to power in November 2002. The following year, National Movement of Georgia, led by current President Mikheil Saakashvili, came to power as a result of Rose Revolution.³²⁷ Both of them gave positive messages about Turkish and Georgian nations on various occasions. Turkish Prime Minister, Tayyip Erdoğan, mentioned

³²² Emmanuel Karagiannis, "Turkish-Georgian Partnership and Pipeline Factor", *Journal of Balkan and Near Eastern Studies*, Vol: 6 Issue: 1, April 2004

³²³ T Shireen Hunter, *The Transcaucasus in Transition: Nation-Building and Conflict*, The Center for Strategic and International Studies, New York, 1994, p.164

³²⁴ Giray Saynur Bozkurt, "Gürcistan'daki Etnik Çatışmalar Karşısında Türkiye ve Rusya'nın Tutumu", *Karadeniz Araştırmaları*, Issue: 19, Autumn 2008, p. 17

³²⁵ Bülent Aras, Pınar Akpınar, "The Relations between Turkey and the Caucasus", *Perceptions*, Vol: 15, Issue: 3, Autumn 2011, p.63

³²⁶ Hasan Kanbolat, "Güney Kafkasya'da Yeni Bir Demiryolu Hattı: Kars-Iğdır-Nahçıvan", *Stratejik Analiz*, Vol: 2, Issue: 22, February 2002

³²⁷ Ahmet Öztürk, "Rusya-Gürcistan Krizi: Yerel bir Çatışma, Küresel Yansımalar", *OAKA*, Vol: 4, Issue: 7, 2009, p. 7

about the satisfactory level of cooperation between Turkey and Georgia during his first visit as Prime Minister on 12 August 2004.³²⁸ Georgian President, Mikheil Saakashvili portrayed Turkey as ‘‘ a great state, Georgia’s close friend and a model state’’ and stated that Mustafa Kemal Atatürk’s revolutions constituted a perfect example for him: ‘‘Georgia should become a modern, united, developed and successful state and in many issues we follow the example of our neighbouring friend, Turkey’’.³²⁹ Turkey emerged as an ally to Tbilisi, as well as a model of development thanks to its long established connections with Europe and US and its economic infrastructure.³³⁰

In the aftermath of Russian-Georgian war in 2008 August, Turkey came up with a proposal, Caucasus Stability and Cooperation Platform (CSCP), to create a ground on which all parties can enjoy the opportunity of communication for the establishment of regional stability and peace. In this framework, Turkish- Georgian diplomatic contacts and attempts gained impetus. CSCP has been formed as a platform between Turkey, Azerbaijan, Armenia, Georgia and the Russian Federation, based on international norms and principles. It has been initiated with a premise that it will provide stability and peace while encouraging economic cooperation. It also paved the way for the process of normalization of Turkish-Armenian relations.³³¹

As a part of regional visits, Turkish Prime Minister paid an official visit to Georgia on 14 August 2008, which was followed by visit of Georgian Foreign Minister

³²⁸ Avrasya Bülteni, ‘‘Başbakan Erdoğan’ın Gürcistan Ziyareti’’, TİKA, Issue: 26, September 2004, p.2

³²⁹ Ivane Chkikvadze, ‘‘Zero Problem with Neighbours: The Case of Georgia’’, Turkish Policy Quarterly, Summer 2011

³³⁰ Mithat Çelikpala, ‘‘From A Failed State to a Weak One? Georgia and Turkish-Georgian Relations’’ The Turkish Yearbook of International Relations, No: 36,2005, p.18

³³¹ Muharrem Ekşi, ‘‘Kafkasya İşbirliği ve İstikrar Platformundan Türkiye-Ermenistan İlişkilerinin Normalleşmesi Sürecine’’, Stratejik Analiz, Vol: 9 Issue: 106, February 2009, p.18

Ekaterine Tkeshelashvili on 31 August 2008.³³² Turkish Prime Minister Tayyip Erdoğan went to Batumi to attend the opening ceremony of newly modernised Sarp Border Gate on 5 March 2009.³³³

6.2. Georgia And Multidimensional Turkish Foreign Policy

As a country in need of energy, Turkey hoped to benefit from energy imports from Azerbaijan, trying to reduce its overdependence on the Middle East, and seeking to become a transit route to Western markets. Georgia, because of its location to secure the transportation of Azerbaijani oil and gas to the international markets, took on a vital role in Turkish foreign policy making.³³⁴

Georgia, locating on the energy transit zone, is an important border neighbour of Turkey. After its independence, Turkey always supported Georgia and attached importance to its stability and security. Turkish foreign policy towards Georgia is based on strengthening political ties and intensifying trade relations. the main concern of Turkish government has been to turn Turkey into ‘one of the principal mediator of regional conflicts, the guarantor of peace and an overall power broker.’³³⁵

During the Russian-Georgian war, abstaining from becoming a party and deciding between Russia or Georgia, Turkey tried to take initiative in Abkhazia and South Ossetia conflict by defending security for everybody principle. It took an immediate

³³²<http://www.milliyet.com.tr/default.aspx?aType=SonDakika&ArticleID=978537> (21.12.2012)

³³³<http://www.sabah.com.tr/Dunya/2011/05/31/gurcistana-kimlikle-girilecek> (18.01.2013)

³³⁴ Temel İskit, ‘Turkey a new Actor in the Field of Energy Politics, Perception, Vol: 1, March-May 1996

³³⁵http://www.mfa.gov.tr/turkey_s-relations-with-southern-caucasus.en.mfa (19.01.2013)

action by sending food and building 100 houses for refugees in Gori.³³⁶ The crisis stemming from the ethnic conflicts in South Osetia and Abkhazia created serious unrest for Turkey, too. The enthusiasm of Russia for a military intervention brought anxiety and violence into the region, causing also problems for Turkey.³³⁷ As a response to the separatist movements in Abkhazia and South Ossetia starting in 1990s, Turkey followed a policy basing on respect to the territorial integrity of Georgia and peaceful settlement of problems in the framework of Georgian internationally recognised borders.³³⁸ The autonomous status of the Adjara region was determined by the Moscow and Kars Treaties in 1921.³³⁹

Turkey, having close cooperation with Georgia, search for a balancing policy against Russia. Turkey's strengthening position in regional cooperation provides it with some opportunities in its relations with Russia. It tries not to externalise Russia in its regional politics. The goal of Turkey's initiative, Caucasus Stability and Cooperation Platform, is the prevention of new prospective crisis in the region by creating a platform through which all parties will have the chance of coming together. Turkey also insists that the conflict must be kept as a regional one, if not solved, rather than transforming it into an international problem. That is why it did not allowed the transit of American ships coming for assisting Georgia into the Black Sea basing on the provisions of Montreux Convention and prevented a possible close confrontation.

Turkey aimed to find a common solution for the settlement of problems on the basis of Caucasus Stability and Cooperation Platform. In this framework, while trying to

³³⁶ Marianna Vindimian, 'Evolution of Turkish Foreign Policy towards Georgia', ISPI Policy Brief, No: 196, 2010, p.3

³³⁷ Bülent Aras, Pınar Akpınar, 'The Relations between Turkey and the Caucasus', Perceptions, Vol: 15, Issue: 3, Autumn 2011, p.63

³³⁸ Selçuk Çolakoğlu, 'Türkiye Gürcistan İlişkileri', Tasam, Stratejik Öngörü, June 2011, p.31

³³⁹ <http://www.mfa.gov.tr/relations-between-turkey-and-georgia.en.mfa> (19.01.2013)

increase cooperation with regional states, Turkey also struggled for creation of a common sense and development of its relations with regional and international powers having interests in the region.³⁴⁰

It is of great significance to bear in mind the specific features of three regional states to be more active in settlement of regional conflicts in line with Turkey's new multidimensional policy basing on zero-problem with neighbours principle. Economic, political and social structure in these three states differ from each other. It needs to take into account the different development level, the influence of domestic pressure groups on politics, and level of foreign intervention in each states. by this way, Turkey will strenghten its hand in its regional activities.³⁴¹

Locating on a very strategically important crossroad, Caucasus is like an interest center of international powers. Turkey should also develop its relations with these international power groups. Regional and international powers desiring to shape and restructure the region in line with their interests are directly concerned with all initiatives about the region. This multilateral relationships basing on self-interests increase the fragility of region. The politics of international powers toward the region have a direct influence on Turkey's existence and acceptance of its political maneuvers by regional states. Free from external interference and regional conflicts gaining a multilateral character with the intervention of other parties, Caucasus can enjoy a much stability and prosperity. This is only possible through a comprehensive participatory regional cooperation basing on economic elements. Multidimensional relations between Georgia and Turkey who became the biggest

³⁴⁰ Mitat Çelikpala, 'Kafkaslardaki Son Gelişmeler, Küresel Hakimiyet Mücadelesi ve Türkiye', Stratejik Analiz, Vol: 9, Issue.101, September 2008

³⁴¹ Vindimian, *ibid*, p. 2

trade partner of it in the first half of 2010 with a volume of 496 million dollars have followed a positive course gradually since Georgian independence. .³⁴²

Georgia signed a number of agreements with Turkey from trade to education, science to aviation. Turkey and Georgia also cooperate in military field. Furthermore, cooperation in the field of defense increased after adoption of a pro-Western foreign policy in Georgia after 2003. Cooperation is not limited to trade. Both countries followed a similar policy in international organizations and stated that they respect to their territorial integrity in every platform.

Due to its strategic position in Caucasus geography, Georgia has been a struggle area of influence between Russia and West after the collapse of Soviet Union.³⁴³ Georgia, situated on the transit zone of East-West and North-South, has always been an important political and economic partner for Turkey. Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan oil pipeline reaches Turkey through Georgian territory. The connection between Turkey and Azerbaijan and the other Turkish republics is only possible through Georgia. It shows that Georgia has an indispensable weight in Turkish foreign policy.

Because of its close historical, cultural and ethnical ties with the region from Abkhazia to Adjara, Turkey had to pay attention to repatriation of Meskhetian Turks to Georgia, exiled from their homeland to Central Asia by the Soviet regime in 1944,³⁴⁴ and supports Georgian government's activities to this end. Negotiation to this end continues between two countries. On 6-20 th April 2006, Georgian State

³⁴² Aras, *ibid* p.62

³⁴³ Bozkurt, *ibid*. p.2

³⁴⁴ Emmanuel Karagiannis, "The Turkish-Georgian Partnership and the Pipeline Factor", *Journal of Southern Europe and the Balkans*, Vol: 6, Issue:1, April 2004, p.17

Minister Giorgi Haindrava paid an official visit to Turkey.³⁴⁵ He stated that Meskhetian Turks has a strategic importance in promotion of Turkish-Georgian relations. He also informed that Georgian Parliament prepared a resolution for the return of Meskhetians to Georgia and they would be granted with Georgian citizenship. Stating that they were working on this issue with enthusiasm, he asked for Turkish government support.³⁴⁶

6.3. Role Of Turkey And Georgia In Regional Security

In both countries security doctrines, bilateral cooperation and close relations have been highlighted. In Georgia's 2011 National Security Concept, Turkey is considered as a leading regional partner. The document underlines that "Turkey, as a member of NATO, and one of the regional leaders, is also an important military partner."³⁴⁷ Turkey always emphasizes that the military cooperation between Turkey and Georgia is part of a project to incorporate Georgia into the western and Atlantic security network through NATO and the US.³⁴⁸

During 2001-2002, Georgia took part in nine NATO Partnership for Peace (PfP) exercises.³⁴⁹ The Turkish Partnership for Peace Training Centre (TUPTC) has been providing training in the states of Caucasus, Central Asia and Balkans through its mobile training teams in line with the project of "Increasing the Efficacy of

³⁴⁵ Hasan Kanbolat, "Gürcistan Kars Antlaşması'nı Unuttu mu?", Stratejik Analiz, Issue: 73 , May, 2006, p.57

³⁴⁶ Ibid, p.57

³⁴⁷ National Security Concepts of Georgia,
http://www.mfa.gov.ge/index.php?lang_id=ENG&sec_id=12 (22.01.2013)

³⁴⁸ Gareth Winrow, Turkey and The Caucasus: Domestic Interests and Security Concerns, The Royal Institute of International Affairs, London, 2000, p.26

³⁴⁹ Marianna Vindimian, "Evolution of Turkish Foreign Policy towards Georgia", ISPI Policy Brief, No: 196, September 2010 p.4

TUPTC in NATO.³⁵⁰ The most striking results of this Turkish and NATO support for Georgia could be seen in Shevardnadze's policy preferences. At NATO's 5001 Anniversary Summit in Washington, Georgia decided to quit the CIS (Commonwealth of Independent States) Collective Security Treaty along with Azerbaijan and Uzbekistan, in 1999.³⁵¹ Georgia and Turkey have been also taking part in Black Sea Naval Cooperation Task Group (BLACKSEAFOR) together with Bulgaria, Russia, Romania, and Ukraine.³⁵²

Turkey and Georgia's military partnership has been strengthened by Turkish army's contributions to modernisation of Georgian Army. Turkish assistance in training of Georgian troops, improving technical and logistic capabilities that complies with the NATO standards and in modernising military infrastructure has contributed to Georgian Armed Forces.³⁵³ Turkey, founding a military Academy in Tbilisi, also modernised the military airbase in Marneuli as well as some other bases in Vaziani after Russia withdrew from these bases in early 2001. Turkish military personnel also offered predeployment training for Georgian armed forces before they were sent to Kosovo.³⁵⁴

Five-day long Russian-Georgian War, proving the fragility of the regional security, has showed the significance of a secure and stable environment for the future of states in the region. Each of these conflicts dating back to Soviet Union but kept as frozen have turned into a threat for the whole region. Promotion of security,

³⁵⁰ Ibid, p.4

³⁵¹ Çelikpala, *ibid* p. 27

³⁵² Vindimian, *ibid*. p.4

³⁵³ Jean-Christophe Peuch, 'Georgia: Hopeful President Pays First Official Visit to Turkey', Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, 20 May 2004

³⁵⁴ Ivane Chkhikvadze, 'Zero-Problem with Neighbours: The Case of Georgia', *Turkish Policy Quarterly*, Summer 2011, p.7

settlement of secessionist regional conflicts and prevention of increasing Russian influence are the troubles generating serious unrest and affecting Turkey as well. One of the most serious outcomes of the Russian-Georgian war has been the change of status quo in a dangerous way. Russia, not hesitated to use military power during the war, keeps it as a possible reality through its military bases in Abkhazia and South Ossetia. Possibility of a military intervention creates a burden for Turkey's regional strategy.

Russia has been defined as the biggest threat for regional security and stability by Georgians. They beleive that Russia preserves its historical imperial perception and it is supported by ideologists of the regime. Russia, struggling for keeping its sphere of influence and keeping energy corridors under control is claimed to deteriorate the balances in the region by playing with the frozen conflicts.³⁵⁵ Turkey, by providing training for Georgian officers tries to manage to balance the Russian influence over Georgia. But at the same time, it seeks to be cautious in not upsetting or threatening its relations with the big northern neighbour.³⁵⁶

Taking into account the stance of Western states during Russian-Georgian war, it can be inferred that Turkey's policies regarding the regional conflicts will be very decisive. West does not seem to pursue a policy that turns its back on Russia given its dependency on Russian natural gas and Russian influence on the region. Failure of EU and NATO to impose sanctions on Russia to have it apply ceasefire terms encourage Russia. It is required to generate applicable policies bringing all sided together and promoting permanent peace in the region. Under these conditions, Turkey should be more active in regional initiatives.

³⁵⁵ Bozkurt, *ibid*, p.2

³⁵⁶ Mithat Çelikpala, "From A Failed State to a Weak One? Georgia and Turkish-Georgian Relations" *The Turkish Yearbook of International Relations*, No: 36,2005, p.25

Turkey's Caucasus policy, in a search of promotion of regional peace and stability, has economic, political and security aspects. Politically, Turkey pursues policies basing on stability and integration of Georgia with West and preservation of its territorial integrity.³⁵⁷ Turkish foreign policy towards Georgia emphasizes stability and promotion of democracy. From security aspect, settlement of regional ethnic conflicts through peaceful means and prevention of all activities by radical groups are Turkey's priorities. In Turkey's point of view, the influence of external powers should also be decreased which can facilitate the settlement of conflicts in regional level. Economically, Turkey acts in accordance with its desire to increase foreign trade with regional states and to transport Caspian energy resources to western markets in a safe way. Transportation of energy resources through Turkey and Georgia, increasing commercial relations and pursuit of cooperation against increasing Russian influence are the main elements of relations between Georgia and Turkey.³⁵⁸

In the first period of its independence during when it struggled with ethnical separatism and economic problems, Georgia faced with the threat to its territorial integrity. Transportation projects of Caspian energy resources to international markets through Georgia and Turkey has been a stimuli in development of bilateral relations not only economically but also politically. Interdependency between two states in a framework of common interests creates further cooperation opportunities. As a result of this, a partnership extending to a passport and visa free travelling opportunity has been achieved.

³⁵⁷ Vitaly Sharia, 'Abkhazia In The Midst of Russia, Georgia and Turkey', (Ed.), Alexander Iskandaryan, Caucasus Institute, 2008, p. 119

³⁵⁸ Karagiannis, *ibid*, p. 22

6.4. Georgia's Ethnic Problems And Their Reflections On Its Relations With Turkey

In Georgia, it is estimated that 3 % of total population is Abkhaz, 5 % is Azerbaijani, 4 % is Armenian, 4% is Ossetian, 3% is Russian and 76 % is Georgian origin.³⁵⁹ Remaining 5 % is composed of other ethnical and religious groups. Today, current estimates of the number of North Caucasians in Turkey range from one to six million, depending on the sources used.³⁶⁰ The public opinion of Caucasian diaspora in Turkey is quite influential about issues in North Caucasus and Georgia. The relations between Turkey and Georgia cannot be fully explained only through its political, economical and strategic dimension. Tendency and identity of electorate is a factor in Turkish foreign policy.

6.4.1. South Ossetia

Ossetians, constituting 75 % of regional population, declared their independence in August 1990 and took a decision turning South Ossetia to Democratic Soviet Republic.³⁶¹ As a reaction, Gamsakurdiya administration declared that it terminated Ossetian autonomy in December 1990, and deployed troops into the region.³⁶² The confrontations between Ossetian and Georgian troops continued for two years. During these military conflicts, appoxiamately 100 thousands refugees asyllumed North Ossetia that is under Russian control.³⁶³

³⁵⁹ Selçuk Çolakoğlu, "Türkiye Gürcistan İlişkileri", Tasam, Stratejik Öngörü, p. 29

³⁶⁰ John Colarusso, "Abkhazia", Central Asian Survey, Vol: 14 No: 1, 1995, p.35

³⁶¹ Yvonne Bangert, "Güney Osetya Anlaşmazlığı", Kafkasya Yazıları, Issue: 4, Summer 1998, p. 63

³⁶² Ahmet Öztürk, "Rusya-Gürcistan Krizi: Yerel Bir Çatışma, Küresel Yansımalar", OAKA, Vol: 4 Issue:7, 2009, p.7

³⁶³ Julian Birch, "Ossetia: A Caucasian Bosnia in Microcosm", Central Asian Survey, Vol: 14 Issue:1, 1995, p.50

‘The military conflicts in the region ended after an agreement reached by Russian President Boris Yeltsin and Georgian President Eduard Shevardnadze. According to this agreement, a peace force composed of Georgian, Russian and Ossetian troops was deployed to the border between Georgia and autonomous region. This peace force was later declared to prevent the conflicts in the region and insure the stability by observers of Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).’³⁶⁴

However, a permanent political solution could not be achieved. South Ossetians declared their ambition to come under Russian rule and unite with Northern Ossetia.³⁶⁵ But, Georgia argued that South Ossetia’s autonomy did not have any legal and historical base. Georgia stated that the only privilege for South Ossetian can be cultural autonomy.³⁶⁶ This approach has been seen in 1995 Georgian Constitution as in this Constitution, Abkhazia and Ajaria were provided with autonomy while South Ossetia was only granted cultural autonomy.³⁶⁷

After coming to office, Mikhail Saakashvili specified establishment of territorial integrity in Georgia as his main goal.³⁶⁸ In June 2004, he declared Reconciliation Plan with Ossetia took some decisions for focusing on economic projects with the region. He was well aware of the importance of Western support in his initiatives.³⁶⁹ For this reason, National Security Strategy Document that had

³⁶⁴ Iraklı Tsereteli, ‘‘Seeking Stability under Shevardnadze’’, Transition Online, 26 July 1996 p. 9

³⁶⁵ Oktay F. Tanrısever, ‘‘Gürcistan’ın Güney Osetya’daki Askeri Operasyonu ve Rusya’nın Tepkisi’’, <http://www.porttakal.com/haberler/dunya/gurcistanin-guney-osetyadaki-askeri-operasyonu-ve-rusyanin-tepkisi-75744.html> (19.12.2012)

³⁶⁶ Fahrettin Çiloğlu, Rusya Federasyonu ve Transkafkasya’da Etnik Çatışmalar, Tran. N. Domanıç, Sinatle Yayınevi, İstanbul, 1998, p.195

³⁶⁷ Tsereteli, ibid, p.9

³⁶⁸ Öztürk, ibid, p. 7

³⁶⁹ Ibid.

Western tendency was accepted in September 2006.³⁷⁰ In this document, there were some provisions about the struggle against secessionist regions. The political regimes in these secessionist regions were evaluated as the biggest threat before country's transition to democracy. In the same document, it was stated that international support was needed but with reference to Russia, it was not under a single state's monopoly.³⁷¹

On 12 November 2006, a referendum for independence was held in South Ossetia and in this referendum, view for independence took 99.88% of votes.³⁷² In presidential election, Georgia supported the former Prime Minister of South Ossetia, Dimitri Sanakoev, who was a politician with close ties with Tbilisi, against Eduard Kokoity. Kokoity was reelected as President of South Ossetia.³⁷³ He gave special attention to his relations with Russia and developed these relations especially in 2008 summer. On the other hand, in Georgian and Ossetian villages not controlled by the separatists, Sanakoyev was declared the president-elect. The appearance of two different de facto governments and a dual power supported by Russian and Georgia was not welcome by the West. Saakashvili's resolution called South Ossetia Administrative Entity was accepted in the first session in Georgian parliament. Within this resolution, a temporary administrative entity was supposed to be formed by Kokoity and Sanakoev with an authority to appoint deputy ministers in the fields like education, finance, culture, internal affairs, social security, justice and science.³⁷⁴ After the approval of the resolution envisaging the

³⁷⁰ Giray Saynur Bozkurt, "Gürcistan'daki Etnik Çatışmalar Karşısında Türkiye ve Rusya'nın Tutumu", Karadeniz Araştırmaları, Vol: 19, Autumn 2008, p.6

³⁷¹ Ibid, p.6

³⁷² Ibid, p.6

³⁷³ Hasan Kanbolat, "Abhazya ve Güney Osetya Sorunu Çatışmaya Yönelebilir mi?", Stratejik Analiz, June 2008, p.78

³⁷⁴ Kanbolat, ibid. p.78

establishment of this administrative entity in South Ossetia by Georgian parliament, Sanakoev was appointed by President of Georgia as the Head of South Ossetian Provisional Administrative Entity.³⁷⁵

In Tbilisi point of view, South Ossetian conflict was more possible to be defrosted than Abkhazia conflict within the principle of Georgian territorial integrity.³⁷⁶ Being elected as President in 2004 presidential election, Mikhael Saakashvili started to argue for the permanent settlement of this conflict.³⁷⁷ Russia asserted the necessity of preventing any possibility that could turn the frozen conflict into a close armed conflict.³⁷⁸

South Ossetian Parliament called Russian Federation, CIS, UN, and EU for the recognition of its independence on 3rd March 2008 after Kosovo declared its independence on 17th February 2008.³⁷⁹ The Parliament stated that Kosovo was a satisfactory example and the principle of sovereign states' territorial integrity lost its priority.³⁸⁰ Russian support for South Ossetia increased drastically in 2008. After recognition of Kosovo independence by Western countries and Georgian application for NATO membership, Russian President Vladimir Putin gave instruction to the local units in North Caucasus to develop their relations with South Ossetia.³⁸¹

³⁷⁵ Hasan Kanbolat, ‘‘Abhazya ve Güney Osetya Sorunu Çatışmaya Yönelebilir mi?’’, *Stratejik Analiz*, June 2008, p.78

³⁷⁶ Tanrısever, *ibid*

³⁷⁷ Tanrısever, *ibid*

³⁷⁸ Tanrısever, *ibid*

³⁷⁹ Kanbolat, *ibid*, p.78

³⁸⁰ Hasan Kanbolat, ‘‘Güney Osetya Sorununun Yakın Tarihi’’, *ASAM*, 12 August 2008,

³⁸¹ Tanrısever, *ibid*.

Although the August war between Russia and Georgia was five-day long from 8 to 12 August, its implications are likely to be effective in the whole region for a long time. One of the most outstanding outcomes of the war has been Turkey's stance under the changed conditions in Caucasus putting Turkey into a corner between Russia and US. During the war days, Turkey did its best to stay out of the conflict and avoided being a side. Underlining Turkey's strong alliance with the US but also acknowledging Turkey's expanding relations with Russia, Turkish Prime Minister Tayyip Erdoğan said he "will not allow Turkey to be pushed to one side or the other. We will act in accordance with Turkey's national interests. Turkey will observe a balance in tandem with its interests. It is not right to force Turkey to stand by only one side."³⁸²

The ambivalent situation existing in South Caucasus before 8 August allowed Ankara to pursue a rather ambiguous policy. The main features of this situation were the frozen state of the local conflicts and Russia's relatively restrained behavior. 'These circumstances were seen as beneficial for Turkey's delicate balancing act, playing the role of a regional heavyweight in the Caucasus and maintaining a 'multidimensional partnership' with Russia.'³⁸³ 'The Georgia crisis broke out at a time when both Russia and Turkey were demonstrating the tendency toward different policies. Russia has abandoned its policy of integration with the West and is casting itself as an independent Eurasian great power, while Turkey has shifted its focus away from its role as a NATO member toward that of a regional power. Turkey has undergone a dramatic strategic reorientation. It has moved away from a role within a larger multilateral Western alliance toward a more unilateral

³⁸² İbrahim Kalın, 'Turkey and NATO: Is non-alliance an option?', *Today's Zaman*, 4 September 2008 <http://www.todayszaman.com/columnist-152027-turkey-and-nato-is-non-alliance-an-option.html> (21.01.2013)

³⁸³ Igor Torbakov, *The Georgia Crisis and Russia-Turkey Relations*, Jamestown Foundation, Washington, 2008, p.9

assertation as a regional power.’³⁸⁴The two countries position themselves as pragmatic international players acting on the basis of their national interest.³⁸⁵

Within this context, Caucasus Stability and Cooperation Platform, proposed by Turkey with the aim of establishing a stability and cooperation platform for the promotion of regional peace, joint security and economic cooperation has been a clear example of Turkey’s understanding of regional developments and of the situation in Georgia. ‘After the end of August 2008 hostilities, the proposal for a CSCP at such a critical juncture serves Turkey’s foreign policy priorities for a more pro-active policy in the Caucasus in the context of its “zero-problems with the neighbours” and the “maximum cooperation” approach.’³⁸⁶

6.4.2. Abkhazia

Abkhazia, most of whom are Orthodox Christians,³⁸⁷ is a Caucasian nation. In the 19th century, the wider region came under Russian domination, and in 1864 Abkhazia was annexed to the Russian Empire.³⁸⁸ After the Bolshevik revolution, Abkhazia gained a measure of autonomy, before Stalin incorporated it into the Soviet union republic of Georgia in 1931. At the time of the collapse of the USSR

³⁸⁴ Richard Giragosian, ‘‘Redefining Turkey’s Strategic Orientation’’, Turkish Policy Quarterly, Vol.6, No: 4, 2007, p. 35

³⁸⁵ Ibid, p.6

³⁸⁶ Eleni Fotiou, ‘‘Caucasus Stability and Cooperation Platform:What is At Stake for Regional Cooperation’’, ICBSS (International Center for Black Sea Studies) Policy Brief No:16, June 2009, p.5

³⁸⁷ Stanislav Lakoba, ‘‘Abkhazia is Abkhazia’’, Central Asian Survey, Vol: 14 Issue: 1, 1995, p.101

³⁸⁸ Hasan Kanbolat, ‘‘Abhazya ve Güney Osetya Sorunu Çatışmaya Yönelir mi?’’, Stratejik Analiz, June 2008, p.76

in 1991, less than a fifth of the people of Abkhazia were ethnic Abkhaz, while the rest of the population was made up largely of Georgians.³⁸⁹

The declaration of independence by Abkhazian Parliament in July 1992 terminated the dialogue between Abkhazia and Georgia.³⁹⁰ Taking advantages of the problems between South Ossetia and Georgia, Abkhazia, believing in Russian support declared their independence. In reaction to this decision, Georgian troops advanced into Abkhazia and a new civil war broke out in Georgia³⁹¹. Being encouraged by this success, Abkhazia, arguing for federative relations with Tbilisi until August 1992, declared that it would only accept a confederative structure.³⁹² Furthermore, Abkhazian People Congress, expressed their desire to come into under Russian protection in April 1995.³⁹³

During Abkhazia Conflict, Turkey emphasised that it respected the territorial integrity and independence of Georgia. It argued for the peaceful settlement of disputes between two sides. On the other hand, it cannot be denied that the sympathy for Abkhazia in Turkish public opinion because of historical and ethnic ties constituted a problem in bilateral relations between Turkey and Georgia.. Taking into account the number of Abkhaz in Abkhazian region, influence of Abkhazian people in Turkey becomes clear.

However, after the second half of 1990s, Turkey's stance towards Abkhazia issue become more concrete in favor of Georgia. Turkey showed that it pursued a policy supporting the territorial integrity of Georgia both on presidential and ministerial level. It was thought that it would be very difficult for Abkhazia to stand as a fully

³⁸⁹ <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-18175030> (13.12.2012)

³⁹⁰ Ciloğlu, *ibid*, p.207

³⁹¹ Bozkurt, *ibid*, p.9

³⁹² Lakoba, *ibid* p.103

³⁹³ Bozkurt, *ibid*, p.10

independent state alone. An independent Abkhazia was highly possible to fall under Russian domination.

Ethnic conflicts in Georgia have different outcomes for Russia, Georgia and Turkey. The relations between Turkey and Georgia improved especially after BTC. But, on the other hand, Russia, as an economic partner, has an indispensable place in Turkish policies.³⁹⁴ Turkey, regarding ethnic conflicts in Georgia, supported Georgian territorial integrity. Turkey also sustains close military and political relations with Georgia who has a very strategical position in energy and transportation issues. Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan oil pipeline, Shahdeniz gas pipeline and Baku-Tbilisi-Kars railway are big projects providing opportunities for further cooperation in Caucasus. Turkey, dependent on Russian natural gas, tries to keep the balance between Russia and Georgia.³⁹⁵

6.5. Economic Relations

The Bilateral Agreements on the Promotion and Reciprocal Protection of Investments and the Agreement on Trade and Economic Co-operation, which were signed in July 1992, provide the legal framework of economic relations. Furthermore, a Credit Agreement of US\$50 million was signed in February 1993 between Turkish Eximbank and Export–Import Bank of Georgia.³⁹⁶ Turkey exports mainly food and electrical appliances to Georgia, and imports in return mostly electrical engineering products and coloured metals.³⁹⁷

³⁹⁴ Giray Saynur Bozkurt, “Gürcistan’daki Etnik Çatışmalar Karşısında Türkiye ve Rusya’nın Tutumu”, Karadeniz Araştırmaları, Issue: 19, Autumn 2008, p.22

³⁹⁵ Bozkurt, *ibid* p.23

³⁹⁶ Emmanuel Karagiannis, “Turkish-Georgian Partnership and Pipeline Factor”, Journal of Southern Europe and the Balkans, Vol: 6 No: 1, April 2004, p.3

³⁹⁷ Karagiannis, *ibid*, p. 15

Economic relations between Turkey and Georgia dating back to the collapsing period of Soviet Union has continued in early 1990s. During Turgut Ozal period neighbours were attached importance as potential export markets. This trend was carried on by later governments. In Justice and Development Party's (AKP) party program, it is stated that 'moving from the fact that exports can be achieved most easily with neighbouring countries. Turkey will take all types of measures aimed at implementation for the increase of exports to neighbouring countries.'³⁹⁸

'Since 2007, Turkey has been Georgia's biggest trade partner. Bilateral trade volume has reached 1.104 billion USD in 2010, which equals to 16.5% of Georgia's total foreign trade. In addition, the value of works undertaken by Turkish contractors in Georgia has exceeded 1 billion USD. Turkish firms have also particularly taken a significant place in hydro-electric station construction works. Furthermore, Turkish investments to Georgia between 1997 and 2010 have reached the level of 682.3 million USD.'³⁹⁹ 'The total share of Turkish contracting firms in the Georgian market is around 70 percent. The share of Turkish companies is 50 percent in the textile and food industries in Georgia.'⁴⁰⁰

'Georgian export to Turkey is 263 million dolar in 2008, 221 million dolar in 2009, 203 million dolar in 2010. With 15.8%, Turkey ranks the first in total Georgian export rate. Georgian import from Turkey is 916 million dolar in 2008, 771 million dolar in 2009, and 862 million dolar in 2010.'⁴⁰¹ Considering that the total amount

³⁹⁸ Justice and Development Party Program, <http://eng.akparti.org.tr/english/partyprogramme.html> (18.01.2013)

³⁹⁹ Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Dışışleri Bakanlığı, "Türkiye-Gürcistan Syasi İlişkileri", <http://www.mfa.gov.tr/relations-between-turkey-and-georgia.en.mfa> (14.01.2013)

⁴⁰⁰ Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Dışışleri Bakanlığı, "Türkiye-Gürcistan Syasi İlişkileri", <http://www.mfa.gov.tr/relations-between-turkey-and-georgia.en.mfa> 8 (14.01.2013)

⁴⁰¹ http://www.itso.org/docs/pdf/country_reports/gurcistan_ulke_raporu_2011.pdf (14.01.2013)

of Georgian foreign trade is \$6.678 billion, Turkey's role and share in the Georgian economy becomes evident.⁴⁰²

6.5.1. Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan Oil Pipeline As A Driver In Turkey-Georgian Relations

Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan (BTC) oil pipeline has 1 million b/d (per day) capacity and it runs 245 km through Azerbaijan, 245 km through Georgia and 1.076 km through Turkey.⁴⁰³ In comparison with its alternatives, BTC has been the most appropriate route ecologically, economically and strategically. Pipelines across the Transcaucasus to the Black Sea and through Turkey to the Mediterranean are the least costly way to get Azerbaijan's oil to the international market. Through this pipeline, region states create a natural system in which they both produce, consume and transport energy.⁴⁰⁴ In Transcaucasus, the only country with oil and natural gas reserves is Azerbaijan. The importance of Georgia results from its crucial position as the only available non-Russian export route for Azerbaijani oil. Georgia is of strategic importance as the transit state of BTC.⁴⁰⁵

Since Turkey's formal recognition of Georgian independence in 1991, Turkey-Georgian relationship have steadily increased and reached the level of strategic partnership in various fields from defense, security, trade, and energy. Energy related projects between Turkey and Georgia which is an indispensable bridge

⁴⁰² Hasan Kanbolat, 'Erdogan, Saakashvili in Sarp Border Gate: Passport Free Travel kicks off', Todays Zaman, 30 May 2011
http://www.todayszaman.com/columnistDetail_getNewsById.action?newsId=245640

⁴⁰³ Alaeddin Yalçinkaya, Kafkasya'da Siyasi Gelişmeler Etnik Düğümünden Küresel Kördüğümüne, Lalezar Kitabevi, Ankara, 2006, p.313, <http://ady.com.tr/tarihce>

⁴⁰⁴ Harun Bal, 'Bakü-Tiflis-Ceyhan Petrol Boru Hattı ve Türkiye Ekonomisine Etkileri', Çukurova Üniversitesi, Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Dergisi, Vol: 19, Issue: 3, 2010, p. 345-360

⁴⁰⁵ Cenk Pala, Hasan Kanbolat, 'Bakü-Tiflis-Ceyhan 21. Yüzyılın İpek Yolu', Stratejik Analiz, Vol: 6, Issue:62, 2005, p. 18

connecting Turkey with Azerbaijan and Central Asia energy resources to Europe have acted as a catalyst for the strengthening of bilateral relations. Appeared as an ally for Tbilisi, Turkey has been evaluated as a model of development stemming from its longlasting connections with Europe and US and their economic infrastructure.⁴⁰⁶ For the development of bilateral economic and commercial relations, pipeline projects are of significant importance and evidences of Turkey's strong commitment for strengthening of regional cooperation.⁴⁰⁷

The most concrete problem of oil-rich states in Caspian region has been the lack of a direct access to international markets. Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan have sought to open up to the world by bypassing Russia and decrease their dependency to Russia. Turkey and Georgia together provide an alternative route that these countries look for. Georgia has become the only door opening up to Caucasus and Central Asia for Turkey taking into account the conflict between Azerbaijan and Armenia over Nagorno Karabakh. Georgia has appeared as only reliable partner that provide Turkey with access to Azerbaijan. Turkey's plans to become a major energy transit country is only possible through good relations with Georgia.

Georgia sees BTC as a means to foster its independence, alleviate its economic difficulties by ensuring transit revenues and stabilize the country.⁴⁰⁸ For Georgia, pipelines are of great importance as they provide both economic and political stability in the region.⁴⁰⁹ With increase in incomes, level of prosperity is expected

⁴⁰⁶ Mitat Çelikpala, "Form a Failed State to a Weak One? Georgia and Turkish-Georgian Relations", *The Turkish Yearbook of International Relations*, No: 36, 2005, p.18

⁴⁰⁷ Marianna Vindimian, "Evolution of Turkish Foreign Policy towards Georgia", *ISPI Policy Brief*, No: 196, September 2010, p.3

⁴⁰⁸ Karagiannis, *ibid.* p. 21

⁴⁰⁹ Kamil Ağacan, "Soğuk Savaş Sonrası Türkiye-Gürcistan İlişkileri", İdris Bal (Ed.) 21. Yüzyılda Türk Dış Politikası, Agam, Lalezar Kitabevi, Ankara, 2006, p.468

to increase paving the way for the settlement of ethnic tensions and social unease. A Georgia overcoming its economic distress and coping with economic depressions will decrease its dependency to Russia.⁴¹⁰

Azerbaijan, Georgia and Turkey signed an agreement supporting the BTC route as the main export pipeline for Azerbaijani oil exports in October 1998.⁴¹¹ On 10 June 2005, with the participation of Turkish President Ahmet Necdet Sezer, Azerbaijani President İlham Aliyev, Georgian President Mikhail Saakashvili and Kazakhstan President Nursultan Nazarbayev, the first oil was pumped through BTC.⁴¹² Cooperation between Turkey and Georgia in the field of pipeline projects has also contributed to the creation of new collaboration areas along with their direct effect to local economies.⁴¹³

6.6. Cultural Relations

‘Cultural relations with Georgia has been conducted within the framework of ‘Cooperation Agreement on Education, Science, Culture, Sport’ signed on 30 July 1992 in Tbilisi.’⁴¹⁴ In Turkey, there are a large number of Georgian citizens especially living in the Black Sea Region. They mostly live in Ordu, Artvin, Samsun and some cities in Marmara Region. Most of them do not speak their language. A small group has still ties with their motherland. But mostly they are integrated with the Turkish culture.

⁴¹⁰ ibid p. 20

⁴¹¹ Karagiannis, ibid, p.20

⁴¹² Cenk Pala, Hasan Kanbolat, ‘‘Bakü-Tiflis-Ceyhan: 21. Yüzyılın İpek Yolu’’, Stratejik Analiz, Haziran 2005, Vol: 6 Issue: 62, p.24

⁴¹³ Vindimian, İbid, p.3

⁴¹⁴ http://www.mfa.gov.tr/bilateral-agreements-for-cooperation--on-culture_.en.mfa (18.01.2013)

Cultural relations constitutes an important part of bilateral relations between two states. Education is another field of Georgian-Turkish cooperation. Turkey offers scholarships to Georgian students for their higher education in Turkey. To promote the relations and to introduce Turkish culture to Georgian people, Tbilisi Yunus Emre Institute came into activity on 7 February, 2012 in one of Tbilisi State University buildings.⁴¹⁵ It provides 270 students with Turkish language courses. There are 262 Georgian students continuing their studies at various Turkish universities.⁴¹⁶ Bilateral cooperation with Georgia in the field of education is at a satisfactory level.

Citizens of both countries enjoy a visa-free regime for touristic travels. As a result, Turkey has become one of the main destinations for Georgian citizens. The Batumi Airport is jointly used by Turkey and Georgia.⁴¹⁷ In addition, after the ratification of the Protocol signed on 31 May 2011, Turkish and Georgian citizens will be able to travel to each other's country by showing their national identity documents without passport.⁴¹⁸ The number of Georgians entering Turkey increased from 235,143 in 2004 to 1,112,193 visitors in 2010.⁴¹⁹ One of the results of the abolishment of visa requirements is labour migration from Georgia to Turkey. They are generally employed by small- or medium-size enterprises in the Marmara and the eastern Black Sea regions.

⁴¹⁵ <http://www.yunusemrevakfi.com.tr/turkiye/index.php?lang=en&page=7&newsCat=1&newsID=219> (21.01.2013)

⁴¹⁶ Ivane Chkhikvadze, 'Zero Problems with Neighbors: The Case of Georgia', Turkish Policy Quarterly, Summer 2011, p.7

⁴¹⁷ Bülent Aras, Pınar Akpınar, 'The Relations Between Turkey and The Caucasus', Perceptions, Vol: 16, Issue: 3, Autumn, 2011, p. 62

⁴¹⁸ Chkhikvadze, *ibid* p.7

⁴¹⁹ www.tuik.gov.tr (22.01.2013)

Problem free political relations, strategic partnership-oriented economic relations and high level of cultural relations stemming from Georgian people living in Turkey has proved that both countries constitutes a significant weight in their both domestic and international affairs. During the war between Georgia and Russia, Turkey defended the territorial integrity of Georgia and provided support by stating that the conflict is completely an internal affair of Georgia in every occasion. The geographical position of Georgia and its role in pipeline projects put this country into a significant place in Turkey's foreign policy as a neighbor state.

CONCLUSION

During the whole process of research, these questions are asked: What are the reasons of Caucasus significance in world politics, how Turkey approached to Caucasus after the end of Cold War, what is Turkey's stance towards Russian-Georgian war, how is Turkish-Azerbaijan relations shaped after this war, what are the reflections of the war on Turkish-Armenian relations and what developments are experienced in Turkish-Georgian relations.

In the third chapter, it is discussed that following Russian-Georgian War in August 2008 and Russian recognition of independence of South Ossetia and Abkhazia, the Caucasus has risen again on the Euro-Atlantic security agenda. The crisis created new sources of instability for the entire post-Soviet space as it highlighted a new form of Russian revisionism. Russia demonstrated its readiness to embark on military confrontation in order to achieve its goals. The possibility of a conflict between Turkey and Russia due to Turkey's long lasting focus on Western structures and Russia's assertive policies regarding Eurasia has been continuously discussed. Nevertheless, Russia's privileged position in the ex-Soviet territories has been balanced by increasing Turkish-Russian relations and Turkey's multifaceted foreign policy. Turkey has started to take the role of negotiator in case of any tensions that is possible to rise between any parties in the region. Having some disagreements about some regional and international issues, Turkey still sees Russia as an indispensable partner in political regional initiatives. Regardless of the competitive nature of their relations, Turkey and Russia follows a positive course in their interactions. In this course, Turkey has repositioned itself and assumed the maintenance of peace, stability and security in the region as its top priority.

In the fourth chapter, it is argued that as a transit zone of East-West energy lines, Caucasus has been a center of international powers' interest and struggle throughout its history. After Russian-Georgian War of five days, the status quo is no longer sustainable due to the high security risks that can trigger regional and international conflicts. On this point, Turkey's historical background with three Caucasian states and the course of its current relations has been an effective factor for the future of region. During the process, Turkey has taken some steps to initiate regional cooperation with Azerbaijan and Georgia, but it is impossible to include Armenia in this cooperation due to some historical issues overshadowing the current course of relations. Turkey's diplomatic endeavours in last periods have showed a constructive approach in the politics of the region opening up a new phase in region's history. The Russian Georgian war has demonstrated that the status quo cannot continue in the region due to its nature both affecting Caucasus and the world. Chronic problems' persistence not to be defroze constitutes the biggest threat before regional security. Turkey is well aware of fragility of peace and stability in the region. Turkey, repositioning itself as a regional actor with its new political perspective through its immediate reactions to the new developments intended to ensure the stability in the region.

The Georgian-Russian crisis placed Turkey in a difficult position not only between neighbouring partner-countries but also in the wider confrontation between the US and Russia. But, Turkey has succeeded in following an effective foreign policy by trying to stay out of the conflict, neither defending its regional partner Georgia nor making official statements on the matter. Turkish Prime Minister Erdogan stated that:

“it would not be right for Turkey to be pushed towards any side. Certain circles want to push Turkey into a corner either with the United States or Russia after the Georgian incident. One of the sides is our closest ally, the United States. The other side is Russia, with

which we have an important trade volume. We would act in line with what Turkey's national interests require.”⁴²⁰ It can be argued that Turkey behaves carefully between the US, Russia and its Caucasian partners.⁴²¹

In the fifth, sixth and seventh chapters, it is analysed that after the war between Russia and Georgia in August 2008, it has been widely understood that the power vacuum and the regional conflicts creates lots of risks for stability. At the same time, the economic interdependence and existing cooperation at the regional level, made the resolution of conflictual issues more urgent. It is clear that Turkey's aspiration to become an energy hub depends on sustainable Turkish-Georgian-Azerbaijani cooperation for the transportation of energy resources from Azerbaijan to Europe through Turkey. On the other hand, taking into account the level of trade between Russia and Turkey, Turkey cannot afford to lose its partners in the region.⁴²²

Through its initiatives, Turkey tries to be a regional power with its confident and principled approach. Within the framework of its trans-Atlantic identity, Turkey strives to carry out a policy that prioritizes its regional characteristics. Adopting a multidimensional approach in its foreign policy, a political dialogue and cooperation in regional politics, Turkey has become a playmaker in the Caucasus, and a key actor who takes initiatives for resolution of regional conflicts. The Caucasus became an interesting example to monitor Turkish foreign policy implementations with mottos such as ‘zero problems with neighbours’, ‘problem solving country’ and ‘rhythmic diplomacy’. The Russian-Georgian War served as a

⁴²⁰ Bülent Alirıza, ‘‘Turkey and The Crisis in the Caucasus’’, CSIS Commentary, Washington D.C; CSIS, 9 September 2009

⁴²¹ Nona Mikhelidze, ‘‘After the 2008 Russia-Georgia War: Implications for the Wider Caucasus and Prospects for Western Involvement in Conflict Resolution’’, *The International Spectator: Italian Journal of International Affairs*, Vol: 44 Issue: 3, p.35

⁴²² Eleni Fotiou, ‘‘Caucasus Stability and Cooperation Platform: What is at stake for Regional Cooperation’’, ICBSS Policy Brief, No: 16, June 2009, p.5

catalyst for Turkey's immediate quest for security in proactive terms, in the context of 'zero problems with neighbours' and 'rhythmic diplomacy'.

With an aspiration to pursue the role of an energy hub between the East and the West and a regional soft power in the Caucasus and Central Asia, Turkey came up with an idea that seeks to resolve the conflicts in South Caucasus through developed regional cooperation. Bringing together three Caucasian states, as well as Russia and Turkey Caucasus Stability and Cooperation Platform aimed at creating a new regional security framework within which ethnic conflicts would be resolved on the basis of regional cooperation.

The proposal of this platform at such a critical time serves Turkey's foreign policy priorities for a more pro active policy in Caucasus within the context of its 'zero problems with the neighbours' approach. In its new foreign policy direction, a transformation towards a more independent and assertive nature can be observed. Turkey's initiative following Russian-Georgian war is the result of understanding that Turkey need some alternative foreign policy options. Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu's 'rhythmic diplomacy' can be interpreted as a part of this transformation in foreign policy emphasising on its multidimensional and multigeographical role. The recognition of Turkey as a strategic actor in the Caucasus could balance Russia's role in the region, eventually strenghtening Turkey's international position. Along with contributing to the foreign policy priorities for a more proactive policy in the Caucasus, CSCP attempt to resolve the conflicts within a regional framework can also be assessed as a tactical move to overcome tensions between Georgia and Russia. Turkey pursued a very cautious policy towards the August crisis avoiding from taking a side not to cause any complications with the pipelines or deterioration of its relations with any sides.

Georgia, as the only direct corridor to Azerbaijan, Caspian energy resources and the Central Asia, is another significant partner for Turkey. CSCP provided Turkey with

an opportunity to restore stability in the region. Turkey and Georgia cooperate in the field of energy, as the two legs of pipelines. This cooperation is crucial for the viability of Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan oil pipeline, Baku-Tbilisi- Erzurum gas pipeline, the Nabucco project and Baku-Tbilisi-Kars railway project connecting Europe to China. As its top foreign policy priority, promotion of relations with the EU and a future possible membership have been attached much importance. Georgia reacted to CSCP in a positive manner as it is seen as a complementary platform to existing EU structures.

In Azerbaijani point of view, any regional cooperation initiative presuppose the resolution of Nagorno Karabakh conflict and withdrawal of Armenian troops from Azerbaijani territory under Armenian occupation. According to Azerbaijan, point of departure for the resolution is related to UN Resolutions stating territorial integrity of Azerbaijan should be respected. In Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev's opinion, solution of Karabakh issue is subject to restitution of Azerbaijan's territorial integrity.

Normalisation of relations between Turkey and Armenia as a part of new directions of transforming Turkish foreign policy has not been welcome by Azerbaijan thinking that this would strengthen Armenian hand in Nagorno Karabakh issue negotiations. Any possibility to open the borders between Turkey and Armenia before a permanent solution of Karabakh could serve Armenian purposes better than Turkey's in Azerbaijan perspective.

It can be assumed that proposal for CSCP was on the agenda before the August crisis. Serving a number of Turkish foreign policy objectives, the CSCP, as a prestige-seeking or result-oriented initiative, 'has complemented the efforts to raise Turkey's regional prestige and to support its pro active foreign policy not only in

Caucasus, but as a part of an overall approach for a soft power regional leadership.⁴²³

To conclude, all of these arguments show that Turkey no longer situates itself as ‘model’ but rather as a ‘central country’ claiming to have the strength to influence the regional policies despite some arguments that Turkey has lost its credibility in Caucasus politics.⁴²⁴ These arguments state that Turkish leverage has decreased in Caucasus as Turkey could not take concrete steps to increase its influence. They also argue that after 2008 Russian Georgian War with the increasing Russian influence, Turkey, together with US and EU, lost its role as an influential regional actor.⁴²⁵ Despite this, Turkish leaders have begun referring to Turkey as not only a regional, but also a global power. In a 2009 speech in Sarajevo, Foreign Minister laid out Ankara’s ambition: ‘we will reintegrate the Balkan region, Middle East and Caucasus together with Turkey as the centre of world politics in the future.’⁴²⁶ In this period, Turkey has risen as an active and influential actor with its pro-active diplomatic initiatives, like Caucasus Stability and Cooperation Platform. It has complemented efforts to increase Turkey’s regional prestige and to support Turkey’s pro-active foreign policy not only in Caucasus, but as a part of an overall approach for a soft power regional leadership.⁴²⁷

⁴²³ Fotiou, *ibid*, p.9

⁴²⁴ Hasan Kanbolat, ‘‘Kafkasya’nın Jeopolitiğinde Değişim Sinyalleri’’, *Stratejik Analiz*, April, 2005, p. 91

⁴²⁵ Muharrem Ekşi, ‘‘Kafkasya İşbirliği ve İstikrar Platformundan Türkiye-Ermenistan İlişkilerinin Normaleştirilmesi Sürecine’’, *Stratejik Analiz*, Vol: 9, Issue: 106, p. 19

⁴²⁶ Svante Cornell, Gerald Knaus, Manfred Scheich, ‘‘Dealing with A Rising Power: Turkey’s Transformation and Its Implications for the EU’’, *The Center for The European Studies*, 2012, p.22

⁴²⁷ Eleni Fotiou, ‘‘Caucasus Stability and Cooperation Platform: What is at stake for Regional Cooperation’’, *ICBSS Policy Brief*, No: 16, June 2009, p.9

REFERENCES

Adilgızı, Lamiya, 'Turkey- Azerbaijan ties crucial for regional stability', Today's Zaman 16 September 2012

Ağacan, Kamil, ''Soğuk Savaş Sonrası Türkiye-Gürcistan İlişkileri'', 21. Yüzyılda Türk Dış Politikası, Ed. İdris Bal, Lalezar Kitabevi, Ankara, 3th Edition, 2006.

Akhmeteli, Nina, ''Georgia: Saakasvili and Medvedev Meet, Nothing Happens'', Eurasia Insight, <http://www.eurasianet.org/departments/insight/articles/eav060608a.shtml>(06.06.2012)

Alırıza, Bülent, ''Turkey and The Crisis in The Caucasus'', CSIS Commentary, Washington, 9 September 2008. Available at <http://csis.org/publication/turkey-and-crisis-caucasus> (15.11.2012)

Allison, Roy, ''Russia Resurgent? Moscow's Campaign to coerce Georgia to Peace'', International Affairs, Vol: 86 Issue: 6 November 2008

Alpargu, Mehmet, ''Güvenlik Boyutunda Türkiye-Azerbaycan İlişkileri'', Stratejik Araştırmalar Dergisi, No: 3 Ankara, 2004

Antonenko, Oksana, ''A War With No Winners'', Survival, Vol: 50 Issue: 5 October-November 2008

Aras, Bülent, ''Davutoglu Era in Turkish Foreign Policy'' SETA Policy Brief , No: 32 May 2009

Aras, Bülent, ''Ermenistan'la Normalleşmenin Sonu mu?', Avrasya İncelemeleri Merkezi, No: 393, 2010

Aras, Bülent, ''Turkey and Russian Federation: An Emerging Multidimensional Partnership'', SETA Pollicy Brief, No: 35 August 2009

Aras, Bülent, ''Dış Politikada Gaz Denklemleri'', Sabah, 17 February 2010 <http://www.haber10.com/makale/18700/#.UQEzVfJq3p8>(14.10.2012)

Aras, Bülent, Emre İşeri, ''The Nabucco Natural Gas Pipeline: From Opera to Reality'', SETA Policy Brief, No: 34, July 2009

Aras, Bülent, Fatih Özbay ''Türkiye ve Ermenistan: Statüko ve Normalleşme Arasında Kafkasya Siyaseti'', SETA Policy Brief, October 2009, No: 12

Aras, Bülent, Fatih Özbay, "Turkish-Armenian Relations: Will Football Diplomacy Work*" i SETA Policy Brief- No: 24, September 2008

Aras, Bülent, Pınar Akpınar, "Relations between Turkey and the Caucasus", Perceptions, Autumn 2011, Vol: 16 Issue: 3

Arıkan, Zeki, "Türk-Ermeni Kültür İlişkileri Üzerine", Bilim ve Aklın Aydınlığında Eğitim, (Tarihten Bir Kesit-Özel Sayı), (MEB yayını), Yıl: 4, S. 38, (Nisan 2003),

Aslanlı, Araz, "Tarihten Günümüze Karabağ Sorunu", Avrasya Dosyası, Vol: 7 Issue: 1 Ankara, 2001,

Atlı, Altay, "Turkey and Georgia: Openning the Roads for Trade" Eurasianet, <http://www.eurasianet.org/departments/business/articles/eav020806.shtml> (10.11.2012)

Azeri Basını: PKK Karabağ'a Yerleşiyor, Hürriyet, 19 Şubat 2008; 'Musavat: Karabağ'daki PKK'ya Türk Azeri operasyonu yapılacak', <http://www.usakgundem.com/haber.php?id=18142> (11.09.2012)

Babacan, Ali, "Turkish Initiatives, Calming the Caucasus", New York Times, September 23, 2008.

Bahçeli: Protokoller Çekilsin, Milliyet, 25 April 2010; "Protokoller Meclis'ten Çekilsin", Radikal, 21 January <http://www.radikal.com.tr/Radikal.aspx?aType=RadikalDetayV3&CategoryID=100&ArticleID=975806>, <http://www.radikal.com.tr/Radikal.aspx?aType=RadikalDetayV3&ArticleID=975806&CategoryID=100>

Bahçeli'den Protokol Tepkisi, Sabah, 13 October 2009 http://www.sabah.com.tr/Siyaset/2009/10/13/bahceliden_protokol_tepkisi (14.12.2012)

Bal, İdris, "Soğuk Savaş Sonrası Türk Dış Politikası için Türk Cumhuriyetleri'nin Önemi", 21. Yüzyılda Türk Dış Politikası, Ed. İdris Bal, Lalezar Kitabevi, Ankara, 3th Edition, 2006

Bal, İdris, Soğuk Savaş Sonrası Türk Dış Politikası, İdris Bal (Ed), 21. Yüzyılda Türk Dış Politikası, Agam-Lalezar Kütapevi, Ankara, 2006

Bangert, Yvonne, "Güney Osetya Anlaşmazlığı", Kafkasya Yazıları, Issue: 4, Summer 1998

Barış Üçgeni: Ermenistan, Türkiye, Azerbaycan", Yeni Şafak 11 Eylül 2008

Berzeg, Nihat, "Osmanlı Devleti'nin Kafkasya Siyaseti"; http://www.circassiancenter.com/cc-turkiye/tarih/319_osmanli.htm (09.09.2012)

- Bir Maç, İki Galip Taraf: Tarih Yaptık,Radikal, 15.10 2009
<http://www.radikal.com.tr/Radikal.aspx?aType=RadikalDetayV3&ArticleID=959328&CategoryID=98>
- Birch, Julian, ‘‘Ossetia: A Caucasian Bosnia in Microcosm’’, Central Asian Survey, Vol: 14 Issue:1, 1995
- Blainey, Geoffrey, The Causes of War, The Free Press, New York, 1988
- Bozkurt, Giray Saynur, ‘‘Gürcistan’daki Etnik Çatışmalar Karşısında Türkiye ve Rusya’nın Tutumu’’, Karadeniz Araştırmaları, Vol: 19, Autumn 2008
- Bozkuş, Yıldız Deveci, ‘‘Ermenistan-Türkiye İlişkileri: Sorunlar ve Beklentiler Konulu Toplantının Düşündürdükleri’’, Stratejik Analiz, Vol: 8 Issue: 94 February 2008
- Bozkuş, Yıldız Deveci, ‘‘Kafkasya Krizinin Ardından Türkiye-Ermenistan-Azerbaycan İlişkileri’’, Stratejik Analiz, Vol: 9 Issue:102, November 2008
- Bozkuş, Yıldız Deveci, ‘‘Karabağ’da Çözüm Bir Başka Bahara Kaldı’’, Stratejik Analiz, No: 87, July 2007
- Bozkuş, Yıldız Deveci, ‘‘PKK, Dağlık Katabağ’a Yerleşebilir mi?’’, Stratejik Analiz, Vol: 8 Issue: 93 January 2008
- Börüşoy, Enver, ‘‘Ermenistan ve Gürcistan Arasındaki Sorunlar’’, Stratejik Analiz, Vol: 3 Issue: 22 February 2002
- Brzezinski, Zbigniew, ‘‘Putin’s Choice’’, The Washington Quarterly, Vol: 31 Issue: 2 Spring 2008
- Brzezinski, Zbigniew, The Grand Chessboard, Basicbooks, New York, 1997 p.129
- Cafersoy, Nazim, ‘‘Tarihten Günümüze ‘Kafkas Evi’ Girişimleri ve Türkiye’’, Stratejik Analiz, Vol: 1 Issue: 7 November 2000
- Cafersoy, Nazim, ‘‘Azerbaycan’da Bağımsızlığın Diğer Adı: Ebülfez Elçibey’’, Stratejik Analiz, Vol: 1 Issue. 5,September 2000
- Cansız, İsmail, ‘‘Bir Dönüm Noktası Olarak 1071’’, Türkiye Sosyal Araştırmalar Dergisi, No: 1 , April 2004,
- Caspian Basin: Russia Uses its Georgia Position to Enhance Its Energy Leverage, Eurasia Net, 25 August 2008
<http://www.eurasianet.org/departments/insight/articles/eav082508a.shtml>(13.12.2012)
- Chkhikvadze, Ivane, ‘‘ Zero Problems with Neighbors: The Case of Georgia’’, Turkish Policy Quarterly, Summer 2011

- Colarusso, John, "Abkhazia", Central Asian Survey, Vol: 14 No: 1, 1995
- Congar, Yasemin, "Caucasus Plan Void without Yerevan", Turkish Daily News, 18 August 2008
- Cooley, Alexander and Lincoln Mitchell, "No Way to Treat Our Friends: Recasting Recent US-Georgian Relations", The Washington Quarterly, Vol: 32 Issue: 1 January 2009
- Cornell, Svante, "War in Georgia, Jitters All Around", Current History, Vol: 107 Issue: 711 October 2008
- Cornell, Svante, "Russia's War in Georgia: Causes and Implications for Georgia and the World", Central Asia-Caucasus Institute Silk Road Studies Program, Policy Paper, August 2008
- Cornell, Svante, "Turkey and the Conflict in Nagorno Karabakh: A Delicate Balance", Middle Eastern Studies, Vol: 34 Issue:1 , January 1998
- Cornell, Svante, E, "Turkey and the Conflict in Nagorno Karabakh: A Delicate Balance", Middle Eastern Studies, Vol: 34 Issue:1 , January 1998
- Cornell, Svante, Gerald Knaus, Manfred Scheich, "Dealing with A Rising Power: Turkey's Transformation and Its Implications for the EU", The Center for The European Studies, 2012
- Cornell, Svante, Johanna Popjanevski, Niklas Nilsson "Russia's War in Georgia: Causes and Implications for Georgia and the World", Policy Paper August 2008, Central Asia-Caucasus Institute, Silk Road Studies Program
- Cornell, Svante, Small nations and great powers: A Study of Ethnopolitical Conflict in the Caucasus. Richmond: Curzon Press, 2001
- Çelikpala, Mitat "From a Failed State to a Weak One? Georgia and Turkish-Georgian Relations", The Turkish Yearbook of International Relations, No: 36, 2005
- Çelikpala, Mitat, "Caucasus: The New Battle Zone", Bridge, 28 February 2009 http://www.bridge-mag.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=478:caucasus-the-new-battle-zone&catid=35:turquoise-2009&Itemid=40
- Çelikpala, Mitat, "From Immigrants to Diaspora: Influence of the North Caucasian Diaspora in Turkey", Middle Eastern Studies, Vol: 42, No: 3, May 2006
- Çelikpala, Mitat, "Kafkasya'da Son Gelişmeler, Küresel Hakimiyet Mücadelesi ve Türkiye", ASAM Stratejik Analiz Vol: 9 Issue: 101, Ankara, September 2008

Çelikpala, Mitat, "The North Caucasian Emigres Between the Two World Wars", International Journal of Turkish Studies, Vol: 9, No: 1/2, 2003

Çiloğlu, Fahrettin, Rusya Federasyonu ve Transkafkasya'da Etnik Çatışmalar, Tran. N. Domaniç, Sinatle Yayınevi, İstanbul, 1998

Çolakoglu, Selçuk, "Türkiye Gürcistan İlişkileri", Tasam, Stratejik Öngörü

Danielyan, Emil, 'Armenia Chides Turkey's Erdogan over Karabakh Linkage', Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, 14 May 2009, <http://www.armenialiberty.com/content/article/1731879.html>(13.11.2012)

Danielyan, Emil, Tatevik Lazarian, "Yerevan Tight-Lipped on Turkish-Armenian 'Roadmap', 25 April 2009, <http://www.azatutyun.am/content/article/1615483.html>(10.10.2012)

Davutoğlu, Ahmet "Turkey's Foreign Policy Vision: An Assessment of 2007", Insight Turkey, Vol: 10 Issue: 1

Demir, Ali Faik, "Türk Dış Politikası Perspektifinden Güney Kafkasya", Bağlam Yayıncılık, İstanbul, 2003

Djavadi, Abbas, "Russia Turns Up the Pressure on Turkey", RFE/RL, 1 September 2008

Dolezal, Christian, "Nabucco will Serve Energy Demand in Turkey and Europe", Hurriyet Daily News, 11 April 2012 <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/nabucco-will-serve-energy-demand-in-turkey-europe.aspx?pageID=238&nID=18156&NewsCatID=449>(17.12.2012)

Efe, Haydar, "Turkey's Role as an Energy Corridor and its Impacts on Stability in the South Caucasus", OAKA, Vol: 6 Issue: 12, 2011

Ekşi, Muharrem, "Kafkasya İşbirliği Platformundan Türkiye-Ermenistan İlişkilerinin Normalleşmesi Sürecine", Stratejik Analiz, Vol: 9, Issue: 106, February 2009

Elanchenny, Susae, Narod Maraşlıyan, Breaking the Ice: The Role of Civil Society and Media in Turkey-Armenia Relations, Global Political Trends Center, Istanbul Kultur University p. İstanbul, April 2012

Erdal Şen, "Turkey steps into Georgia Conflict", Today's Zaman, 14.August 2008 http://www.todayszaman.com/newsDetail_getNewsById.action;jsessionid=38A23F029F56C8830D35770E7C543EB8?pageNo=601&category=102&dt=0&newsId=150152&columnistId=0(12.11.2012)

Erdogan Pledges Continued Support for Azerbaijan, 13 May 2009
[http://asbarez.com/62270/in-baku-erdogan-pledges-continued-support-for-azerbaijan/\(24.10.2012\)](http://asbarez.com/62270/in-baku-erdogan-pledges-continued-support-for-azerbaijan/(24.10.2012))

Eren, Oya, ‘‘Cumhurbaşkanı Gül’ün Azerbaycan Ziyareti Heyecan Uyandırdı’’,
Stratejik Analiz, Vol: 8 Issue: 92 December 2007

Eren, Oya, ‘‘Türkiye-Ermenistan İlişkilerinde 2008 Yılına İlişkin Beklentiler’’,
Stratejik Analiz, No: 94, February 2008

Eren, Oya, ‘‘Yeni Ermenistan Hükümeti’nin Önceliği Ekonomik Kalkınma’’,
Stratejik Analiz, No: 87, 2007

Foroohar, Rana, ‘‘Pulled From Two Directions’’, Newsweek, 13 October 2008

Fotiou, Eleni, ‘‘Caucasus Stability and Cooperation Platform: What is at Stake for
Regional Cooperation?’’, International Centre for Black Sea Studies, (ICBSS),
Policy Brief, No: 16 2 June 2009

Fuller, E, Graham, ‘‘Russia and Central Asia: Federation of Fault Line?’’, Michael
Mandelbaum (Ed.), Central Asia and the World, New York, Council on Foreign
Relations Books, 1994

Fuller, E, Graham, J. Arquilla, ‘‘The Intractable Problem of Regional Power’’
Orbis, Autumn, 1996

Fuller, Elizabeth, ‘‘Aliyev in Turkey’’, RFE/RL News Briefs 3, Issue: 7 7-11
February 1994

Fuller, Liz, Richard Giragosian, ‘‘Nagorno Karabakh: What is the Sticking Point in
Peace Talks?’’, RFE/RL Newline, Vol: 10 Issue: 106 Part 1, 12 June 2006

Ghazinyan, Aris, ‘‘Shifting Neighbourhood : What are Turkey’s Intentions as
New Movement Stirs in Caucasus’’, ArmeniaNow, 20 February 2009

Giragosian, Richard, ‘‘Redefining Turkey’s Strategic Orientation’’, Turkish Policy
Quarterly, Vol.6, No: 4, 2007

Gökçe, Mustafa, ‘‘Yukarı Karabağ Sorunu ve Türkiye Ermenistan İlişkileri
Üzerine bir Değerlendirme’’, Turkish Studies, Vol. 6 Issue: 1 Winter 2011

Gömeç, Sadettin, ‘‘Türkiye- Türk Cumhuriyetleri İlişkileri Üzerine bir
Değerlendirme’’, Uluslararası Sosyal Araştırmalar Dergisi, Vol: 1 Issue: 1, Fall
2007

Görgülü, Aybars, Onnik Krikorian, ‘‘Turkey’s South Caucasus Agenda: The Role
of State and Non-State Actors’’, TESEV Foreign Policy Programme, Eurasia
Partnership Foundation, July 2012

- Göyünç, Nejat, Osmanlı İdaresinde Ermeniler, İstanbul, Gültepe Yayınevi, 1983
- Gül, Nazmi, ‘‘Yirmibirinci Yüzyılın Başlangıcında ‘Haydat’ (Ermenilerin Davası)’’, Stratejik Analiz, Vol: 1 Issue: 2, June 2000
- Gülşen, Halit, ‘‘Babadan Oğula Güney Kafkasya, Türkiye-Güney Kafkasya İlişkileri Kitap Tahlili, Ermeni Araştırmaları, No. 37-38- 2010-2011
- Gürses, Emin, ‘‘Kafkasya’da Uluslararası Rekabet’’, Avrasya Dosyası, Azerbaycan special edition, Vol: 7 Issue: 1 Spring 2001
- Güzeldere, Ekrem Eddy, ‘‘Turkish Foreign Policy: From ‘Surrounded by Enemies’ to ‘Zero Problems’ ‘, CAP Policy Analysis, No: 1, 2009
- Henze, Paul B, ‘‘Turkey and Armenia: Past Problems and Future Prospects’’, Eurasian Studies, Vol: 3 Issue: 1 Spring 1996
- Henze, Paul. B, ‘‘Kafkasya’da Çatışma: Geçmiş Sorunlar ve Gelecek İçin Öngörüler’’,Avrasya Etüdleri, İlkbahar, 1994
- Hunter, Shireen, ‘‘Conflict in the Caucasus and the Black Sea Region: Causes and Prospects for the Resolution’’, Hellenic Foundation for European and Foreign Policy, 1997
- Hunter, T. Shireen, The Transcaucasus in Transition: Nation-Building and Conflict, The Center for Strategic and International Studies, New York, 1994
- ITorbakov, Igor, The Georgia Crisis and Russia-Turkey Relations, Jamestown Foundation, Washington D.C, November 2008
- İskit, Temel, ‘‘Turkey a new Actor in the Field of Energy Politics, Perception, Vol: 1, March-May 1996
- İsmailzade, Fariz, ‘‘Turkey-Azerbaijan: The Honeymoon is Over’’, Turkish Policy Quarterly, Vol: 4 Issue:4 Winter 2005
- Jackson, Alexander, ‘‘The Limits of Good Intentions. The Caucasus as a Text Case for Turkish Foreign Policy’’, Turkish Policy Quarterly, Vol: 9 Issue: 4 Winter 2010
- Jenkins, Gareth, ‘‘Turkey Caught in a Dilemma over South Ossetia’’, Eurasia Daliy Monitor, August 11, 2008.
- Joint Statement on the Nagorno Karabakh Conflict, The White House Press Office, 18 June 2012 <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2012/06/18/joint-statement-nagorno-karabakh-conflict>
- Kalafat, Yaşar, Araz Aslanlı, ‘‘Türkiye Azerbaycan İlişkileri’’, İdris Bal (Ed.) 21.Yüzyılda Türk Dış Politikası, Agam Yayınları,Ankara, 2006

Kalın, İbrahim, “ Turkey and NATO: Is non-alliance an option?”, Todays Zaman, 4 September 2008 <http://www.todayszaman.com/columnist-152027-turkey-and-nato-is-non-alliance-an-option.html>

Kanbolat, Hasan “Abhazya ve Güney Osetya Sorunu Çatışmaya Yönelebilir mi?”, Stratejik Analiz, June 2008

Kanbolat, Hasan “Erdogan, Saakashvili in Sarp Border Gate: Passport Free Travel kicks off”, Todays Zaman, 30 May 2011
http://www.todayszaman.com/columnistDetail_getNewsById.action?newsId=245640(28.10.2012)

Kanbolat, Hasan, ‘Turkish-Azerbaijani Relations’, Today’sZaman, 18 August2010

Kanbolat, Hasan, “Balkanlar Örneğinde Kafkasya İstikrar ve İşbirliği Platformu ve Türkiye’nin Kafkasya’da İşbirliği Arayışları”, , Stratejik Analiz, Vol: 9 Issue: 101, September 2008

Kanbolat, Hasan, “Güney Kafkasya’da Yeni bir Demiryolu Hattı: Kars-Iğdır-Nahçıvan”, Stratejik Analiz, Vol: 8, Issue. 94, February 2008

Kanbolat, Hasan, “Güney Osetya Sorununun Yakın Tarihi”, ASAM, 12 August 2008,

Kanbolat, Hasan, “Gürcistan Kars Antlaşması’nı Unuttu mu?”, Stratejik Analiz, Issue: 73 , May, 2006

Kanbolat, Hasan, “Kafkasya Jeopolitiğinde Değişim Sinyalleri”, Stratejik Analiz, No: 60, April 2005

Kanpolat, Hasan, “Rusya Federasyonu’nun Güney Kafkasya’daki Askeri Varlığı ve Gürcistan Boyutu”, Stratejik Analiz, Vol: 1 Issue: 3, July 2000

Kantarcı, Hakan, Kısaçtaki Bölge Kafkasya, IQ Kültür Sanat Yayıncılık, İstanbul,2006

Kantarcı, Şenol, “ABD-AB Kıskaçında Türkiye-Ermenistan İlişkileri”, Stradigma, No: 8 September 2003

Karagiannis, Emmanuel, “Turkish-Georgian Partnership and Pipeline Factor”, Journal of Balkan and Near Eastern Studies, Vol: 6 Issue: 1, April 2004

Karakılıç, Cem, Oğuzhan Aydın, “Azerbaycan’daki Latin Alfabesi Tartışmalarına Türkiye’deki Azerbaycan Matbuatının Bakışı”, A.Ü Türkiyat Araştırmaları Enstitüsü Dergisi, No: 43, 2010

Kardaş, Şaban, “Turkey Clears the Way For Azerbaijani Gas Transfer”, Eurasia Daily Monitor, Vol: 8 Issue: 201 1 November 2011

Kardaş, Şaban, "Turkey Reacts to Armenian Constitutional Court's Decision on Protocols", Eurasia Daily Monitor, Vol: 7 Issue: 17 26 January 2010

Kasım, Kamer, "11 Eylül Sürecinde Kafkasya'da Güvenlik Politikaları", Orta Asya ve Kafkasya Araştırmaları, Issue: 1, 2006

Kasım, Kamer, "Türkiye-Ermenistan İlişkileri: Protokollere Giden Süreç ve Sonrası", Ermeni Araştırmaları, Vol: 37-38, 2010-2011

Kasım, Kamer, "The August 2008 Russian- Georgian Conflict and its Implications: A New Era in the Caucasus?", OAKA, Vol: 5 Issue: 9, 2010

Kasım, Kamer, "The Transportation of Caspian Oil and Regional Stability", Journal of Southern Europe and the Balkans, Vol: 4 Issue: 1, 2002

Kasım, Kamer, "Turkey-Azerbaijan-Armenian Triangle", Journal of Turkish Weekly, International Strategic Research Organisation, 29 May 2009

Kasım, Kamer, "Turkish Armenian Reconciliation Commission: A Missed Opportunity", Armenian Studies, Issue: 4 December 2001

Kasım, Kamer, "The Nagorno Karabakh Conflict From its Inception To The Peace Process", Armenian Studies, Issue 2, June-July-August, 2001

Kasım, Kamer, "Armenian Foreign Policy: Basic Parameters of the Ter-Petrosyan and Kocharian Era", Review of Armenian Studies, Vol: 1 Issue: 1 2002

Kasım, Kamer, Soğuk Savaş Sonrası Kafkasya, Usak Yayınları, Ankara, 2009

Kavtaradze, Giorgi Leon, "The Geopolitical Role of the Caucasus Mountains from the Historical Perspective", Causes of War-Prospects for Peace, Metropolitan Ananya Japaridze, Tbilisi, 2009

http://www.researchgate.net/publication/214412728_The_Geopolitical_Role_of_the_Caucasus_-_Mountains_from_the_Historical_Perspective

Kemik, Akif, "Kafkaslarda Türkiye-ABD İşbirliği", Harp Akademileri Bülteni, Year: 36 No: 196 İstanbul, July 2000,

Khelashvili, George, "Towards a Strategic Respite in the Black Sea Area", in Transformations in the Black Sea Region, PONARS Eurasia Policy Memo, no. 42 (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University, December 2008).

King, Charles, "The Five-Day War", Foreign Affairs, Vol: 87 Issue: 6 November-December 2008

Kinzer, Stephen, "The Turkey-Armenia Road Map", the Guardian. 30 April 2009
<http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/cifamerica/2009/apr/27/turkey-armenia-genocide-road-map-obama>

Kissenger, Henry, Diplomasi, Trans. İbrahim Kurt, Türkiye İş Bankası Yayınları, İstanbul, 2010

Kotchikian, Asbed, "The Perceived Roles of Russia and Turkey in Georgian Foreign Policy", Insight Turkey, Vol: 6, Issue: 2, April-June 2004

Kuloğlu, Armağan, "Rusya Federasyonu'nun Yeni Kafkasya Politikası", Stratejik Analiz, Vol: 1, Issue: 5, September 2000

Laçiner, Sedat, "Türkiye- Ermenistan İlişkilerinde Sınır kapısı Sorunu ve Ekonomik Boyutu", Ermeni Araştırmaları Dergisi Vol: 2 Issue: 6 Summer 2002

Lakoba, Stanislav, "Abkhazia is Abkhazia", Central Asian Survey, Vol: 14 Issue: 1, 1995

Lomsadze, Giorgi, "Georgia: Tensions Flare over Breakaway South Ossetia", Eurasia Net, http://www.eurasia.net.org/departments/insight/articles/eav080408_pr.shtml 04.08.2008

Lütem, Ömer Engin, "Karabağ Sorununun Çözümü Yakın mı?", Stratejik Analiz, Vol: 9 Issue: 104, December 2008

Lüthem, Ömer Engin, "Olaylar ve Yorumlar", Ermeni Araştırmaları, No: 30, 2008

Mammadgulyev, Mahmud, "Azerbaijan's Foreign Economic Relations" Azerbaijan in Global Politics Crafting Foreign Policy, Baku, 2009

Marcel de Haas , Geostrategy in the South Caucasus; Power play and energy security of states and organisations – The Hague, Netherlands Institute of International Relations Clingendael, 2006

Meloyan, Ruben, "Dashnaktsyutyun Condemns Turkish-Armenian Deal", Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, 23 April 2009

Mert, Okan, Türkiye'nin Kafkasya Politikası ve Gürcistan, IQ Kültür-Sanat Yayıncılık, İstanbul, 2004

Mesbahi, Mohiaddin, "Russian Foreign Policy and Security in Central Asia and the Caucasus", Central Asian Survey, Vol: 10 Issue: 2 1993

Mesimov, Ali, "Bağımsızlık Yıllarında Azerbaycan-Türkiye İlişkileri", Avrasya Dosyası, Vol: 7 Issue: 1, Azerbaycan Özel, Spring 2001

Mikheilidze, Nona, "After the 2008 Russia-Georgia War: Implications for the Wider Caucasus and Prospects for Western Involvement in Conflict Resolution", The International Spectator: Italian Journal of International Affairs, Vol: 44 Issue: 3

Mouawad, Jad, "Conflict in Georgia Narrows Oil Options for West", New York Times, 13 August 2008

<http://www.nytimes.com/2008/08/14/world/europe/14oil.html>

Nichol, Jim, "Russia-Georgia Conflict in South Ossetia: Context and Implications for US Interests", CRS Report for Congress, RL34618, 24 October 2008

Nuriyev, Elkhan, "Azerbaijan's Geo-Strategic Role in the EU's Energy Security", Caucasus Analytical Digest, No: 3 19 February 2009

Ogan, Sinan, "Azerbaycan'ın Tanımlanamayan Ekonomisi ve Türkiye ile Ekonomik İlişkiler", Avrasya Dosyası, Azerbaycan Özel, İlkbahar 2000 Vol: 7 Issue: 1

Ogan, Sinan, "Crisis over Customs Procedures with Russia Risks and Opportunities" Today's Zaman, 7 September 2008

Oğan, Sinan, Kamil Ağacan, 'Güney Kafkasya'da Yeniden Başlayan veya Bitmeyen Savaş', Stratejik Analiz, Vol: 2 Issue: 12 May 2004,

Owen, Elizabeth, "Abkhazia's Diaspora: Dreaming of Home", Eurasia Insights, <http://www.eurasianet.org/departments/insightb/articles/eav030909b.shtml> (14.11.2012)

Owen, Elizabeth, Giorgi Lomsadze, "Georgian Troops Withdraw From South Ossetia, Russia Bombs Tbilisi Airport", Eurasia Insight <http://www.eurasianet.org/departments/insight/articles/eav081008.shtml> (10.10.2012)

Özbay, Fatih Türkiye Ermenistan İlişkileri", Blgesam Raporu, No: 25, İstanbul, 2011

Özertem, Hasan Selim, "The Limits of Zero Problem Policy in the Caucaus: The Impasse in Turkish-Armenian Relations, OAKA, Vol: 5 Issue: 10, 2010

Özkan, Güner, "Türk-Amerikan İlişkilerinde Kafkasya Faktörü", Avrasya Dosyası, Vol: 11, Issue: 2, 2006

Öztürk, Ahmet, "Rusya-Gürcistan Krizi: Yerel Bir Çatışma, Küresel Yansımalar", OAKA, Vol: 4 Issue: 7, 2009

Pala, Cenk, Hasan Kanbolat, "Bakü-Tiflis-Ceyhan: 21. Yüzyılın İpek Yolu", Stratejik Analiz, Vol: 6 Issue: 62, June, 2005

Pamir, Nejdett, "Türkiye'nin Enerji Gereksinimi, Uluslararası Boruhatları ve Jeostratejisi", Stratejik Analiz, Vol: 1, Issue: 5, September 2000

Pamuk, Mustafa, Kafkasya ve Azerbaycan'ın Dünü-Bugünü ve Yarını, Harp Akademileri Basımevi, İstanbul Mayıs 1995

Pannier, Bruce, "Russia-Georgia Conflict Raises Concerns About Caspian Energy Exports", RFE/RL 13 August 2008

Pashayeva, Gulshan, "The Nagorno Karabakh Conflict In The Aftermath of Russia-Georgia War", Turkish Policy Quarterly, Vol 8, Issue:4

Phillips, L, David, Diplomatic History: The Turkey Armenia Protocols, The Institute for the Study of Human Rights, Columbia University, New York, May 2012

Rahman, Mohammed Sajjadur, "Georgia and Russia: What Caused the August War?", Identity, Culture and Politics: An Afro-Asian Dialogue, Vol: 10 Issue: 1, July 2009

Roberts, John, "The Southern Corridor: Baku-Tbilisi- Ceyhan's Gas Legacy", Turkish Policy Quarterly, Vol: 11 Issue: 2

Sabah, Deniz Baykal: Ermenistan'la 4 Sorun Çözölmeli, 16 September 2009 http://www.sabah.com.tr/Siyaset/2009/09/16/deniz_baykal_ermenistanla_dort_sorun_cozulmeli

Schöpflin, George "The End of Communism in Eastern Europe", The Grand Failure,(Ed.) Zbigniew Brzezinski, Cambridge University Press, 1990

Selvi, Haluk, "Türkiye-Azerbaycan-Gürcistan İlişkilerinde Ermenistan Faktörü"

Sestanovich, Stephen, "What has Moscow done?", Foreign Affairs, Vol: 87 Issue: 6 November-December 2008

Shaffer, Brenda, "The Geopolitics of the Caucasus", Brown Journal of World Affairs, Vol: 15 Issue. 2, Spring/Summer 2009

Stoner-Weiss, Kathryn, "It Is Still Putin's Russia", Current History, Vol: 107, Issue: 711, 2008

Strachota, Krzysztof, "The Southern Caucasus and Central Asia after the Russian-Georgian War: The Geopolitical Consequences", CES Commentary, Vol:10, 2008

Sushko, Oleksandr, The End of International Order-1991: Impact of 2008 Russia Georgia War on Ukraine, Heinrich Böll Stiftung, Warsaw, 2008

Şimşir, Bilal, Azerbaycan'da Türk Alfabesi Tarihçe, Türk Dil Kurumu Yayınları, No: 563 Ankara, 1991

Tanrısever, Oktay, ‘‘Gürcistan’ın Güney Osetya’daki Askeri Operasyonu ve Rusya’nın Tepkisi’’, <http://www.porttakal.com/haberler/dunya/gurcistanin-guney-osetyadaki-askeri-operasyonu-ve-rusyanin-tepkisi-75744.html>

Tavkul, Ufuk, ‘Kafkasya’nın Coğrafik Konumu ve Stratejik Önemi’’, http://www.circassiancenter.com/cc-turkiye/arastirma/0090_kafkasyanin_cografi_konumu_ve.htm

Tavkul, Ufuk, ‘Kafkasya: Etnik, Sosyal, Siyasi Problemler’’, Kök Araştırmalar Dergisi, Vol: 1 Issue: 1, Ankara, Bahar 1999

Tellal, Erel, ‘SSCB’yle İlişkiler’’, Türk Dış Politikası Kurtuluş Savaşından Bugüne Olgular, Belgeler, Yorumlar, Ed. Baskın Oran, İletişim Yayınları, İstanbul, 2001

Tsereteli, Iraklı, ‘Seeking Stability under Shevardnadze’’, Transition Online, 26 July 1996

Turkey’s President Makes Historical Visit to Armenia, New York Times, 6 September 2008, ‘Turkish President to Visit Armenia’’, International Herald Tribune, 4 September 2008; ‘Turkey, Armenia Mend Ties Through Football’’, Associated Press, 5 September 2008; ‘Gul’s Yerevan Visit Welcomed by All But Extremist Opposition’’, Today’s Zaman, 4 September 2008

Turksoy Activity Report 2008-2011 available at: <http://www.turksoy.org.tr/EN/belge/2-27231/activities.html>

Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Dışişleri Bakanlığı, ‘Türkiye-Gürcistan Syasi İlişkileri’’, [http://www.mfa.gov.tr/relations-between-turkey-and-georgia.en.mfa\(13.10.2012\)](http://www.mfa.gov.tr/relations-between-turkey-and-georgia.en.mfa(13.10.2012))

Türkiye ile Türk Cumhuriyetleri ve Türk Toplulukları Arasında Yapılan Anlaşmalar, İlişkiler ve Faaliyetler, 1. Kitap, T.C Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı Talim Terbiye Kurulu Başkanlığı Türk Cumhuriyetleri ve Türk Toplulukları Dairesi No: 1/1, Ankara, 1993, Sayı: 21284

Türkiye-Ermenistan-Azerbaycan görüşmeleri, Cumhuriyet, 26 September 2008;

Usta, Metin, ‘Kafkaslarda Güç Dengeleri ve Türkiye-Azerbaycan-Gürcistan Demiryolu’’, <http://www.metinusta.net/events/caucasus1.pdf> (15.01.2013)

Vindimian, Marianna, ‘Evolution of Turkish Foreign Policy towards Georgia’’, ISPI Policy Brief, No: 196, September 2010

Winrow, Gareth, ‘Turkey, Russia and the Caucasus: Common and Diverging Interests’’, Chatham House Briefing Paper, November 2009

Winrow, Gareth, Turkey and The Caucasus: Domestic Interests and Security Concerns, The Royal Institute of International Affairs, London, 2000

Yalçinkaya, Alaaddin, Kafkasya’da Siyasi Gelişmeler Etnik Düğümden Küresel Kördüğüm, Lalezar Kitabevi, Ankara, 2006,

Yanar, Savaş, Türk-Rus İlişkilerinde Gizli Güç Kafkasya, IQ Kültür Sanat Yayıncılık, İstanbul, 2002

Yapıcı, Utku, Küresel Süreçte Türk Dış Politikasının Yeni Açılımları Orta Asya ve Kafkasya, Otopsi yayınları, İstanbul, May 2004, p. 172-173

Yazar, Yusuf, ‘’Turkey’s Role and Priorities in Enhancement of Security if Oil and Gas Supplies’’, SETA Policy Brief, November 2010

Yıldız, Hakkı Dursun, ‘‘Abbasiler devrinde Türk kumandanları I. Boga el-kebir et-Türki’’, Türk Kültür Araştırmaları, Ankara, II (1965), pp. 195-203. Cited in Nejat Göyünç, ‘Turkish Armenian Cultural Relations’

WEBSITES

<http://disiliskiler.kulturturizm.gov.tr/TR,22143/2008-yili-gerceklesen-faaliyetler.html> (31.10.2012)

<http://en.apa.az/archive?date=2009-09-01>(14.10.2012)

<http://www.baku.emb.mfa.gov.tr/ShowInfoNotes.aspx?ID=121502> (30.10.2012)

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-18175030>(12.10.2012)

<http://www.fao.no/irec/papers/NihanCigerciIUlukan.pdf>(8.11.2012)

http://www.itso.org/docs/pdf/country_reports/gurcistan_ulke_raporu_2011.pdf(16.10.2012)

<http://www.mfa.gov.tr/protocol-on-development-of-relations-between-the-republic-of-turkey-and-the-republic-of-armenia.en.mfa>(27.10.2012)

<http://www.mfa.gov.tr/relations-between-turkey-and-azerbaijan.en.mfa>(4.12.2012)

<http://www.mfa.gov.tr/relations-between-turkey-and-georgia.en.mfa>(27.09.2012)

http://www.mfa.gov.tr/turkey_s-relations-with-southern-caucasus.en.mfa(23.09.2012)

<http://www.mfa.gov.tr/turkiye-azerbaycan-siyasi-iliskileri.tr.mfa>(16.10.2012)

<http://www.news.az/articles/official/68007>(09.11.2012)

<http://www.newtimes.az/en/r0/s0/d2/2/n427/Geopolitical-position-of-the-South-Caucasus-and-security-problems> (22.10.2012)

<http://www.ntvmsnbc.com/id/25291802/>(26.09.2012)

<http://www.tccb.gov.tr/haberler/170/47613/azerbaycan-cumhurbaskani-ilham-aliyev-turkiyede.html>(15.08.2012)

<http://www.trtge.com/trtworlde/en/newsDetail.aspx?haberkodu=df991409-c537-4079-9181-3234f60a7c2a>(07.12.2012)

<http://www.tuik.gov.tr>(03.12.2012)

<http://yeogm.meb.gov.tr> (14.01.2007)

APPENDIX: TEZ FOTOKOPİSİ İZİN FORMU

ENSTİTÜ

Fen Bilimleri Enstitüsü	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Uygulamalı Matematik Enstitüsü	<input type="checkbox"/>
Enformatik Enstitüsü	<input type="checkbox"/>
Deniz Bilimleri Enstitüsü	<input type="checkbox"/>

YAZARIN

Soyadı : Cindi
Adı : Eylem Yaşam
Bölümü : Uluslararası İlişkiler

TEZİN ADI (İngilizce) : Turkey's Relations With Southern Caucasus
States Since 2008 Russian-Georgian War

TEZİN TÜRÜ : Yüksek Lisans ☒ Doktora ☐

1. Tezimin tamamından kaynak gösterilmek şartıyla fotokopi alınabilir. ☐
2. Tezimin içindekiler sayfası, özet, indeks sayfalarından ve/veya bir bölümünden kaynak gösterilmek şartıyla fotokopi alınabilir. ☒
3. Tezimden bir bir (1) yıl süreyle fotokopi alınamaz. ☐

TEZİN KÜTÜPHANEYE TESLİM TARİHİ: