

TURKEY'S RELATIONS WITH GEORGIA
IN THE POST-SOVIET ERA

E. KIZILBUĞA

ESRA KIZILBUĞA

METU 2013

September,2013

TURKEY'S RELATIONS WITH GEORGIA IN THE POST-SOVIET ERA

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

BY

ESRA KIZILBUĞA

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR
THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
IN
THE DEPARTMENT OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

SEPTEMBER 2013

Approval of the Graduate School of Social Sciences

Prof. Dr. Meliha Altunışık
Director

I certify that this thesis satisfies all the requirements as a thesis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

Prof. Dr. Hüseyin Bağcı
Head of Department

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 Doctor of Philosophy.

Assoc. Prof. Oktay F. Tanrısever
Supervisor

Examining Committee Members

Prof. Dr. Hüseyin Bağcı (METU,IR) _____

Assoc. Prof. Oktay F. Tanrısever (METU,IR) _____

Prof. Dr. Meliha Altunışık (METU, IR) _____

Prof. Dr. Kamer Kasım (IBU,IR) _____

Assoc. Prof. Ayşegül Aydıngün (METU, SOC) _____

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Name, Last name :Esra KIZILBUĞA

Signature :


ABSTRACT

TURKEY'S RELATIONS WITH GEORGIA IN THE POST-SOVIET ERA

Kızılbuğa, Esra

PhD., Graduate School of Social Sciences, International Relations

Supervisor: Assoc. Prof. Oktay F. Tanrisever

September 2013, 391 pages

The purpose of the thesis is to examine the characteristics and limitations of Turkey's cooperation with Georgia. This thesis employs the political realist approach in explaining Turkey's cooperation with Georgia and seeks to answer the following question: "Why does Turkey have significant tensions with Georgia over certain issues when both countries deepened their cooperation and labelled it strategic partnership?". Contrary to the view that Turkey's relations with Georgia are based on exclusive cooperative behaviour, the thesis argues that, Turkey's relations with Georgia contain both conflict and cooperation since Turkey's approach is not guided by liberal cooperation ideas but by security orientated political realist understanding.

Keywords: Turkey, Georgia, political realism, liberalism, cooperation

ÖZ

SOĞUK SAVAŞ SONRASI DÖNEMDE TÜRKİYE’NİN GÜRCİSTAN İLE İLİŞKİLERİ

Kızılbuğa, Esra

Doktora, Sosyal bilimler Enstitüsü, Uluslararası İlişkiler

Danışman: Doç. Dr. Oktay. F. Tanrısever

Eylül 2013, 391 sayfa

Bu çalışmanın amacı, Türkiye’nin Gürcistan ile işbirliğinin özelliklerini ve kısıtlarını incelemektir. Bu tez, Türkiye’nin Gürcistan olan işbirliğini incelerken politik realizm yaklaşımını benimsemektedir ve şu soruyu cevaplamaya çalışmaktadır: “ Her iki ülke işbirliğini derinleştirdikleri ve stratejik ortaklık olarak isimlendirdikleri halde, neden Türkiye belli konularda Gürcistan ile önemli gerilimler yaşamaktadır? Türkiye’nin Gürcistan ile ilişkilerinin sadece işbirliğine dayalı olduğu görüşüne karşılık, bu çalışma, Türkiye’nin Gürcistan ile ilişkilerinin hem çalışma hem işbirliği içerdigini, çünkü Türkiye’nin yaklaşımının liberal işbirliği fikriyle değil güvenliğe dayalı politik realizm anlayışı ile güdüldüğünü savunmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Türkiye, Gürcistan, politik realizm, liberalizm, işbirliği

To My Daugther

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I wish to express my deepest gratitude to my supervisor Assoc. Prof. Oktay F. Tanrısever for his guidance, advice, criticism, encouragements and insight throughout the research.

I would also like to thank Prof. Dr. Meliha Altunışık and Assoc. Prof. Ayşegül Baydar Aydingün for their suggestions and comments.

I gratefully acknowledge the comments and suggestions of Prof. Dr. Hüseyin Bağcı and Prof. Dr. Kamer Kasım.

I would also like to express my deepest gratitude to my daughter Duha Naz Karaca and my family for their help and motivation during the research.

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CHAPTER I

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Subject , Aim and Scope of The Thesis

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, Turkey faced with a radically changed conjuncture in the region. The collapse of the Soviet Union meant the removal of a strong neighbour and emergence of weak, unstable and problematic states.¹ This new conjuncture along with bringing new opportunities was also source to new challenges for Turkey.² After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the balance of power of the Cold War era ended. For Turkey as a regional power, the need of redefining its “near abroad” emerged.³ Thus, how Turkey would manage in this newly emerging international and regional conjonkture was a big question mark. Joshua W. Walker, in his article “Learning Strategic Depth: Implications of Turkey’s New Foreign Policy Doctrine”, stated that:

For the last several decades, Turkey, with its strict adherence to maintaining stability and the status quo in its region, has been trying to adjust to a world where conditions for traditional foreign policy making have been undergoing a radical change.⁴

Further, Joshua W. Walker, argues that:

While Turkey’s pre-Cold War and pre-9/11 goal of belonging to the West (and in particular of being a part of Europe) is still in place, analysts can no longer take Turkish foreign policy for granted. Turkey no longer solely represents a geographic barrier against communism, but rather is transforming itself to meet the various threats emerging from its new geopolitical environment.⁵

¹ Selçuk Çolakoğlu, “Türkiye-Gürcistan İlişkileri”, *Stratejik Öngörü*, No.5, 2005, p. 29.

² Gareth M. Winrow, “Orta Asya ve Trans-Kafkasya Politikası”, Alan Makovsky, Sabri Sayarı (eds.), *Türkiye’nin Yeni Dünyası, Türk Dış Politikası’nın Değişen Dinamikleri*, Trans: Hür Güldü, Alfa, 2003, p.157.

³ Suat Kınıklıoğlu, “Kadife Devrim Işığında Türkiye-Gürcistan İlişkileri”, *Zaman*, 25 Aralık 2003.

⁴ Joshua W. Walker, “Learning Strategic Depth: Implications of Turkey’s New Foreign Policy Doctrine”, *Insight Turkey*, Vol.9, No.3, 2007, p. 32.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 33.

Turkey's adaptation to the newly emerged conjonkture after the collapse of the Soviet Union as a new regional actor well reflected to Turkey's relations with Georgia. On 16 December 1991, Turkey was the first country that recognized the independence of Georgia.⁶ Following that, in May 1992, Turkey's diplomatic relations with Georgia was established.⁷ After a period of ambiguity, Turkey's relations with Georgia developed and towards the end of 1990's, Turkey and Georgia have been called as strategic partners. Nevertheless, Turkey's relations with Georgia have not been problem free during the post-Soviet era. There have been certain issues which will be examined throughout the thesis, where interests of both states have conflicted. This practical reality caused Turkey's cooperation with Georgia to be questioned and examined.

Within this framework, the subject of the thesis consists of Turkey's relations with Georgia in the post-Soviet era. This thesis employs a political realist approach in examining the characteristics and limitations of Turkey's cooperation with Georgia in the post-Soviet period. In order to have a proper and deeper analysis of Turkey's relations with Georgia, both conflicting and cooperative issues will be examined. Further, Turkey's relations with Georgia will be examined in a wider context including their relations with the US and the Russia Federation. Turkey's diplomatic, security and economic relations with Georgia will be examined. However, though historical background of relations had implications on the current level of relations, the historical aspect of relations are not included within the scope of this thesis.

Regarding all, the aim of this thesis is to examine both the characteristics and limitations in Turkey's cooperation with Georgia and challenge the argument that Turkey and Georgia are strategic partners.

⁶ On 9 April 1991, the Georgian parliament adopted a resolution to re-declare Georgia's independence., cited in., Wojciech Konofczuk, " A Caucasian Ally? Turkey-Georgia Relations", CES Report, Chapter III, p.33.

⁷ Wojciech Konofczuk, *Op.cit.*, p.33.

1.2 Research Question of the Thesis

This thesis seeks to answer the following research question: “Why does Turkey have significant tensions with Georgia over certain issues when both countries have deepened their cooperation and labelled it strategic partnership?”.

Beyond the fact that Turkey’s relations with Georgia are strategically important, it should be notified that the ‘strategic partnership’ discourse does ignore the existence of conflicting interests and potential problems in Turkey’s relations with Georgia. Turkey’s unofficial standing during the Abkhaz-Georgia war in 1992-93, Turkey’s policy during the August 2008 War, the recent intention of change in Turkey’s policy towards Abkhazia, the arrest of Turkish citizens by Georgia, the seizure of Turkish ships and/or staff on their way to Abkhazia by Georgia, Turkey’s policy during the Ajara crisis, Georgia’s so called policies of Christianization of Muslim regions in Georgia, promotion of radical nationalistic feelings among Georgian diaspora in Turkey, the role and attitude of the Abkhaz diaspora in Turkey, Turkey’s and Georgia’s policies towards the repatriation of Ahiska Turks and different perceptions of Turkey and Georgia concerning the role of the US and Russia in the region, different security orientations of Turkey and Georgia in the Black Sea have been among the problems and conflicting areas between Turkey and Georgia which challenged the ‘strategic partnership’ discourse.

Considering these conflicting interests and potential problems “why do Turkey and Georgia conflict when they cooperate?”, is the main point to be discussed. Though, this point will be analyzed in a theoretical framework in the second chapter, it can be briefly argued that, since Turkey’s relations with Georgia are motivated by security oriented political realist understanding rather than liberal cooperation ideas, this makes the existence of conflict inevitable and cooperation fragile. Though Turkey-Georgia relations is defined as strategic partnership, both states have in fact its own national interests interpreted differently. Rather than a strategic partnership based on a common value and unchangeable common interest, cooperation between Turkey and Georgia are fragile and includes both conflicting and cooperative patterns. Thus,

as well as interests of states change and are re-defined, the nature of Turkey-Georgia relations may also change.

1.3. Literature Review

Concerning the period after 1991, there are two main streams in the literature concerning Turkey's relations with Georgia. One part of literature has a liberal perspective arguing that Turkey-Georgia relations are based on pure cooperation and strategic partnership. The second part of the literature has a political realist perspective arguing that Turkey-Georgia relations are motivated by security oriented interests resulting both in cooperation and conflict.

Regarding the first part of literature, evaluating Turkey's foreign policy in its neighbourhood in a general perspective, by Kaan Kadri Renda, in his article "Turkey's Neighbourhood Policy: An Emerging Complex Interdependence", it is stated that "the new activism in Turkish foreign policy seems, at least to me, to facilitate international cooperation among regional actors and to create a complex interdependence between Turkey and its neighborhood"⁸. Further, referring to two different transformations in Turkish foreign policy- one a security driven foreign policy in the 1990's and second a economy driven foreign policy in the 2000's- he argues that:

In the Turkey of the 2000s, an economy-oriented "new activism"⁹ has prevailed over the security-first activism of the 1990s. This is due to the changes in domestic political structures and the increasing importance of economic growth and trade not only for Turkey but also for its neighbors. Hence, instead of finding conflict with its neighbors, recently at the top of Turkey's foreign policy agenda is a move to promote interstate cooperation.¹⁰

⁸ Kaan Kadri Renda, "Turkey's Neighbourhood Policy: An Emerging Complex Interdependence", *Insight Turkey*, Vol.13, No.1, 2011, p. 90.

⁹ For the new activism during the Justice and Development Party era, see Ziya Öniş and Şuhnaz Yılmaz, "Between Europeanization and Euro-Asianism: Foreign Policy Activism in Turkey during the AKP Era," *Turkish Studies*, Vol.10, No.1 (March, 2009), pp.7-24., cited in Kaan Kadri Renda, *Op.cit.*, p. 90.

¹⁰ Kaan Kadri Renda, *Op.cit.*, p.90.

Güner Özkan argues that the establishment of a lasting peace and security is the principal aim of Turkey and he believes that this goal could be achieved through the increase of economic cooperation among the regional states.¹¹ In order to better present this idea, Özkan gave the examples of the Baku-Tbilisi- Ceyhan (BTC), Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum (BTE) and Baku-Tbilisi-Kars (BTK) projects as the best economic projects contributing to the regional peace and security.¹² Furthermore, Güner Ozkan, concerning Turkey's proposal of "The Caucasus Stability and Cooperation Platform", stated that:

In fact, the proposal Turkey is now presenting is a method that it has been discussed in security studies in international relations for years mainly between the Liberal and Realist thinkers on security. Turkey's suggestion of 'Alliance' for the Caucasus takes its logical base from liberal views on security solutions developed mainly as responses to those of the state centric realist perspectives in inter-state relations.¹³

Mustafa Aydin, in his article "Foucault's Pendoleum: Turkey in Central Asia and the Caucasus" states that:

Although economic and political conditions in the region are unlikely to stabilize, there is no doubt that Turkish policymakers will continue with their efforts to create new networks of interdependency between Ankara and regional capitals.¹⁴

Eleni Fotiou also indicated in her article "“Caucasus Stability and Cooperation Platform”: What is at stake for Regional Cooperation?” that:

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.¹⁵

¹¹ Guner Ozkan, “Turkey’s Proposal of “Caucasus Alliance”: How Likely is Its Success?”, *Journal of Turkish Weekly*, 21 August, 2008.

¹² Guner Ozkan, *Op.cit.*

¹³ Guner Ozkan, *Op.cit.*

¹⁴ Mustafa Aydin, “Foucault’s Pendoleum: Turkey in Central Asia and the Caucasus”, *Turkish Studies*, Vol.5, No.2, p.19.

¹⁵ Eleni Fotiou, ““Caucasus Stability and Cooperation Platform”: What is at Stake with Regional Cooperation?”, *ICBSS Policy Brief*, No. 16, June 2009, pp.5-6.

Regarding the second stream of literature, Kamer Kasım, in his article “11 Eylül Sürecinde Kafkasya’da Güvenlik Politikaları”, argued that considering post-Soviet developments in the Caucasus, security dilemma was dominated in the region and that the anarchical structure superceded.¹⁶ Kamer Kasım further stated that: “The zero-sum approach in state to state relations, the emergence of blocks by times and additional to all problems derived from the domestic structure of states, turned Caucasus to a region of conflict and tensions.”¹⁷

Drawing attention to both conflict and cooperation in Turkey’s relations with Georgia, in his article “The Turkish-Georgian Partnership and the pipeline factor” , Emmanuel Karagiannis argued that:

Numerous areas of tension relating to ethnic minorities have threatened to undermine the Turkish-Georgian relations. However, cooperation in the field of oil transportation was identified as the main reason why bilateral problems have not worsened relations between the two countries.¹⁸

Gareth Winrow in his article “Central Asia and Trans-Caucasia policy” in *Turkey’s New World* argues that while in the early 1990’s relations were limited with urgent economic and political problems, with the emergence of the issue of Caspian energy resources, there were big developments in Turkish-Georgian relations and this was followed by military cooperation agreement between the sides.¹⁹

¹⁶ Kamer Kasım, “ 11 Eylül Sürecinde Kafkasya’da Güvenlik Politikaları”, *OAKA*, Vol.1, No.1, 2006, p.22.

¹⁷ Kamer Kasım, *Op.cit*, p. 22.

¹⁸ Emmanuel Karagiannis, “The Turkish-Georgian Partnership and Pipeline Factor”, *Journal of Southern Europe and the Balkans*, Vol.6, No.1, April 2004.
,,<http://ourworld.compuserve.com/HOME PAGES/USAZERB/413.htm>

¹⁹ Winrow, “Orta Asya ve Trans-Kafkasya Politikası”, Alan Makovsky, Sabri Sayarı (eds.), *Türkiye’nin Yeni Dünyası, Türk Dış Politikası’nın Değişen Dinamikleri*, Trans: Hür Güldü, Alfa, 2003, p. 157.

Wojciech Konofczuk in his article “ A Caucasian Ally? Turkey-Georgia Relations” argues that:

After the ‘rose revolution’ a slight deterioration in Turkish-Georgian relations came about as a result of Georgia’s unequivocally pro-American policy, the growing involvement of the US in the Southern Caucasus and the increasing rapprochement between Turkey and Russia, which contrasts with the very poor state of Georgian-Russian relations.²⁰

Further, drawing attention to problems between Turkey and Georgia, Wojciech Konofczuk argued that:

In its official declarations Turkey has supported Georgia’s territorial integrity, but maintains intensive economic contacts with Abkhazia, a fact which causes periodic tensions in Turkish- -Georgian relations. Particularly after the changes in Turkish-Russian relations, the Georgian authorities started fearing that Abkhazia might become a sort of co-dominion of Turkey and Russia. Georgia believes that solving the Abkhazian problem requires collaboration with Turkey, but equally thinks that Ankara has not been using its full potential in this area.²¹

Drawing attention to the challenge the August 2008 War caused on Turkey’s policy and interests in the region, Bülent Ali Rıza in his article, “Turkey and the Crisis in the Caucasus”, argues that:

The outbreak of war between Georgia and Russia, following the ill-advised Georgian attempt to wrest control of the breakaway province of South Ossetia on August 7, posed an immediate challenge to Turkish interests. The conflict introduced instability and dangerous unpredictability immediately beyond Turkey’s northeastern border after a period of relative calm in the Caucasus. It also placed Turkey in a difficult diplomatic position not only between two neighboring countries with which it has been cultivating close relations and cooperation, especially on energy, but also between the United States and Russia.²²

As it may be seen in the above quotations and arguments, based on the political realist view, it is more the interests of Turkey in her relations with Georgia that are

²⁰ Wojciech Konofczuk, “ A Caucasian Ally? Turkish-Georgian Relations”, *CES Report*, Chapter III, p.31.

²¹ *Ibid.*,p.31.

²² Bülent Ali Rıza, “Turkey and the Crisis in the Caucasus”, *Center for Strategic and International Studies*, 9 September 2008,
www.csis.org

emphasized. Furthermore, though the existing cooperation between Turkey and Georgia is not ignored, the conflicting interests and potential problems are outlined.

1.4 Argument of the Thesis

In the light of the literature review, contrary to the view that Turkey's relations with Georgia reflect a strategic partnership exclusively based on cooperative behaviour, this thesis argues that Turkey's relations with Georgia reflect characteristics of both conflict and cooperation since Turkey's approach is not guided by liberal institutionalist cooperation ideas but by security orientated political realist understanding. Throughout the thesis, it is argued that Turkey's relations with Georgia is driven more by the security concerns of Turkey which mainly includes the motivation of balancing Russia in the region and perceives Georgia as a buffer state against Russia. Throughout the thesis, the 'strategic partnership' discourse between Turkey and Georgia is questioned and it is argued that Turkey's relations with Georgia indeed is far from reflecting the characteristics of a strategic partnership. It is argued that Turkey's cooperation with Georgia is not based on unchangeable constant common interests and common value but rather on differently interpreted national interests of states which makes the nature of relations changeable and fragile. Furthermore, Turkey's relations with Georgia did not proceed independent from the changing balance of power in the region and internal dynamics in both countries.

1.5 Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework of the thesis consists of the evaluation of the concept of cooperation in liberalism and political realism. According to liberalism, cooperation is achievable in the international system. It is argued that "conflict and war are not inevitable; when people employ their reason they can achieve mutually beneficial

cooperation not only within states but also across international boundaries”²³. Briefly, the relation between liberalism and cooperation is explained as: “the process of modernization enlarges the scope for cooperation across internatinal boundaries. Human possess reason, and when they apply it to international affairs greater cooperation will be the end result.”²⁴

Further, it is argued that, “modernization increases the level and scope of interdependence between states”²⁵ . Consequently, this increased interdependence makes transnational relations and transnational actors important and this results with welfare not security to become the primary goal and concern of states.²⁶ All refers “ a world of more cooperative international relations”²⁷.

For the promotion of cooperation, in liberalism, the role of international institutions is also emphasized. Regarding this, Robert O. Keohane in his article “ International Institutions: Can Interdependence Work?” argues that:

Institutions create the capability for states to cooperate in mutually beneficial ways by reducing the costs of making and enforcing agreements- what economics refer to as “transaction costs”. They rarely engage in centralized enforcement of agreements, but they do reinforce practices of reciprocity, which provide incentives for governments to keep their own commitments to ensure that others do as well. Even powerful states have an interest, most of the time, in following the rules of well-established international institutions, since general conformity to rules makes the behavior of other states more predictable.²⁸

²³ Robert Jackson; Georg Sørensen, “ Liberalism”, *Introduction to International Relations*, Oxford University Press,, 1998, p. 109.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 110.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p.118.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p.118.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p.118.

²⁸ Robert O. Keohane, “ International Institutions: Can interdependence Work?”,*Foreign policy*, Spring, 1998, p.86

Thus, according to liberalism, institutions enable states to reach mutual benefits and cooperative outcomes.²⁹ International institutions are seen as means of promoting and achieving cooperation across international boundaries among actors in the system.³⁰

In political realism, “the conduct of foreign policy is an instrumental activity based on the intelligent calculation of one’s power and one’s interests as against the power and interests of rivals and competitors”³¹.

Political realism, on the other hand, has a more pessimistic view on cooperation. Since international politics is defined as power politics—that is an arena of rivalry, conflict, and war between states in which the basic problem is defending the national interest and survival of the state—the core assumption of political realism is that international politics operate in international anarchy.³² Since the basic motivation of states is to defend their national interests, this causes a lack of trust to emerge among states. It is further assumed that states sacrifice their international obligations for the sake of their self-interests if the two come into conflict.³³ This refers that, in political realism, since there is not progressive change in international politics, conflict instead of cooperation prevail.³⁴

²⁹ Randall L. Schweller and David Priess, “A Tale of Two Realisms: Expanding the Institutional Debate, *Mershon International Studies Review*, Vol. 41, No. 1, May, 1997, p. 3.

³⁰ Robert Jackson, Georg Sorensen, *Op.cit*, p.50.; Steven L. Lamy, *Op.cit*, p. 189.

³¹ Robert Jackson; Georg Sørensen, “Liberalism”, *Introduction to International Relations*, Oxford University Press,, 1998, p.103.

³² Robert Jackson; Georg Sørensen, “Liberalism”, *Introduction to International Relations*, Oxford University Press,, 1998, p.68.

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 69.

³⁴ *Ibid.*,p.97.

In political realism, great importance is placed on the concept of balance of power. Kenneth Waltz in his book *Theory of International Politics*, states that:

A self help system is one in which those who do not help themselves, or who do so less effectively than other will fail to prosper, will lay themselves open to dangers, will suffer. Fear of such unwanted consequences stimulates states to behave in ways that tend toward the creation of balance of power.³⁵

Further, it is stated that:

Instead of cooperating with each other to maximize individual benefits, players are more interested to increase their own share or preserve their initial advantage, if any, at the same time. This tendency is referred to as a zero-sum or a constant sum game which reflects more accurately the empirical domain of international politics. Thus the goal of sheer survival makes balance of power inevitable.³⁶

Considering the political realist stance on cooperation, international anarchy discourages cooperation because states mostly worry about the relative gains derived from cooperation and the possibility of cheating on agreements.³⁷ Further, Charles L. Glaser indicated that: "The standard structural-realist argument predicts that cooperation between adversaries, while not impossible, will be difficult to achieve and, as a result, will be rare and contribute relatively little to states' well-being."³⁸

³⁵ Kenneth N. Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, Addison Wesley Publishing Company, 1979, p. 118.

³⁶ Shibashis Chatterjee, " Neo-realism, Neo-liberalism and Security", *International Studies*, Vol.40, Sage Publications p.128.

³⁷ Charles L. Glaser, " Realists as Optimists Cooperation as Self Help", *International Security*, Winter 1994-95, Vo.19, No.3, p.50.

³⁸ Structural realists are sometimes referred to as neorealists. Kenneth N. Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (New York: Random House, 1979) remains the most important statement of these arguments. Some authors want to reserve "neorealism" to refer to the theory as articulated by Waltz, while using structural realism to refer to a broader family of systemic theories; see Barry Buzan, Charles Jones and Richard Little, *The Logic of Anarchy: Neorealism to Structural Realism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993). In this essay, I use "structural realist" as an ideal type-an analyst who believes that only international or systemic-level factors influence international politics. I recognize, however, that virtually all structural realists actually believe that other levels of analysis have some influence., cited in, Charles L. Glaser, *Op.cit*, p. 50.

Considering all, though cooperation is difficult but possible to achieve in political realism, international anarchy, the self-help system based on security dilemma and the maintainance of balance of power, makes states conflict when they cooperate.

1.6 Methodology and Organisation of the Thesis

Concerning the methodology of the thesis, the main sources have been secondary sources like books, articles, past and current news related to Turkey's relations with Georgia, newspapers, some definite internet sites and primary sources like agreements and documents of Turkish Foreign Ministry accessed from the official website and interviews done with officials and experts in 2010, 2012 and 2013. Interviews included questions about the definite and potential areas of problem in Turkey's relations with Georgia. Questions on main areas of cooperation such as energy, were also asked. Furthermore, regarding the importance of the August 2008 War on the nature of relations, questions about Turkey's policy during the August War were asked. Lastly, considering the impact of the US and Russia on Turkey's relations with Georgia, questions on Turkey's relations with the US and Russia were asked. The major difficulty I faced was that sources about Turkey's relations with Georgia usually remained superficial without having a deeper analysis.

The organization of the thesis consists of seven main themes. First, a historical background of relations including relations during the Ottoman Era and the political transformation of Georgia during the Soviet era and in the post-Soviet era will be examined. Second, a theoretical framework of Turkey's relations with Georgia will be examined. The concept of cooperation in liberalism and political realism will be compared and examined. Third, Turkey's relations with Georgia will be examined in a wider context including relations with the US and Russia. Fourth, dynamics of Turkey's relations with Georgia including principles, objectives and instruments of Turkey's foreign policy and evolution of the discourse on Georgia will be examined. Fifth, Turkey's diplomatic relations with Georgia will be examined. Sixth, Turkey's security relations with Georgia will be examined. Last, Turkey's economic relations with Georgia will be examined.

In the second chapter, historical background of relations during the Ottoman and Tsarist Russia era will be examined. Then, Georgia's political transformation during the Soviet era will be briefly examined. Afterwards, the political transformation in the post-Soviet era emphasizing the importance of Georgian nationalism and its impact on Georgia's relations with Russia will be examined.

In the third chapter, the theoretical framework of Turkey's relations with Georgia will be examined in the light of the question " why do states conflict when they cooperate?". First, the meaning of the concept of cooperation will be discussed. Then political realism in international relations will be explained. After that, realist concepts of conflict and cooperation will be discussed. Following that, liberalism in international relations will be explained. Then, liberal concept of cooperation will be explained. Finally, a realist critique of liberalism will be done.

On the fourth chapter , Turkey's relations with Georgia will be explained in a wider context. First, Turkey's relations with Russia will be analyzed considering diplomatic, security and economic aspects of relations. Second, Turkey's relations with the US will be analyzed including the diplomatic, security and economic aspects of relations. Third, a general evaluation of Georgia's relations with Russia and US will be done.

On the fifth chapter, dynamics of Turkey's relations with Georgia will be examined. First, evolution of the discourse on Georgia will be explained in a chronological order considering spesific events in Turkey's relations with Georgia. Then, principles of Turkey's foreign policy, objectives and instruments will be explained.

On the sixth chapter, Turkey's diplomatic relations will be examined in the light of different periods. First, Turkey's diplomatic relations with Georgia between 1991-1996 will be examined. Second, Turkey's diplomatic relations between 1996-2003 will be examined. During this period, both bilateral relations and Turkey's policy towards Ajaria and about the return of Ahiska Turks will be examined. Third, Turkey's diplomatic relations between 2003-2008 will be examined considering the

effect of the Rose Revolution to the relations. Fourth, Turkey's diplomatic relations between 2008-2012 will be examined.

On the seventh chapter, Turkey's security relations towards Georgia will be examined. First, Turkey's security relations between 1991-1996 will be examined. During this period, Turkey's policy towards the Abkhaz-Georgian conflict and about Russian presence and Russian military bases in Georgia will be examined. Second, Turkey's security relations between 1996-2003 will be examined considering both Turkey's bilateral policy and regional policy through organisations like Black Sea Naval Force and NATO Partnership for Peace programs. Third, Turkey's security relations between 2003-2008 will be examined. Fourth, Turkey security relations between 2008-2012 will be examined in the light of both bilateral relations and regional policy through NATO.

On the eighth chapter, Turkey's economic relations towards Georgia will be examined. First, Turkey's economic relations between 1991-1996 will be examined in the light of both bilateral trade relations and the role of Black Sea Economic Organisation. Second, Turkey's economic relations between 1996-2003 will be examined. During this period as well as bilateral relations, role of the energy projects such as Baku-Tiblisi-Ceyhan Pipeline projects will be examined. Third, Turkey's economic relations between 2003-2008 will be examined. Fourth, Turkey's economic relations between 2008-2012 will be examined.

To conclude all, it will be stated Turkey's relations with Georgia is far from reflecting the real characteristics of a strategic partnership. Rather, it is a practical cooperation which includes both conflicting and cooperative patterns and is mainly motivated by security concerns of Turkey in the region which differ from Georgia's security concerns in some critical contexts. Rather than full convergence of interests, Turkey's relations with Georgia are based on a changeable fragile ground.

CHAPTER II

2. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF RELATIONS

In this thesis, examining the historical background of relations is expected to provide us a better analysis of the current position of Turkey's relations with Georgia. In this chapter, relations with Georgia during the Ottoman era, the political transformation of Georgia during the Soviet Union, the late Soviet era and post-Soviet Georgia will be examined.

2.1 The Imperial Era

After the Ottoman conquest of Istanbul in 1453, Georgia's relations with the Western Christian world was disrupted.³⁹ Thus, the conquest of Istanbul in 1453 constituted the cornerstone in Ottoman-Georgia relations. After that, a struggle between Ottomans and Iran started in the Caucasus in order to get the control of Georgia.⁴⁰ While the western parts came under the rule of the Ottomans, the eastern parts were under the influence of Iran.⁴¹ Following that, in 1578, Ottomans started to dominate and govern the southwestern part of Georgia and Turkish-Georgian relations in historical and political aspects started.⁴²

The struggle between the Ottoman State and Iran was replaced by the struggle between the Ottoman State and Russia over the Caucasus during the 18th century. Russian motivation of spreading its control over the region and policy of reaching to

³⁹ Muhittin Güл, "Türk-Gürcü İlişkileri ve Türkiye Gürcüler", *SAU Fen Edebiyat Dergisi*, Vol.1, 2009, p. 84.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, pp.84-85.

⁴¹ Berdzenishvili et al., *Istoriia Gruzii*, p.287., cited in Ronald Grigor Suny, *The Making of the Georgian Nation*, Indiana University Press, 1994, p. 48.

⁴² Muhittin Güл, *Op.cit*, p. 88.

hot seas in the south were determining in that struggle.⁴³ Russia mainly focused on controlling the Black sea and the Caucasus region.⁴⁴ In the 19th century, Russia became the dominant and hegemonic Christian power in the region by achieving the integration of Christian people in the region and getting almost the full control of the region.⁴⁵ Russian annexation of Georgia constituted a new phase in Georgia's history, due to the fact that, Georgia's security became strongly linked Russia.⁴⁶ As a result of the struggle between Russians and the Ottoman State, after the 1877-78 War, an important outcome of Russian pressure and fear of Russian domination was the deportation of Muslim Georgians(mostly Ajarians) and Turks in these regions to the Ottoman territories.⁴⁷ Concerning the period under Russian rule, it was argued that "heavy handed Russian rule led to uprisings led by elements of the Georgian nobility"⁴⁸.

Following that, during the First World War, in 1917 as a result of the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia, Russia had to retreat from the war.⁴⁹ Since then, the Ottomans had to take into consideration and deal with the Federative Government of Transcaucasia consisted of Armenians, Georgians and Azeris for the region.⁵⁰ During a meeting between the Turkish delegation and the Federative Government of

⁴³ Kamil Uşun, *Op.cit*, p. 19.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

⁴⁵ John F. Baddeley, Rusya'nın Kafkasya'yı İstilası ve Şeyh Şamil, trc. Sedat Özden, İstanbul 1989, p. 99 and Akdes Nimet Kurat, Rusya Tarihi, Ankara 1987, 2. bs., s. 300., cited in Nebi Gümüş, "Son Gürcü Kralı II. Solomon'un Ruslara Karşı Mücadelesi ve Osmanlı Devleti ile İlişkileri", *SÜİFD*,22, p. 107.

⁴⁶ Glenn E.Curtis, *Georgia A Country Study*, Federal Research Division, Liberal Congress, 1994, p. 42.

⁴⁷ Süleyman Erkan, *Kırım ve Kafkasya Göçleri*, KTÜ yayını, Trabzon, 1996, pp.59-79., cited in Muhittin Gül, *Op.cit*, p.92.

⁴⁸ Svante Cornell, Autonomy and Conflict, Ethnoterritoriality and Separatism in the South Caucasus-Cases in Georgia, Department of Peace and Conflict Research, Report No. 61, Uppsala, 2002, p. 134.

⁴⁹ Muhittin Gül, *Op.cit*, p. 96.

⁵⁰ Nasır Yüceer, *I. Dünya Savaşında Osmanlı Ordusunun Azerbaycan ve Dağıstan Harekati*, Ankara, 1996, pp.15.17.,cited in Çelebioğlu, *Op.cit*, p.xiv.

Transcaucasia in Trabzon, Batum was joined to Ottoman territories.⁵¹ On 11 May 1918, in the Batum Conference, Akhaltsikhe (Ahiska) and Akhalkalaki (Ahılkalek) were among the territorial demands of the Turkish delegation from Georgia.⁵² Nevertheless, the Federative Government of Transcaucasia did not last long and was repealed and after that Georgia declared its independence on 25 May 1918.⁵³ Since then relations with the region had to be conducted bilaterally with the states in the region and on 4 June 1918 in Batum, peace agreements with Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan were signed.⁵⁴ On June 4, the Ottoman State formally recognized the Georgian state.⁵⁵

Considering all, during the period examined above, there was an intensified interaction between the Ottomans, Georgians, Iran and Czarist Russia. Thus, Georgia during its history, except the three years between 1918-1921 of independence, became a region of rivalry between regional powers.

2.2 The Soviet Era

With the establishment of the Soviet power in Georgia, Georgia's independence did not last long and on 25 February 1921, ended.⁵⁶ Nevertheless, on 31 December 1920, Georgian Ambassador then Simon Mdivani came to Ankara and on 8 February 1921, he was welcomed by Mustafa Kemal.⁵⁷ During this meeting Mustafa Kemal,

⁵¹ Serpil Sürmeli, Türk- Gürcü İlişkileri (1918-1921), Ankara: 2001, s. 74-75., cited in., Çelebioğlu, *Op.cit.*, p.4.

⁵² Çelebioğlu, *Op.cit.*, pp.4-5.

⁵³ Serpil Sürmeli, *Türk-Gürcü İlişkileri (1918-1921)*, Atatürk Kültür Dil ve Tarih Yüksek Kurumu yayını, Ankara., 2001:103 vd., cited in Muhittin Gül, *Op.cit.*, p. 94.

⁵⁴ Gül, *Op.cit.*, p.94.

⁵⁵ Ronald Grigor Suny, *The Making of the Georgian Nation*, Second Edition, Indiana University Press, 1994, p. 193.

⁵⁶ Serpil Sürmeli, *Türk-Gürcü İlişkileri (1918-1921)*, Atatürk Kültür Dil ve Tarih Yüksek Kurumu yayını, Ankara., 2001:pp.694-696., cited in Muhittin Gül, *Op.cit.*, p. 97.

emphasized the importance of mutual recognition of independences and good neighbourhood.⁵⁸ Mustafa Kemal, further, indicated that:

What makes us closer to Georgia is not solely sympathy, but the fact that our objectives are the same. There is need for a strong East. Especially, a strong Caucasus. The most important thing in Caucasus, is the need for Georgians which are a nation to be strong. For us, there is need for a strong and independent Georgia. We should spend effort with Georgia for the other countries of Caucasus to be independent, also.⁵⁹

Following that, on 16 March 1921, the Moscow agreement was signed between the Ankara Government and the Soviet Union.⁶⁰ According to the Moscow agreement, Artvin and Ardahan would remain to Turkey and Batum would be left to Georgia.⁶¹ Further, on 13 October 1921, the Kars Agreement through which the border with Georgia was defined, was signed between the Ankara government and Georgia.⁶² According to the agreement, Kars, Ardahan and Artvin remained in Turkey while Batum was left to Georgia.⁶³ Furthermore, during this period, while the Turkish army left Ajara and Batum, Muslim Georgians and Turks in these regions, immigrated to Turkic region.⁶⁴

During the Soviet period, relations were conducted through the Soviet Union. The 1921 Moscow agreement was followed with the Pact of Non-aggression signed between Turkey and the Soviet Union in 1925.⁶⁵ Whereas, this situation changed

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

⁵⁹ Nutuk, 1989:327; Aral, 1968:7; Bayur, 1938:69; Kocatürk, 1988:236; Sürmeli, 2001:620 vd., cited in Gül, *Op.cit.*, p.97.

⁶⁰ TBMMZC, 1958, C.XI:332-333., cited in., Muhittin GüL, *Op.cit.*, p. 98.

⁶¹ TBMMZC C.IX, 1954: 66; Aralov, 1967:30; Karabekir, 1988:385-386; Harp Tarihi Dergisi, 1964:26., cited in., Muhittin GüL, *Op.cit.*, p. 98.

⁶² Muhittin GüL, *Op.cit.*, p.98.

⁶³ Bıyikoğlu, 1958:21, 22, 31; Soysal, 1983:41-47., cited in., GüL, *Op.cit.*, p.98.

⁶⁴ GüL, *Op.cit.*, p.98.

⁶⁵ M.A. Gasratyan – P.P. Moyseyev, SSSR i Turtsiya 1917-1979, p.65., cited in., Çağatay Benhür, “Turkish Soviet Relations in 1920s: A Chronological Study, *Türkiyat Araştırmaları Dergisi*, p. 298.

after World War II. Stalin, after World War II, ended the Pact of Non-Aggression with Turkey and expressed the intention of the Soviet Union to take back Kars and Ardahan provinces.⁶⁶ This situation was perceived as a threat to its territorial integrity by Turkey till the death of Stalin in 1953.⁶⁷ After the death of Stalin, Molotov invited the Ambassador of Turkey and said that neither Georgia nor Armenia would demand any territory from Turkey and thus the Soviet Union gave up from any territorial demands from Turkey.⁶⁸ Furthermore, since Turkey in 1952 joined to NATO, due to its obligations of NATO membership, did not renew its Pact of Non-Aggression with the Soviet Union.⁶⁹ Nevertheless, the crisis between Turkey and the US with the 1964 dated Johnson Letter caused Turkey to re-think its relations with the Soviet Union and after this date, relations were decided to be conducted on the principle of reciprocity with the Soviet Union.⁷⁰ Furthermore, though in 1980, again there was a down process in Turkey's relations with the Soviet Union due to the Cyprus Issue, after 1980, Turkey did not turn its back against the Soviet Union and conducted a multidimensional policy.⁷¹

Concerning Georgia's political transformation, on the other hand, during the Soviet Era, it is argued that Georgia maintained some cultural independence, nevertheless,

<http://www.turkiyat.selcuk.edu.tr/pdfdergi/s24/benhur.pdf>

⁶⁶ İsmail Soysal, *Türk Dış Politikası İncelemeleri İçin Klavuz*, İstanbul: 1993, pp. 13- 15., cited in., Tuğba Çelebioğlu , “1990 Sonrası Türkiye-Gürcistan İlişkileri”, *M.S Thesis*, Marmara University, İstanbul, 2005, p.27.

⁶⁷ S. Canaşa- N. Berdzenişvili, “Türkiye'den Haklı İstemlerimiz”, *Tarih ve Toplum*, C. 8, Sayı 46, Ekim 1987, pp. 49-52., cited in, Çelebioğlu, *Op.cit.*, p.28.

⁶⁸ Ayhan Kamel, “İkinci Dünya Savaşı Bitiminden Günümüze Kadar Türk-Rus İlişkileri”, Makale Arşivi.,
http://www.dispolitika.org.tr/dosyalar/akamel_p.htm

⁶⁹ Soysal, *Tarihçeleri ve Açıklamaları ile Birlikte Türkiye'nin Siyasal Anlaşmaları I. Cilt (1920-1945)*, TTK, Ankara: 1989, s. 267., cited in, Çelebioğlu, *Op.cit.*, p.29.

⁷⁰ Fahir Armaoğlu, *20. Yüzyıl Siyasi Tarihi (1914-1995)*, C.1-2, 13. Basım, İstanbul: Alkım Yayıncıları, s. 827-829., cited in Çelebioğlu, *Op.cit.*, p.29.

⁷¹ Fahir Armaoğlu, *20. Yüzyıl Siyasi Tarihi (1914-1995)*, C.1-2, 13. Basım, İstanbul: Alkım Yayıncıları, s. 831-832., cited in Çelebioğlu, *Op.cit.*, p.29.

Georgia nationalism remained a significant issue in relations with the Russians.⁷² Georgia's declaration of independence in 1918 did not last long and in 1921 the Red Army invaded Georgia.⁷³ Since 1922 till 1936, Georgia became part of the Transcaucasian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic (TSFSR) within the Soviet Union.⁷⁴ In 1936, since the federated republic was split up, Georgia became one of the Soviet socialist republics of the Soviet Union till the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991.⁷⁵

During the Stalin era, it is argued that "Stalin's regime oppressed Georgians as severely as it oppressed citizens of other Soviet republics"⁷⁶. It is further argued that, as a sociopolitical formation, Stalinism was in place in Georgia by 1939 and in the quarter-century between 1928 and 1953, Georgia was transformed more fundamentally than in any comparable period in its three-thousand year history.⁷⁷ While during the World War II, Stalin's appeal for patriotic unity diminished the power of Georgian nationalism, during the late Stalin period, the preferential treatment of Georgians at the expense of ethnic minorities took place.⁷⁸

⁷² Glenn E. Curtis, *Georgia, A country Study*, Federal Research Division, Library of Congress, 1995, p. 94.

⁷³ Curtis, *Op.cit*, p. 94.

⁷⁴ Curtis, *Op.cit*, p.94.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, p.94.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p.94.

⁷⁷ Ronald Grigor Suny, *The Making of the Georgian Nation*, Second Edition, Indiana University Press, 1994, p. 280.

⁷⁸ Curtis, *Op.cit*, p.95.

It was further argued that:

The socioeconomic transformation of Georgia under Stalin made the republic, in one sense, less Georgian, for the traditional peasant life and customs were forced into new molds; but in another sense Georgia's ethnic uniqueness was enhanced by the legacy of the *korenizatsiia* policies..... The nativization of schooling, the courts, and governmental institutions gave Georgians the dominant role in a republic that still possessed significant non-Georgian minorities.⁷⁹

It was further stated that, “Korenizatsiia had “grown over”, into Georgian chauvinism, parallel to the growth of Russian nationalism on the all union level”⁸⁰. Georgians’ relationship with Moscow during Stalin era, was marked by “internal colonialism”, on the other hand.⁸¹

After the death of Stalin, Georgian nationalism which had lost power, revived and further as an outcome of the decentralization policy during Khrushchev, Georgians started to get a more prominent status against other ethnic groups in Georgia.⁸² When combined with other problems such as corruption and economic inefficiency, Shevardnadze was appointed as first secretary of the Georgian communist Party by Moscow. Shevardnadze’s struggle against corruption and chauvinism of Georgia’s elites caused a dissident nationalist group to emerge around Zviad Gamsakhurdia.⁸³ The claim of the nationalist group that the Russification presented a threat to the Georgian national identity, indeed, constituted the core of Georgia-Russian relations during the 1990’s after Georgia’s declaration of independence.⁸⁴ During the 1970’s and 1980’s, Shevardnadze managed Moscow’s demands and Georgians’ desire for national autonomy through seeking compromise solutions.⁸⁵ In 1985, after

⁷⁹ Ronald Grigor Suny, *Op.cit*, p. 281.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 282.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p. 291.

⁸² Curtis, *Op.cit*, p.95.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, p.96.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, p.96.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, p.96.

Shevardnadze left office, he was appointed as minister of foreign affairs of the Soviet Union, and Patiashvili succeeded him as head of the Georgian communist party. Unlike Shevardnadze, Patiashvili in dealing with opposition groups used a harsh strategy and caused the isolation of opposition groups.⁸⁶ As a result of the radicalization of opposition group, the struggle between Moscow and Georgia intensified as well as the struggle between Georgians and ethnic minorities seeking to escape the control of Tbilisi.

Following all, April 1989 constituted a turning point in the rise of Georgian nationalism. Since a peaceful demonstration at the government building in Tbilisi was brutally oppressed by Soviet troops, this event which was later called as “The April Tragedy” resulted with the radicalization of political life in the republic.⁸⁷ This demonstration though originally began in order to protest the declaration made by 30,000 Abkhazians in Abkhazian town of Lykhny requesting from Moscow to be a union republic separate from Georgia⁸⁸, later on carried more radical aims including independence from Moscow and end of the communist rule.⁸⁹ Following this event, Patiashvili was replaced by Givi Gumbaridze, nevertheless the nationalist atmosphere continued and the vast majority of the population demanded independence from Moscow.⁹⁰

One of the important outcome of the April Tragedy was that the opposition became much more radicalized even leaving no place for moderate voices.⁹¹ Second, the communist party lost its legitimacy and any compromise with Soviet authorities was

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, p.97.

⁸⁷ Curtis, *Op.cit*, p. 98.

⁸⁸ Jonathan Weathley, *Georgia from National Awakening to Rose Revolution*, Ashgate, 2005, p. 43.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 43.

⁹⁰ Curtis, *Op.cit*, p. 98.

⁹¹ Jonathan Weathley, *Op.cit*, p. 44.

strongly rejected.⁹² Third, was the proliferation of paramilitary groupings, the most important of which was the Mkhedrioni(Horsemen) leaded by Jaba Ioseliani.⁹³

In the light of all, parallel with the rise of nationalism, opposition forces though lacked any unity at the first sight, became more effective under the leadership of Zviad Gamsakhurdia.⁹⁴ As a result of the elections held by opposition parties without government approval, Georgian National Congress as the legislative body of the opposition was formed.⁹⁵ Furthermore, in the official October election, Gamsakhurdia's Round Table/Free Georgia coalition won the majority of the votes in the Supreme Soviet.⁹⁶ Gamsakhurdia's intolerance towards all political opposition was the greatest shown against armed opposition.⁹⁷ Mkhedrioni, rather than parliamentary opposition, constituted the biggest problem to Gamsakhurdia.⁹⁸ Gamsakhurdia aimed to realize Georgia's independence from Moscow as soon as possible and rather than participating Gorbachov's March 1991 referendum, organised a referendum on Georgian independence. After that referendum, on 9 April 1991 on the second anniversary of the April Tragedy, the Georgian parliament passed a declaration of independence from the Soviet Union.⁹⁹ In May 1991, Gamsakhurdia was elected as president of Georgia by getting % 86 of the votes.¹⁰⁰ Nevertheless, in the following period, Gamsakhurdia's more oppressive attitude against the oppositon groups, caused a coalition to emerge around Sigua and

⁹² *Ibid.*, p. 44.

⁹³ *Ibid.*,p. 45.

⁹⁴ Curtis, *Op.cit*, p. 99.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 99.

⁹⁶ Curtis, *Op.cit*, p. 99.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 99.

⁹⁸ Jonathan Weathley, *Op.cit*, p. 54.

⁹⁹ Curtis, *Op.cit*, pp. 99-100.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 100.

Kitovani which further demanded the resign of Gamsakhurdia and new parliamentary elections.¹⁰¹ In September 1991, an opposition rally was dispersed by Gamsakhurdia's forces and in the following period, the tension between government and opposition forces intensified more and resulted with an intense fighting on December 22 in central Tbilisi.¹⁰² As a result of all, Gamsakhurdia had to leave the city and seek refuge outside Georgia in early January 1992.¹⁰³

2.3 The Post-Soviet Era

The political transformation of Georgia with the chaotic situation in the country reflected to Georgia's perception of Turkey, as well. The historical legacy of the Otoman era directly reflected to this perception. The fact that Georgia became under the Otoman rule before Czarist Russia's occupation of Georgia was exaggerated under the Russian and Soviet education system and Ottomans and Turks were stereotyped as "evil" and "enemy".¹⁰⁴ Nevertheless, Russians were shown as friend and rescuer.¹⁰⁵ Concerning this situation, it is stated that, while Georgians understood that Russians were not friend and rescuer, this their Turk perception was not eliminated, at once.¹⁰⁶

There was a dominant Soviet thesis that "if Georgia became independent, it would be occupied by Turkey"¹⁰⁷. Even, Gamssakhurdia in 1990 demanded Turkey to openly declare that "Turkey will not use force against Georgia".¹⁰⁸

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, p. 101.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, p. 101.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, p. 101.

¹⁰⁴ AĞACAN, *Op.cit*, p. 428

¹⁰⁵ AĞACAN, *Op.cit*, p.428.

¹⁰⁶ AĞACAN, *Op.cit*, p.428.

¹⁰⁷ AĞACAN, *Op.cit*, p. 428.

Another important aspect of the fear was the Ajaria region mostly populated by Muslims. Since with the Kars Agreement, Turkey became the guarantor of Ajaria's autonomy, the beginning of relations in 1989 after the opening of the Sarp Border Gate caused anxiety on Georgian side.¹⁰⁹ The anti-Turkish approach in Georgia was also reinforced with the territorial demands of some nationalist groups in Georgia. The Georgia parliament while discussing the Agreement signed on 30 July 1992, in March 1993, nationalists did not want to join to the poll arguing that in the agreement a reference was made to the Kars Agreement defining the border between Turkey and Georgia.¹¹⁰

After Gamsakhurdia left the country, this chaotic process in Georgia continued and was followed with the formation of a Military Council made up of Sigua, Kitovani and Mkhedrioni leader Jaba Ioselini.¹¹¹ After the collapse of the Soviet Union at the end of December 1991, while Georgia refused to participate in the formation of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), in March 1992, with the invitation of Shevardnadze by the Military Council, Shevardnadze returned Georgia and with Ioselini, Sigua and Kitovani formed the State Council Presidium.¹¹² The State Council would be a temporary body and operate until elections were held later that year.¹¹³ At the same time, Gamsakhurdia in Grozny formed a parliament in exile and during 1992 and 1993, the tension between the government and his armed

¹⁰⁸ For further information about the fear felt from Turkey in the independence period See: Fahrettin Çiloglu, "Post-Soviet Consequences in Georgian and Turkish Policy" Ole Hoiris and Sefa Martin Yüksel (Eds.), *Contrasts and Solutions in the Caucasus*, Aarhus: Aarhus University Pres, 1998, pp.318-324; Svante E.Cornell, *Small Nations and Great Powers*, Richmond: Curzon Pres, 2001, pp.307-308., cited in Ağacan, *Op.cit*, p. 428.

¹⁰⁹ Ağacan, *Op.cit*, p. 428.

¹¹⁰ Abesalom İmedaşvili, "Türkiye- Gürcistan ilişkilerinde Yeni Aşama", *Diyalog Avrasya*, No.3, February 2001, pp.86-91. cited in, Ağacan, *Op.cit*, p.429.

¹¹¹ Curtis, *Op.cit.*, p. 102.

¹¹² Curtis, *Op.cit*, p. 102.

¹¹³ Jonathan Weathley, *Op.cit*, p. 70.

supporters continued.¹¹⁴ For this period, it also worth to note that Shevardnadze's power was more symbolic than real.¹¹⁵

While dealing with such internal problems that challenged its state and nation building process, Georgia, on the other hand, faced with threats of fragmentation with the emergence of the South Ossetia and Abkhazia conflicts. While Gamsakurdia's intransigent attitude towards ethnic minorities constituted an important reason of the lack of compromise with these regions¹¹⁶, the weak power structure in Tbilisi with a lack of a proper hierarchical structure also played a crucial role in these conflicts, especially in the Abkhaz conflict.¹¹⁷ Russian involvement to these problems, on the other hand, while complicated Georgia's relations with Russia had concrete implications of the nature of Georgia's relations with Russia. While Shevardnadze first accused Yeltsin of supporting secessionists and thus weakening Georgia's national security, afterwards, in September 1993, since Gamsakhurdia returned to Georgia by taking advantage of the conflict in Abkhazia, as a result of the fighting and struggle between Georgian army and Gamsakhurdia's forces for the control of Western Georgia, Shevardnadze faced with the danger of losing the territorial integrity and state collapse, had to appeal Russia for military assistance.¹¹⁸ Soon after Russia's military assistance, internal hostilities ended and Gamsakhurdia committed suicide in January 1994.¹¹⁹

The period between 1993-1995 could be named as the period of consolidation of power by Shevardnadze.¹²⁰ Shevardnadze's consolidation of power in the Head of

¹¹⁴ Curtis, *Op.cit*, p. 102.

¹¹⁵ Jonathan Weathley, *Op.cit*, p. 70.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p.56.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p.73.

¹¹⁸ Curtis, *Op.cit*, p. 104.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 104.

¹²⁰ Jonathan Weathley, *Op.cit*, p. 82.

State with the personal control of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, his decision to call a state of emergency and rule by decree, his decision to join the CIS and create a ruling party- the Citizens' Union of Georgia) all initiated the consolidation of power.¹²¹ The major consequences of these decisions were first the decline of the paramilitaries mainly the Mkhedrioni, the weakening of the opposition groups, then through the appointment of Shevardnadze's loyalists to positions of power Shevardnadze became the most powerful person in Georgian politics.¹²² Furthermore, though by Shevardnadze considerable steps for the establishment of a viable state was taken, the issue of sovereignty was at stake since there was an increased reliance on Russia with the permission of Russian military bases in Georgian territories.¹²³

The period between 1996 and 2001 was dominated by the weakness of the Georgian state.¹²⁴ As well as the high corruption level, the fragmented and feudalized structure of the political elite prevented the state to penetrate society.¹²⁵ Thus, though Georgian political elite reflected a high degree of pluralism, rather than a reflection of democracy, this was more the result of the inability of Shevardnadze to establish centralized rule.¹²⁶

The period between 1996 and 2001, on the other hand, unlike the previous era, was marked by the influence of society on the Georgian state which resulted with the emergence of a independent media and non-governmental organisations.¹²⁷

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 82.

¹²² *Ibid.*, pp. 86- 89.

¹²³ *Ibid.*, p. 91.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 135.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 135-136.

¹²⁶ Jonathan Weathley, *Op.cit*, p. 134.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 143.

Emergence of NGO's mostly depended on foreign donor money started to get disproportionate influence on Georgian politics.¹²⁸ Nevertheless, due to the weaknesses of the bottom-up channels of influence and vertical cleavages in Georgian society, a distance remained between political elites and the rest of the society.¹²⁹ Thus, civil society strongly remained under state control, while the Georgian state was unable to deliver public goods to society.

The post 2001 period till 2003 was an important transition process that led to the overthrown of Shevardnadze with a bloodless coup known as “Rose Revolution”. Without going through the details, it can be well argued that The Rose Revolution and Saakashvili becoming the new president of Georgia took place as the outcome of the combination of many internal and international factors simultaneously. The formation of National Movement by Saakashvili and his leadership role, the independent media, the NGO activists such as Liberty Institute that played role in the emergence of the youth movement Kmara, International Society for Fair Elections and Democracy and Open Society Georgia Foundation (Soros), National Democratic Institute were important factors for the success of the Rose Revolution.¹³⁰ Considering the international aspect of the process through Rose Revolution, the US' and Russia's attitudes were main points of discussion. It is a fact that US- based organizations played important role by assisting the opposition. Nevertheless, considering state level attitude towards the process, it was argued that the US was clearly interested in the outcome of the power struggle in Tbilisi and that the US was attempting to facilitate a change in government.¹³¹ Considering Russia's attitude, on the other hand, it can be well argued that Russia for several reasons did not back up Shevardnadze and that Russia's attitude could be “characterized as more or less neutral”.¹³²

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 143.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 143.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, pp.185-190.

¹³¹ Jonathan Weathkey, *Op.cit*, p. 189.

With Saakashvili coming to power, a new era started in Georgia. Nevertheless, how much Saakashvili's presidency differed from Shevardnadze was a matter of question due to the fact that, while Saakashvili's statements were in favor of building democracy, practices showed that there were more illeliberal and authoritarian tendencies.¹³³ Nevertheless, as explained in the related parts of the thesis, relations with the US and Russia had different tendencies than the Sheverdnadze era.

This brief political history of Georgia is important first to see first the implications of the Stalinist period and events of 9 April on Georgia's political life. The emergence and strengthening of radical nationalist groups against the communist power with the lack of a liberal intelligentsia that could bridge the gap, undermined Georgia's viability as an independent state even long after Gamsakhurdia's overthrow.¹³⁴ It should be first stated that, the Soviet legacy had considerable impacts of the characteristics of Georgian nationalism. Second, the Soviet legacy had considerable implications of the nature of Georgia's relations with Russia. Third, the Soviet legacy had impacts on the authoritarianism in Georgia.

Considering all, the internal political transformation of Georgia had effects on the foreign relations of Georgia, as well. Georgia's relations with the US and Russia and the US and Russia's policies in Georgia had considerable impact on Turkey's relations with Georgia.

¹³² *Ibid.*, p.190.

¹³³ *Ibid.*, pp. 208-209.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 62.

CHAPTER III

3. THEORETICAL AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK: POLITICAL REALIST AND LIBERALIST DEFINITIONS AND APPROACHES TO THE CONCEPT OF COOPERATION IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

In this chapter, first, different forms of cooperation in international relations will be analyzed and the concept of cooperation will be defined. Second, political realism in international relations will be explained. Third, the realist concepts of “conflict” and “cooperation” will be discussed. After that, liberalism in international relations will be explained. This will be followed by the discussion on the liberal concept of cooperation. Last, political realism’s criticism on liberalism will be outlined.

3.1 Analysis of the Concept of Cooperation

In this part, definition of the concept of cooperation will be done and different forms of cooperation will be examined.

3.1.1 Definition of the Concept of Cooperation

Helen Milner in the article “International Theories of Cooperation Among Nations, Strengths and Weaknesses” indicates that “a notable feature of the recent literature on international cooperation is the acceptance of a common definition of the phenomenon”¹³⁵.

¹³⁵ See Keohane (fn. 1); Kenneth A. Oye, ed., *Cooperation under Anarchy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986); Putnam and Bayne (fn. 1); as well as Grieco and Haas, cited in, Helen Milner, “International Theories of Cooperation Among Nations Strengths and Weaknesses”, Review Article, *World Politics*, Vol.44, No.3, April, 1992, p. 467.

Robert Keohane in his article “Cooperation and International Regimes” indicates that:

Cooperation requires that actions of separate individuals or organizations- which are not in pre-existent harmony- be brought into conformity with one another through a process of negotiation, which is often referred to as “policy coordination”.¹³⁶

Within this framework, cooperation is defined “as occurring when actors adjust their behavior to the actual and/ or anticipated preferences of others, through a policy of coordination”¹³⁷. Based on this definition of cooperation, policy coordination refers to “policies of each state have been adjusted to reduce their negative consequences for the other states”¹³⁸. Thus, according to Charles E. Lindblom, policy coordination is defined as:

A set of decisions is coordinated if adjustments have been made in them, such that the adverse consequences of any one decision for other decisions are to a degree and in some frequency avoided, reduced, or counterbalanced or overweighted.¹³⁹

Further, Helen Milner identifies important elements of the concept “cooperation” by stating that:

First, it assumes that each actor's behavior is directed toward some goal(s). It need not be the same goal for all the actors involved, but it does assume rational behavior on their part. Second, the definition implies that cooperation provides the actors with gains or rewards. The gains need not be the same in magnitude or kind for each state, but they are mutual. Each actor helps the others to realize their goals by adjusting its policies in the anticipation of its own reward. Each actor is not necessarily out to help the other, though; it is the anticipation of bettering one's own situation that leads to the adjustment in one's policies.¹⁴⁰

¹³⁶ Robert Keohane, “ Cooperation and International Regimes”, *Conflict and Cooperation Evolving Theories of International Relations*, Marc A.Genest (Ed.), Wadsworth Thomson, 2004,p.165.

¹³⁷ Robert Keohane, “ Cooperation and International Regimes”, *Conflict and Cooperation Evolving Theories of International Relations*, Marc A.Genest (Ed.), Wadsworth Thomson, 2004,p.166.

¹³⁸ Helen Milner, “ International Theories of Cooperation Among Nations Strengths and Weaknesses”, Review Article, *World Politics*, Vol.44, No.3, April, 1992, p. 467.

¹³⁹ Charles E. Linblom, *The Intelligence of Democracy*, Free Press, 1965, p.227., cited in., Robert Keohane, “ Cooperation and International Regimes”, *Conflict and Cooperation Evolving Theories of International Relations*, Marc A.Genest (Ed.), Wadsworth Thomson, 2004,p.166.

¹⁴⁰ Helen Milner, *Op.cit.*, p. 468.

Based on this definition, three ways of achieving cooperation are outlined.¹⁴¹ First is the tacit form of cooperation which occur without an explicit agreement¹⁴², but when the expectations of actors converge.¹⁴³ Second, cooperation is achieved through a negotiation process based on an explicit agreement.¹⁴⁴ Third, cooperation is imposed which means that a stronger party in a relationship forces the other side to adjust its policies.¹⁴⁵ Furthermore, for cooperation to occur, the stronger side also adjusts its policies in order to reach mutual gains.¹⁴⁶

Considering the conditions under which cooperation is likely to occur, Robert O. Keohane states that since cooperation is based on change in patterns of behavior, this change may be achieved through negative as well as positive inducements.¹⁴⁷ It was further indicated that:

Studies of international crises, as well as game-theoretic experiment and simulations have shown that under a variety of conditions, strategies that involve threats and punishments as well as promises and rewards are more effective in attaining cooperative outcomes than those that rely entirely on persuasion and the force of good example.¹⁴⁸

To sum up all, as argued by Robert Axelrod and Robert Keohane in their article “Achieving Cooperation Under Anarchy: Strategies and Institutions”, it is stated that

¹⁴¹ The three forms used here were suggested by the discussion of regimes in Young (fn. 1), 87-96., cited in., Helen Milner, *Op.cit.*, p.469.

¹⁴² Helen Milner, *Op.cit.*, p. 469.

¹⁴³ See Thomas Schelling, *Strategy of Conflict* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1960), for a discussion of focal points; see also the work on tacit signaling among firms, e.g., Michael Spence, *Market Signaling* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1974)., cited in., Helen Milner, *Op.cit.*, p. 469.

¹⁴⁴ Helen Milner, *Op.cit.*, p. 469.

¹⁴⁵ Helen Milner, *Op.cit.*, p. 469.

¹⁴⁶ Helen Milner, *Op.cit.*, p.469.

¹⁴⁷ Robert Keohane, “Cooperation and International Regimes”, *Conflict and Cooperation Evolving Theories of International Relations*, Marc A.Genest (Ed.), Wadsworth Thomson, 2004,p.167.

¹⁴⁸ Axelrod, 1981, 1984; Lebow, 1981; Snyder and Diesing, 1977., cited in Keohane, “Cooperation and International Regimes”, *Conflict and Cooperation Evolving Theories of International Relations*, Marc A.Genest (Ed.), Wadsworth Thomson, 2004,p.167.

cooperation can only occur in situations that contains both conflicting and complementary interests.¹⁴⁹ Supporting this view, Robert Keohane, further indicates that cooperation does not refer to an absence of conflict but rather takes place only in situations in which actors perceive that their policies are actually or potentially in conflict, not where there is harmony.¹⁵⁰

3.1.2 Forms of Cooperation

In the light of liberalist and political realist perspectives, concepts of “international institution (international regime)”, “alliances” and “strategic partnership” will be explained as the main forms of cooperation.

a. International Institutions (International Regimes)

Regarding first the concept of international institution, it can be well argued that “there is no widely- agreed upon definition of institutions in the international relations literature”¹⁵¹. Nevertheless, few definitions reflecting different theoretical perspectives can be written down. John Mearsheimer reflecting a political realist perspective, defined institutions “ as a set of rules that stipulate the ways in which

¹⁴⁹ Robert Axelrod, Robert O. Keohane, “Achieving Cooperation Under Anarchy: Strategies and Institutions”, *World Politics*, Vol.38, No.1, 1985, p.226.

¹⁵⁰ Robert Keohane, “ Cooperation and International Regimes”, *Conflict and Cooperation Evolving Theories of International Relations*, Marc A.Genest (Ed.), Wadsworth Thomson, 2004,p.167.

¹⁵¹ Regimes and institutions are treated as synonymous concepts in this article. They are also used interchangeably in the institutionalist literature. See Robert O. Keohane, "International Institutions: Two Approaches," *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 32, No. 4 (December 1988), p. 384; Robert O. Keohane, *International Institutions and State Power: Essays in International Relations Theory* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1989), pp. 3-4; and Oran R. Young, *International Cooperation Building Regimes for Natural Resources and the Environment* (Ithaca, N.Y: Cornell University Press, 1989), chaps. 1 and 8. The term "multilateralism" is also virtually synonymous with institutions. To quote John Ruggie, "the term 'multilateral' is an adjective that modifies the noun 'institution.' Thus, multilateralism depicts a generic institutional form in international relations.... [Specifically,] multilateralism is an institutional form which coordinates relations among three or more states on the basis of 'generalized' principles of conduct." Ruggie, "Multilateralism," pp. 570-571., cited in, John J.Mearsheimer, “The False Promise of International Institutions”, *International Security*, Vol.19, No.3, 1994, p.8

states should cooperate and compete with each other".¹⁵² John J. Mearsheimer further highlighted that, "institutions are not a form of world government. States themselves must choose to obey the rules they created"¹⁵³. Considering all, according to Mearsheimer, institutions refer to "decentralized cooperation of individual sovereign states, without any effective mechanism of command"¹⁵⁴. From a political realist perspective, role of institutions is outlined as below:

Realists also recognize that states sometimes operate through institutions. However, they believe that those rules reflect state calculations of self-interest based primarily on the international distribution of power. The most powerful states in the system create and shape institutions so that they can maintain their share of world power, or even increase it. In this view, institutions are essentially "arenas for acting out power relationships."¹⁵⁵

Reflecting a liberalist perspective, on the other hand, Robert Keohane defines institutions as "the rules that govern elements of world politics and the organisations that help implement those rules"¹⁵⁶. Further, Keohane outlines a broad definition of institutions as "persistent and connected sets of rules that prescribe behavioral roles, constrain activity, and shape expectations"¹⁵⁷.

¹⁵² See Douglass C. North and Robert P. Thomas, "An Economic Theory of the Growth of the Western World," *The Economic History Review*, 2nd series, Vol. 23, No. 1 (April 1970), p. 5., cited in., John J. Mearsheimer, "The False Promise of International Institutions", *International Security*, Vol.19, No.3, 1994, p.8

¹⁵³ John J. Mearsheimer, "The False Promise of International Institutions", *International Security*, Vol.19, No.3, 1994, p.9.

¹⁵⁴ Charles Lipson, "Is the Future of Collective Security Like the Past?" in George W. Downs, ed., *Collective Security beyond the Cold War* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press), p. 114., cited in., John J. Mearsheimer, "The False Promise of International Institutions", *International Security*, Vol.19, No.3, 1994, p.9.

¹⁵⁵ Tony Evans and Peter Wilson, "Regime Theory and the English School of International Relations: A Comparison," *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*, Vol. 21, No. 3 (Winter 1992), p. 330., cited in., John J. Mearsheimer, "The False Promise of International Institutions", *International Security*, Vol.19, No.3, 1994, p.13.

¹⁵⁶ Robert O. Keohane, "International institutions: Can Interdependence Work?", *Foreign Policy*, Spring 1998, 110, p. 82.

¹⁵⁷ Robert O. Keohane, "International Institutions: Two Approaches", *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 32, No. 4, 1988, p.382.

From a liberal perspective, considering cheating as the main problem against cooperation, it is argued that:

Liberal institutionalists instead concentrate on showing how rules can work to counter the cheating problem, even while states seek to maximize their own welfare. They argue that institutions can change a state's calculations about how to maximize gains. Specifically, rules can get states to make the short-term sacrifices needed to resolve the prisoners' dilemma and thus to realize long-term gains. Institutions, in short, can produce cooperation.¹⁵⁸

While international institution is indeed a broader concept that includes both international organizations and international regimes and since international institutions and international regimes are most of the times used interchangeably in the literature, what regime is, also need to be defined. Regimes are defined as “sets of implicit or explicit principles, norms, rules, and decision-making procedures around which actors' expectations converge in a given area of international relations”¹⁵⁹.

In the light of this definition, Keohane reflecting a neo-liberalist perspective explains “reasons for the emergence, function and persistence of regimes as a form of international cooperation”¹⁶⁰. Furthermore, Keohane argues that:

International cooperation is only likely if the cooperation is institutionalized through an international regime, since international regimes do have specific advantages, such as the reduction of transnational costs and the provision of information about the actors within a regime. By offering a negotiation framework with well defined parameters of cooperation, international regimes can reduce transaction costs that originate in the efforts of establishing and maintaining international negotiations. Furthermore, international regimes reduce the incentives of misbehaviour by stating and implementing specific control mechanisms while producing incentives to play fair and thus reducing the aforementioned uncertainty.¹⁶¹

¹⁵⁸ John J.Mearsheimer, “The False Promise of International Institutions”, *International Security*, Vol.19, No.3, 1994, p.18.

¹⁵⁹ Stephen D. Krasner, *International Regimes*, Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1983, p.2., cited in., Thomas Diez, Ingvild Bode, Alexandra Fernandes da Costa, *Key Concepts in International Relations*, SAGE Publications, 2011, p.115.

¹⁶⁰ Thomas Diez, Ingvild Bode, Alexandra Fernandes da Costa, *Key Concepts in International Relations*, SAGE Publications, 2011, p. 116.

¹⁶¹ Keohane, 1984, pp.89-109., cited in., Thomas Diez, Ingvild Bode, Alexandra Fernandes da Costa, *Key Concepts in International Relations*, SAGE Publications, 2011, p. 117.

Considering all, from a neoliberal perspective, Keohane explains the reason of the emergence of international regimes with their capacity to facilitate cooperation.¹⁶²

From a political perspective, “emergence and function of international regimes can be explained by the distribution of power within the specific issue areas of international politics”¹⁶³. Further, according to political realism, neo-liberals in their analysis of international regime ignores the impacts of anarchy.¹⁶⁴ Joseph Grieco, reflecting a neo-realist perspective states that:

Within an anarchical self-help system, states are not only concerned about their own absolute gains: they always have to have an eye on the gains of the others. Given that today’s cooperation partner might be the future adversary, states are seen to prevent increasing relative power capabilities of other states. And since they can not afford relative losses, stable cooperation within international regimes is not likely.¹⁶⁵

Considering all, international institutions (international regimes) while perceived as effective forms of cooperation in liberalism, they are seen forms of cooperation that reflect the national interest of states and distribution of power in the international system in political realism.

b. Alliances

In the political realist understanding of cooperation the role affiliated to alliances become important. According to realists, the security dilemma states face in a self help anarchical system, is believed to be mitigated through the mechanism of

¹⁶² Thomas Diez, Ingvild Bode, Alexandra Fernandes da Costa, *Key Concepts in International Relations*, SAGE Publications, 2011, p.117.

¹⁶³ Thomas Diez, Ingvild Bode, Alexandra Fernandes da Costa, *Key Concepts in International Relations*, SAGE Publications, 2011, p. 118.

¹⁶⁴ Thomas Diez, Ingvild Bode, Alexandra Fernandes da Costa, *Key Concepts in International Relations*, SAGE Publications, 2011, p. 118.

¹⁶⁵ Thomas Diez, Ingvild Bode, Alexandra Fernandes da Costa, *Key Concepts in International Relations*, SAGE Publications, 2011, p. 118.

operation of balance of power.¹⁶⁶ Further, it is argued that in such an environment, alliances are formed in order to check and balance the power against threatening states.¹⁶⁷ Thus, alliances emerge as a type of cooperation. Nevertheless, balance of power established through alliances, according to political realism, are not a stable since they are broken and in its aftermath new balances emerge.¹⁶⁸ Thus, the lack of trust among states, prevents states to be able to escape from the security dilemma.¹⁶⁹ First, it can be well stated that, alliances has become a central phenomenon in international politics due to the fact that they are major instruments for the implementation of foreign and security policies. In the light of their importance, based on the work of the Correlates of War (COW) Project, alliance is defined “as formal, written, mostly voluntary, agreements, treaties, or conventions among states pledging to coordinate their behavior and policies in the contingency of military conflict”,¹⁷⁰.

Furthermore, Christopher Sprecher and Volker Krause argue that:

From a realpolitic perspective, alliances are formed and maintained in order to re-establish a balance of power or capabilities, since an imbalance means capability-inferior states may be easily threatened by those with superior capabilities.¹⁷¹

¹⁶⁶ Tim Dunne, Brian C. Schmidt, “Realism”, John Baylis and Steve Smith (Eds.), *The Globalization of World Politics*, Oxford University Press, 2001, p.153.

¹⁶⁷ Tim Dunne, Brian C. Schmidt, “Realism”, John Baylis and Steve Smith (Eds.), *The Globalization of World Politics*, Oxford University Press, 2001, p.153.

¹⁶⁸ Tim Dunne, Brian C. Schmidt, “Realism”, John Baylis and Steve Smith (Eds.), *The Globalization of World Politics*, Oxford University Press, 2001, pp.153-154.

¹⁶⁹ Tim Dunne, Brian C. Schmidt, “Realism”, John Baylis and Steve Smith (Eds.), *The Globalization of World Politics*, Oxford University Press, 2001, p.154.

¹⁷⁰ J. David Singer, & Small Melvin, ‘Formal Alliances, 1815–1939: A Quantitative Description’, *Journal of Peace Research* 3(1): 1–32, 1966; J. David Singer & Small Melvin, ‘Alliance Aggregation and the Onset of War, 1815–1945’, in J. David Singer, ed., *Quantitative International Politics*. New York: Free Press (247–286), 1968; Douglas M. Gibler & Meredith Reid Sarkees, 2004. ‘Measuring Alliances: The Correlates of War Formal Interstate Alliance Dataset, 1816–2000’, *Journal of Peace Research* 41(2): 211–222 (<http://www.correlatesofwar.org/>). cited in, Sprecher, Krause, *Op.cit*, p. 363.

¹⁷¹ Kenneth N. Waltz., *Theory of International Politics*, Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1979; Vasquez, John A. & Colin Elman, eds, *Realism and the Balancing of Power: A New Debate*, Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2003., cited in Sprecher, Krause, *Op.cit*, p.364.

According to neorealism, “alliances are made by states which have some but not all their interests in common”¹⁷². Further, it is emphasized that the common interest is a negative one—that is fear of other states.¹⁷³ James D. Morrow, in his article “Alliances: Why Write Them Down? ” indicates that “an alliance entails a formal commitment between the parties wherein certain specific obligations are written out”¹⁷⁴. Further, he added that “alliances require specification because the allies need to clarify their degree of shared interests, both to each other and to others outside the alliance”¹⁷⁵.

The first work in the sphere of alliance theory was George Liska’s work of Nations in Alliance: The Limits of Interdependence where he argued that states enter into alliance either to supplement each others’ capabilities or to reduce the impact of the antagonistic power.¹⁷⁶ In the light of all, he indicates that “the decision to align, in what form, and with whom or not to align, as part of a deliberate policy- is made with reference to national interests”¹⁷⁷. Stephan Walt with his book “The Origins of Alliances” made also great contributions to the sphere of alliance theory. Walt defines alliance as formal or informal arrangement for security cooperation between two or more states.¹⁷⁸

¹⁷² Kenneth N. Waltz, “The Origins of War in Neorealist theory”, *The Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, Vol.18, No.4, *The Origin and Prevention of Major Wars*, Spring, 1988, p. 620.

¹⁷³ *Ibid.*, pp.620-621.

¹⁷⁴ James D. Morrow, “Alliances: Why Write Them Down?”, *Annual Review*, 2000, p. 64.

¹⁷⁵ Niou EMS, Ordeshook PC. 1994. Alliances in anarchic international systems. *Int. Stud. Q.* 38:167–92, cited in, James D. Morrow, “Alliances: Why Write Them Down?”, *Annual Review*, 2000, p. 64.

¹⁷⁶ Dr. Sangit Sarita Dwivedi, “Alliance in International Relations Theory”, *International Journal of Social Science&Interdisciplinary Research*, Vol.1, Issue.8, August 2012, p. 227.

¹⁷⁷ Liska, George, 1962. Nations in Alliance: The Limits of Interdependence, Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins University Press, p.40., cited in Dr. Sangit Sarita Dwivedi, “Alliance in International Relations Theory”, *International Journal of Social Science&Interdisciplinary Research*, Vol.1, Issue.8, August 2012, p. 227.

¹⁷⁸ Stephen Walt, *The Origins of Alliances*, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1987), p. 12. Also, Glenn Snyder presents a widely accepted definition of alliances as “Formal associations of states for the use (or nonuse) of military force, in specified circumstances, against states outside their own

Regarding all, as indicated above, alliance emerges as a concept mostly reflecting political realist perspective and understanding of cooperation based on the maintenance of national interests of states and provision of balance of power in the international system.

c. Strategic Partnership

Strategic partnership emerged as a frequently used term in international politics with the emergence of multipolarism after the end of the Cold War. While it was multipolarism that promoted the usage of this term, there have been a random usage of the term in international politics that aroused a need for the clarification of its meaning which is indeed out of the scope of this paper.

Emerson has a simple definition of strategic partnership. He defines it as a kind of relationship which involves two actors that are powerful and capable of taking strategic action together.¹⁷⁹ One of the most comprehensive definition of the term “strategic partnership” was made by Grevi:

The debate on who is a strategic partner and who is not is a circular one and the practice of attributing such political status is quite inconsistent. Both the ‘strategic’ quality and the ‘partnership’ nature of relations with individual countries are often questioned. (...) Strategic partnerships are those that both parties regard as essential to achieve their basic goals. This is because the cooperation of strategic partners can lead to win-win games and, conversely, because such partners are those who could inflict most harm to one another were relations to turn sour. (...) Strategic partnerships are therefore important bilateral means to pursue core goals. As such, they may concern pivotal global but also regional actors. What matters is that they deliver. (...) Effective partnerships are bilateral relations that should contribute to bridging over various levels of cooperation.¹⁸⁰

membership” *Alliance Politics*,(Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997), p. 4. cited in Halil Sıddık Ayhan, “Dynamics of the Alliance Between Turkey and the USA”, Unpublished M.S Thesis, Bilkent University, Ankara, July, 2003, p.4

¹⁷⁹ Emerson, Michael, *The Elephant and the Bear: the European Union, Russia and their Near Abroads.*, 2001, p. 45.,cited in Louis Blanco, “ Strategic Partnership: A new form of Association in International Relations”, p.7.

¹⁸⁰ Grevi, Giovanni (2010). Making EU strategic partnerships effective. *Working paper (FRIDE)*, p. 105, December 2010, pp.2,3-5., cited in Louis Blanco, *Op.cit*, pp. 8-9.

Sean Kay, on the other hand, states that, “strategic partnership enhances or justifies a close relationship between two states that seek mutual gains but whose interests may be competitive rather than shared”¹⁸¹. Further he indicated that, “strategic partnerships have become central tools of two competing national grand strategies, primacy and balancing, and at the same time, they are at the core of a growing tension between these two policy objectives”¹⁸². Thus, it is argued that, currently the debate about strategic partnership mostly fit into realist conceptions of international theory.¹⁸³

From a liberalist perspective, on the other hand, regarding the characteristics of a strategic partnership, several points may be outlined. First, environmental uncertainty, strategic fit and a system principle emerge as key factors forming strategic partnership.¹⁸⁴ Strategic partnerships are formed as a response to uncertainty in the international environment.¹⁸⁵ Further, faced with uncertainty, states look for compatible and receptive partners upon the basis of mutual interests and possibly shared values or ideology, for an overall strategic fit.¹⁸⁶ After all, “common purpose

¹⁸¹ Many different adjectives have been joined with the term ‘partnership’ in descriptions of this form of international relations. ‘Strategic partnership’ designating the broadest level of partnership, was the most commonly used term in the 1990’s. Other terms adopted by various states include “state dialogue”, “special relationship”, “enhanced relationship”, “constructive strategic partnership”, “comprehensive partnership”, “long term comprehensive partnership”, “long term stable constructive partnership” and “good neighbourly mutual trust partnership”, cited in Sean Kay, *Op.cit*, p.15.

¹⁸² Sean Kay, *Op.cit*, p.15.

¹⁸³ Sean Kay, *Op.cit*, p.16.

¹⁸⁴ Thomas S. Wilkins, “Russo-Chinese Strategic Partnership: A New Form of Security Cooperation, *Contemporary Security Policy*, Vol.29, No.2, p. 363.

¹⁸⁵ Thomas S. Wilkins, “Russo-Chinese Strategic Partnership: A New Form of Security Cooperation, *Contemporary Security Policy*, Vol.29, No.2, pp. 363-364.

¹⁸⁶ William H. Bergquist, Juli Betwee, and David Meuel, *Building Strategic Relationships: How to Extend your Organization’s Reach Through Partnerships, Alliances, and Joint Ventures* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1995), pp. 69-70, James Austin, *The Collaboration Challenge* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2000), (note 34), pxii, Thomas S. Wilkins, ‘Towards a “Trilateral Alliance?” – Understanding the Role of Expediency and Values in American–Japanese–Australian Relations’, *Asian Security*, Vol. 3, No. 3 (Fall 2007), (note2), cited in, Thomas S. Wilkins, “Russo-

becomes solidified into an overarching framework of mutual agreement and understanding known as a system principle which is usually grounded in the common interests and values that together make up a joint world view”¹⁸⁷. Strategic partnerships are organized around a general (security) purpose known as a system principle (such as championship of a multi-polar world), rather than a specific task, such as deterring or fighting a hostile state”¹⁸⁸. Thus, “strategic partnerships are primarily goal-driven rather than threat-driven arrangements”¹⁸⁹. To say in other words, though the partnership may be concerned with common security issues, no state is identified as a threat by the partnership.¹⁹⁰ Considering essentials of strategic partnerships, on the other hand, Marius Vahl states that:

[i]t has been suggested that the presence of *common values, common interests* and *mutual understanding* are essential criteria for a ‘partnership’, as opposed to mere ‘co-operation’. It could furthermore be argued that a prerequisite for a proper ‘partnership’ is that it must be between generally similar parties of roughly *equal size*.¹⁹¹

In the light of all these essentials, regarding the cohesiveness and effectiveness of strategic partnership, “common interests [and] values, goals, and perspectives are ultimately what makes or breaks most partnerships”¹⁹². Furthermore, the fate and

Chinese Strategic Partnership: A New Form of Security Cooperation, *Contemporary Security Policy*, Vol.29, No.2, p.364.

¹⁸⁷ Thomas S. Wilkins, “Russo-Chinese Strategic Partnership: A New Form of Security Cooperation, *Contemporary Security Policy*, Vol.29, No.2, p. 364.

¹⁸⁸ Thomas S. Wilkins, “Russo-Chinese Strategic Partnership: A New Form of Security Cooperation, *Contemporary Security Policy*, Vol.29, No.2, p. 360.

¹⁸⁹ Thomas S. Wilkins, “Russo-Chinese Strategic Partnership: A New Form of Security Cooperation, *Contemporary Security Policy*, Vol.29, No.2, p. 361.

¹⁹⁰ Thomas S. Wilkins, “Russo-Chinese Strategic Partnership: A New Form of Security Cooperation, *Contemporary Security Policy*, Vol.29, No.2, p. 361.

¹⁹¹ Emerson, Michael; Tassinari, Fabrizio; Vahl, Marius (2006). *A New Agreement between the EU and Russia: Why, what and when?* CEPS Policy Brief n. 103. May 2006, p.4., cited in Louis Blanco, Op.cit, p.7.

¹⁹² William H. Bergquist, Juli Betwee, and David Meuel, Building Strategic Relationships: How to Extend your Organization’s Reach Through Partnerships, Alliances, and Joint Ventures (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1995), (note 21), p. 70., cited in, Thomas S. Wilkins, “Russo-Chinese Strategic Partnership: A New Form of Security Cooperation, *Contemporary Security Policy*, Vol.29, No.2, p. 366.

success of the strategic partnership depends on the mutual commitment and progress for the achievement of the common goal determined.¹⁹³ Mutual perceptions which include issues of historical legacies, ideologies, or cultural affinities/clashes have also the potential to strengthen or challenge the strategic partnership.¹⁹⁴ Thus, the maintenance of mutual trust between the states is an important necessity for a durable and sustained strategic partnership.¹⁹⁵ Additionally, the approvement of the strategic partnership by public opinion stands important for a proper functioning of the strategic partnership.¹⁹⁶

Considering all, practically, in international relations, strategic partnerships are rather far from reflecting a liberalist perspective. As it is argued by Mytelka, strategic partnerships may be ‘seen as temporary arrangements, endangered by opportunism, lack of trust and power games’¹⁹⁷. Sean Kay argues that while one power may use strategic partnership to enhance unipolar primacy and systemic management, other states can manipulate the same tool to direct international politics toward a multipolar international system.¹⁹⁸

¹⁹³ Thomas S. Wilkins, “Russo-Chinese Strategic Partnership: A New Form of Security Cooperation, *Contemporary Security Policy*, Vol.29, No.2, p. 366.

¹⁹⁴ Thomas S. Wilkins, “Russo-Chinese Strategic Partnership: A New Form of Security Cooperation, *Contemporary Security Policy*, Vol.29, No.2, p. 366.

¹⁹⁵ Chris Steward, *Developing Strategic Partnerships* (Brookfield, VT: Gower, 1999). (note 21), p. 36, Lynn K. Mytelka (ed.), *Strategic Partnerships: States, firms and International Competition* (London: Pinter, 1991), (note 21), p. 58, see also Charles W. Kegley and Gregory Raymond, *When Trust Breaks Down: Alliance Norms and World Politics* (Columbus, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 1990)., cited in, Thomas S. Wilkins, “Russo-Chinese Strategic Partnership: A New Form of Security Cooperation, *Contemporary Security Policy*, Vol.29, No.2, p. 366.

¹⁹⁶ Thomas S. Wilkins, “Russo-Chinese Strategic Partnership: A New Form of Security Cooperation, *Contemporary Security Policy*, Vol.29, No.2, p. 366.

¹⁹⁷ Lynn K. Mytelka (ed.), *Strategic Partnerships: States, firms and International Competition* (London: Pinter, 1991), (note 21), p. 73., cited in, Thomas S. Wilkins, “Russo-Chinese Strategic Partnership: A New Form of Security Cooperation, *Contemporary Security Policy*, Vol.29, No.2, p.367.

¹⁹⁸ Sean Kay, *Op.cit*, p.16.

Furthermore, he adds that:

A strategic partnership may be a contemporary spin on traditional *realpolitik*. A strategic partnership may be window-dressing to justify bilateral alliances arising out of pragmatic necessity and the balance of power security dynamics of an-hoc world system.¹⁹⁹

Regarding all, though the term strategic partnership may be defined rhetorically, practically, it emerged as a form of cooperation reflecting the political realist perspective on cooperation based on the provision of state interests.

3.2 Political Realism in International Relations

Political realism views international relations as “a political arena of considerable turmoil, discord, and conflict between states in which the great powers dominate everybody else”²⁰⁰. Furthermore, basic principles of political realism are, first that, “the state is the pre-eminent actor in world politics”²⁰¹. Second, world politics operate in international anarchy.²⁰² Concerning the anarchical structure of the international system, it is referred that, there is no overarching authority- no world government.²⁰³ Thus, international relations are consisted of relations among states. Third, state survival and national security are core values in realist foreign policy.²⁰⁴ Thus, the basic motivation of states is to pursue their national interests.

In the light of all, concerning the term international security in political realism which is defined as the situation where there is no threat or the least threat for a

¹⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 16.

²⁰⁰ Robert Jackson; Georg Sørensen, “Realism”, *Introduction to International Relations*, Oxford University Press,, 1998, p.69.

²⁰¹ Robert Jackson; Georg Sørensen, “Realism”, *Introduction to International Relations*, Oxford University Press,, 1998, p.68.

²⁰² *Ibid.*,p.68.

²⁰³ *Ibid.*,p.68.

²⁰⁴ *Ibid.*,p.68.

state²⁰⁵, there emerges different prospects. While for defensive realists, security is the principal interest of states, states will not seek to gain more power if that means jeopardizing their own security and survival, for offensive realists, the principal aim of the state is to achieve a hegemonic position in the international system, thus, states always seek for more power and seek to change the existing distribution of power even if this challenge their own security and survival.²⁰⁶

As well as the concept of security, in order to better explain political realism, one needs to define also the concepts of balance of power and security dilemma. In the book *Understanding International Relations* by Chris Brown and Kirsten Ainley, it is stated that:

The international system is a ‘self-help’ system; states (which for theoretically purposes are assumed to be unitary actors) are obliged to look after themselves, because there is no one else to look after them. This means that they are obliged to be concerned with their security, and obliged to regard other states as potential threats. They must continually adjust their stance in the world in accordance with their reading of the power of others and of their own power. The result of these movements is the emergence of a balance of power.²⁰⁷

Security dilemma, on the other hand, refers a situation in which “one state increases its means of defense in order to achieve a higher degree of security, which, however, is interpreted by another state as an act of aggression, and thus countered by security measures on its side, thus possibly leading to an armanent spiral”²⁰⁸. Based on this definition, security dilemma is based on uncertainty which means that it is unclear to a state whether another state behaves offensively or defensively.²⁰⁹

²⁰⁵ Kamer Kasım, “11 Eylül Sürecinde Kafkasya’da Güvenlik Politikaları”, *OAKA*, Vol.1, No.1, 2006, p. 20.

²⁰⁶ Tim Dunne, Brian C. Schmidt, “Realism”, John Baylis and Steve Smith (Eds.), *The Globalization of World Politics*, Oxford University Press, 2001, p.152.

²⁰⁷ Chris Brown; Kirsten Ainley, *Understanding International Relations*, Palgrave Macmillan, 2005, pp.42-43.

²⁰⁸ Thomas Diez, Ingvild Bode, Alexandra Fernandes da Costa, *Key Concepts in International Relations*, SAGE Publications, 2011,p. 205.

²⁰⁹ Thomas Diez, Ingvild Bode, Alexandra Fernandes da Costa, *Key Concepts in International Relations*, SAGE Publications, 2011,p. 205

Considering all, in political realism the anarchical structure of the international system in which no other state can be trusted for the guarantee of your survival and security is emphasized.²¹⁰

3.3 Realist Concepts of Conflict and Cooperation

In the light of the question “ Why do states conflict when they cooperate?”, one should first examine the concepts of cooperation and conflict in political realism.

William Zartman and Saadia Touval, in order to better understand the concept of cooperation, draw also attention to the concept of conflict and state that, “ while the term is frequently used as shorthand for “violent conflict”, the violent form of conflict can not be understood without addressing the first its broader form, which is simply an incompatibility of goals”²¹¹. Helen Milner, further, states that “cooperation is usually opposed to competition or conflict, which implies goal-seeking behavior that strives to reduce the gains available to others or to impede their want-satisfaction”²¹².

According to William Zartman and Saadia Touval, “conflict derives from the security dilemma, where a party seeking to assure even minimal security is perceived as acting threateningly towards another party, who takes measures to assure its own security and thereby threatens the other even more”²¹³. Thus, according to political

²¹⁰ Tim Dunne, Brian C. Schmidt, “Realism”, John Baylis and Steve Smith (Eds.), *The Globalization of World Politics*, Oxford University Press, 2001, p. 155.

²¹¹ Jessie Bernard, *American Community Behaviour*, New York, Driden, 1949; Jessie Bernard, “The Sociological Study of Conflict, in Bernard et al., *The Nature of Conflict*, New York, UNESCO, 1957, p.38; Lewis Coser, *The Social Functions of Conflict*, New York, Free Press, 1956, p. 8., cited in, William Zartman and Saadia Touval, “ Introduction: Return to the theories of cooperation”, William Zartman and Saadia Touval (Eds.), *International Cooperation, The Extents and Limits of Cooperation*, Cambridge University Press, 2010, p. 3.

²¹² Helen Milner, “ International Theories of Cooperation Among Nations Strengths and Weaknesses”, Review Article, *World Politics*, Vol.44, 1992, p. 468.

²¹³ Robert Jervis, “Cooperation Under Security Dilemma”, *World Politics*, 1978, 30: 167-210; Barry Posner, “The Security Dilemma and Ethnic Conflict”, Michael Brown (Ed.), *Ethnic Conflict and*

realism, conflict emerges as a natural outcome of security dilemma which constituted the core and inevitable mechanism of the anarchical international system. By Joseph M. Grieco, in his article “ Anarchy and the limits of cooperation: A realist critique of the newest liberal institutionalism”, it is indicated that, “for realists, international anarchy fosters competition and conflict among states and inhibits their willingness to cooperate even when they share common interests”²¹⁴.

Political realism, has a more different view on cooperation in the international system. Joseph Grieco, states that, realist theory has a pessimistic view about the prospects for international cooperation and of the capabilities of international institutions.²¹⁵ Further, he states that “realist theory argues that international institutions are unable to mitigate anarchy's constraining effects on inter-state cooperation”²¹⁶. According to realism, states are posititonal and this refers that, states in their cooperation arrangements worry that their partners may gain more from cooperation than they do.²¹⁷ Further, Joseph Grieco indicated that:

For realists, a state will focus both on its absolute and relative gains from cooperation, and a state that is satisfied with a partner's compliance in a joint arrangement might nevertheless exit from it because the partner is achieving relatively greater gains. Realism, then, finds that there are at least two major barriers to international cooperation: state concerns about cheating and state concerns about relative achievements of gains.²¹⁸

International Security, Princeton University Pres, 1993., cited in, William Zartman and Saadia Touval, “ Introduction: Return to the theories of cooperation”, William Zartman and Saadia Touval (Eds.), *International Cooperation, The Extents and Limits of Cooperation*, Cambridge University Press, 2010, p.4.

²¹⁴ Joseph Grieco, “Anarchy and the limits of cooperation: A realist critique of the newest liberal institutionalism”, *International Organisation*, Vol. 42, No. 3, Summer 1998, p. 485.

²¹⁵ Richard Rosecrance provided the insight that realism presents an essentially pessimistic view of the human condition: this is noted by Robert Gilpin, "The Richness of the Tradition of Political Realism," in Keohane, ed., Neorealism and Its Critics, p. 304. This pessimism in realist theory is most clearly evident in Hans J. Morgenthau, *Scientific Man vs. Power Politics* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1946), especially pp. 187-203., cited in, Joseph Grieco, A realist Critique of the Newest Liberal Institutionalism”,*International Organisation*, Vol.42, No.3, Summer 1988, p. 485.

²¹⁶ Joseph Grieco, *Op.cit*, p. 485.

²¹⁷ Joseph Grieco, *Op.cit*, p. 487.

²¹⁸ Joseph Grieco, *Op.cit*, p.487.

Regarding the problem of relative gain in cooperation, it is stated that:

Realism's identification of the relative gains problem for cooperation is based on its insight that states in anarchy fear for their survival as independent actors. According to realists, states worry that today's friend may be tomorrow's enemy in war, and fear that achievements of joint gains that advantage a friend in the present might produce a more dangerous potential foe in the future. As a result, states must give serious attention to the gains of partners.²¹⁹

Joseph Grieco, drawing attention to the different interpretations of realism and liberalism on international anarchy, states that this reflects to their perception of cooperation. According to realists, international anarchy refers that, "there is no overarching authority to prevent others from using violence, or the threat of violence, to destroy or enslave them"²²⁰. Fueled by fear and mistrust, it is argued that "the fundamental goal of states in any relationship is to prevent others from achieving advances in their relative capabilities"²²¹. Thus, according to realist theory, "state positionality may constrain the willingness of states to cooperate"²²². This relative gain problem in cooperation is argued to reflect the persistence of uncertainty in international relations.²²³ Furthermore, this uncertainty is the outcome of the inability of states to control or predict the future interests of partners.²²⁴ Robert Jervis, best summarized this situation by stating that, "Minds can be changed, new leaders can come to power, values can shift, new opportunities and dangers can arise"²²⁵.

Evaluating realism's understanding of cooperation and conflict, it can be well stated that since incompatibility of states' goals are regarded a constant characteristics of states' relations, cooperation though is not totally rejected, is regarded hard to

²¹⁹ Joseph Grieco, *Op.cit*, p.487.

²²⁰ Joseph Grieco, *Op.cit*, pp.497-498.

²²¹ Joseph Grieco, *Op.cit*, p. 498.

²²² Joseph Grieco, *Op.cit*, p. 499.

²²³ Joseph Grieco, *Op.cit*,p. 500.

²²⁴ Joseph Grieco, *Op.cit*, p. 500.

²²⁵ Robert Jervis, "Cooperation Under the Security Dilemma," *World Politics* 30 (January 1978), p. 168., cited in, Joseph Grieco, *Op.cit*, p. 500.

achieve in the light of states' intention of cheating and the relative gain problem. This pessimistic perception of cooperation is a natural outcome of the anarchical international system based on security dilemma and most important than all lack of trust among states. Evaluating all, considering the realist concepts of cooperation and conflict, by Robert Keohane, it is argued that, cooperation does not refer to an absence of conflict, but rather to a reaction to conflict or potential conflict that without the specter of conflict there is no need to cooperate.²²⁶

3.4 Liberalism in International Relations

Liberalism has a progressive view of history which refers that with the emergence of the modern constitutional state with the process of modernization, in most areas of life, progress was brought and the scope of cooperation across international boundaries was enlarged.²²⁷

Against the state centric view of political realism, in liberalism the ‘world politics paradigm’ which refers to ‘transnational interactions’ is emphasized.²²⁸ This means that, “world politics is changing dramatically from a state system to a transnational political system”²²⁹. In liberal international theory, “the fundamental actors in world politics are individuals and privately constituted groups with autonomous preferences; second, governments represent some subset of domestic social actors; third, interstate behaviour is shaped by the patterns of state preferences, not state

²²⁶ Robert Keohane, “Cooperation and International Regimes”, *Conflict and Cooperation Evolving Theories of International Relations*, Marc A. Genest(Ed.), Wadsworth Thomson, 2004, p. 167.

²²⁷ Robert Jackson; Georg Sørensen, “ Liberalism”, *Introduction to International Relations*, Oxford University Press,, 1998, p. 110.

²²⁸ Robert Jackson; Georg Sørensen, “ Liberalism”, *Introduction to International Relations*, Oxford University Press,, 1998, p. 129.

²²⁹ Robert Jackson; Georg Sørensen, “ Liberalism”, *Introduction to International Relations*, Oxford University Press,, 1998, p. 129

power”²³⁰. By Andrew Moravcsik, it is argued that: “states are embedded in domestic and international civil society which places structural constraints on the behaviour of the state by shaping the underlying preferences on which its foreign policy is based.”²³¹

Liberalism views “international relations primarily in terms of patterns of conflicting or convergent state preferences”²³² which refers that “behavior of states –hence levels of international conflict and cooperation-reflect the nature and configuration of state preferences”²³³. Further, state references are based on and changeable according to the changing relationship of the state to domestic and international civil society.²³⁴

Thus, according to liberalism, though there is not an automatic convergence of state interests, cooperation is achievable in the international system. It is argued that “conflict and war are not inevitable; when people employ their reason, they can achieve mutually beneficial cooperation not only within states but also across international boundaries”²³⁵. In liberalism, rather than an automatic harmony of

²³⁰ Andrew Moravcsik, “Liberalism and International Relations Theory”, Paper No. 92-6, *Harvard University and University of Chicago*, p.2.
http://www.princeton.edu/~amoravcs/library/liberalism_working.pdf

²³¹ Andrew Moravcsik, “Liberalism and International Relations Theory”, Paper No. 92-6, *Harvard University and University of Chicago*, p.2.
http://www.princeton.edu/~amoravcs/library/liberalism_working.pdf

²³² Andrew Moravcsik, “Liberalism and International Relations Theory”, Paper No. 92-6, *Harvard University and University of Chicago*, p.10.
http://www.princeton.edu/~amoravcs/library/liberalism_working.pdf

²³³ Andrew Moravcsik, “Liberalism and International Relations Theory”, Paper No. 92-6, *Harvard University and University of Chicago*, p.10.
http://www.princeton.edu/~amoravcs/library/liberalism_working.pdf

²³⁴ Andrew Moravcsik, “Liberalism and International Relations Theory”, Paper No. 92-6, *Harvard University and University of Chicago*, p.2.
http://www.princeton.edu/~amoravcs/library/liberalism_working.pdf

²³⁵ Robert Jackson; Georg Sørensen, “ Liberalism”, *Introduction to International Relations*, Oxford University Press,, 1998, p. 109.

interests between individuals, social groups and nations²³⁶, the successful management of conflict is recommended.²³⁷ Further, it is argued that, “modernization increases the level and scope of interdependence between states”²³⁸. Consequently, this increased interdependence makes transnational relations and transnational actors important and this results with welfare not security to become the primary goal and concern of states.²³⁹ All refers “a world of more cooperative international relations”²⁴⁰.

For the promotion of cooperation, in liberalism, the role of international institutions is also emphasized. Regarding this, Robert O. Keohane in his article “ International Institutions: Can Interdependence Work?” argues that:

Institutions create the capability for states to cooperate in mutually beneficial ways by reducing the costs of making and enforcing agreements- what economics refer to as “transaction costs”. They rarely engage in centralized enforcement of agreements, but they do reinforce practices of reciprocity, which provide incentives for governments to keep their own commitments to ensure that others do as well. Even powerful states have an interest, most of the time, in following the rules of well-established international institutions, since general conformity to rules makes the behavior of other states more predictable.²⁴¹

²³⁶ Andrew Moravcsik, “Liberalism and International Relations Theory”, Paper No. 92-6, *Harvard University and University of Chicago*, p.7.
http://www.princeton.edu/~amoravcs/library/liberalism_working.pdf

²³⁷ Halevy, Philosophic Radicalism, p.489-490.,cited in., Andrew Moravcsik, “Liberalism and International Relations Theory”, Paper No. 92-6, *Harvard University and University of Chicago*, p.7.
http://www.princeton.edu/~amoravcs/library/liberalism_working.pdf

²³⁸ Robert Jackson; Georg Sørensen, “ Liberalism”, *Introduction to International Relations*, Oxford University Press,, 1998, p.118.

²³⁹ Robert Jackson; Georg Sørensen, “ Liberalism”, *Introduction to International Relations*, Oxford University Press,, 1998, p.118.

²⁴⁰ Robert Jackson; Georg Sørensen, “ Liberalism”, *Introduction to International Relations*, Oxford University Press,, 1998, p.118.

²⁴¹ Robert O. Keohane, “ International Institutions: Can interdependence Work?”,*Foreign policy*, Spring, 1998, p.86

Thus, according to liberalism, institutions enable states to reach mutual benefits and cooperative outcomes.²⁴² International institutions are seen as means of promoting and achieving cooperation across international boundaries among actors in the system.²⁴³ Further, regarding the problem of security dilemma, it is stated that, even in an anarchical world, through the establishment of common institutions, it was possible to tackle the problem of security dilemma.²⁴⁴

3.5 Liberal Concept of Cooperation

Liberalism's claims about cooperation are based on its belief that states are atomistic actors"²⁴⁵. Against the pessimistic perception of "cooperation" by political realists, liberals have a more optimistic perception and by Joseph Grieco it is stated that:

The new liberal institutionalists basically argue that even if the realists are correct in believing that anarchy constrains the willingness of states to cooperate, states nevertheless can work together and can do so especially with the assistance of international institutions.²⁴⁶

Regarding the role of international institutions, Robert O. Keohane, in his article "International Institutions: Can Interdependence Work", indicated that:

Institutions create the capacity for states to cooperate in mutually beneficial ways by reducing the costs of making and enforcing agreements-what economists refer to as "transaction costs". They rarely engage in centralized enforcement of agreements but they do reinforce practice of reciprocity, which provides incentives for governments to keep their own commitments to ensure that others do so as well. Even powerful states have an interest, most of the time, in following the rules of well established international institutions, since general conformity to rules makes the behavior of other states more predictable.²⁴⁷

²⁴² Randall L. Schweller and David Priess, "A Tale of Two Realisms: Expanding the Institutional Debate, *Mershon International Studies Review*, Vol. 41, No. 1, May, 1997, p. 3.

²⁴³ Robert Jackson, Georg Sorensen, *Op.cit*, p.50.; Steven L. Lamy, *Op.cit*, p. 189.

²⁴⁴ Thomas Diez, Ingvild Bode, Alexandra Fernandes da Costa, *Key Concepts in International Relations*, SAGE Publications, 2011, p.206.

²⁴⁵ Joseph Grieco, *Op.cit*, p. 487.

²⁴⁶ Joseph Grieco, *Op.cit*, p. 486.

²⁴⁷ Robert O. Keohane, *Op.cit*, p. 86.

By drawing attention to the concept of uncertainty, Robert O. Keohane further states that, “by reducing the uncertainty of enforcing agreements, international institutions help states achieve collective gains”²⁴⁸. Further, it is argued that, “if parties could accurately communicate both their intentions and their capabilities, they would not venture into conflict, which would be either unnecessary or unwise”²⁴⁹. In the light of the question of “why do states cooperate?”, by William Zartman and Saadia Touval, it is stated that:

A common reason for cooperation is interdependence. States are not politically or economically autarkic; they are not alone. They need the active or passive help of others in order to achieve their goals. They need others as allies to help assure their security, they need them for establishing rules of international behavior, they need them for commerce and as partners in managing international economic relations, and they need them to help protect from public bards such as environmental risks. Calculations of efficiency accompany the needs generated by interdependence: states may believe that it would cost them less to achieve their goals by cooperating with others than to act alone.²⁵⁰

Thus, compared with the “self help” logic of the international system by political realists, according to liberalism, it is “interdependence” that defines the nature of relations based on cooperation. Further, according to liberals, it is stated that:

States cooperate in the expectation of benefits from future cooperation, as well as current payoffs. In addition, they hold that anticipated reciprocity provides benefits from reputation and relationship that are not only less precise but tie states into patterns of behavior. Information can play a role in sustaining this expectation, since the greater the reliable information on future reciprocity, the greater the chances of cooperation lasting. Since it is inefficient to negotiate the terms of reciprocity each time, states institutionalize their cooperation through regimes, laws, and organizations.²⁵¹

²⁴⁸ Robert O. Keohane, *Op.cit*, p. 86.

²⁴⁹ James D. Fearon, “Signaling Foreign Policy Interests: Tying Hands versus Sinking Costs”, *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 41 (1):68-90., cited in, William Zartman and Saadia Touval, “Introduction: Return to the theories of cooperation”, William Zartman and Saadia Touval (Eds.), *International Cooperation, The Extents and Limits of Cooperation*, Cambridge University Press, 2010, p.4.

²⁵⁰ William Zartman and Saadia Touval, “Introduction: Return to the theories of cooperation”, William Zartman and Saadia Touval (Eds.), *International Cooperation, The Extents and Limits of Cooperation*, Cambridge University Press, 2010, p.5.

²⁵¹ William Zartman and Saadia Touval, “Introduction: Return to the theories of cooperation”, William Zartman and Saadia Touval (Eds.), *International Cooperation, The Extents and Limits of Cooperation*, Cambridge University Press, 2010, p.7.

According to liberals, “institutions may change a state’s calculations about how to maximize gains. Specifically, rules can get states to make the short-term sacrifices needed to resolve the prisoners dilemma and thus to realize the long-term gains. Institutions, in short, produce cooperation”²⁵².

To sum up all, liberalism sees the international system in a more cooperative way. Though, they may agree on the anarchical structure of the international system, through reciprocity and information among states achieved by international institutions, cooperation and collective gains may be achieved.

3.6 Realist Criticism of the Concept of Cooperation in Liberalism

The divergence between political realism and liberalism on the concept of cooperation was explained by Robert Jervis as:

Neoliberalism does not see more cooperation than does realism; rather, neoliberalism believes that there is much more unrealized or potential cooperation than does realism, and the schools of thought disagree about how much conflict in world politics is unnecessary or avoidable in the sense of actors failing to agree even though their preferences overlap.²⁵³

In the light of this divergence, realism’s criticism on liberalism by Joseph Grieco is based on the argument that, “neoliberal institutionalism misconstrues the realist analysis of international anarchy and therefore it misunderstands the realist analysis

²⁵² Jean Mearsheimer, “The False Promise of International Institutions”, *International Security*, Vol.19, No.3, p.18.

²⁵³ For a parallel discussion of “real” and “illusory” incompatibility, see Kenneth E. Boulding, “National Images and International Systems,” *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 3, No. 2 (June 1959), p. 130. This distinction and the one I am making are not without their difficulties, as I discuss below. The move from con^oicting preferences to con^oictful behavior is not entirely direct because if information is complete and outcomes are in^anitely divisible, the actors should be able to ^and a way of reaching the outcome that is cheaper than engaging in costly con^oict. This is known as the Hicks paradox in economics and was introduced into the international relations literature by James D. Fearon in “Rationalist Explanations for War,” *International Organization*, Vol. 49, No. 3 (Summer 1995), pp. 379–414. The subject is important but not central to the issues of concern here., cited in, Robert Jervis, “Realism, Neoliberalism and Cooperation Understanding the Debate”, *International Security*, Vol.24, No.1, p. 47.

of the impact of anarchy on the preferences and actions of states”²⁵⁴. From a realist perspective, unlike argued by liberals that the lack of a common government means no authority to enforce promises, it is argued that, “there is no overarching authority to prevent others from using violence, or the threat of violence, to destroy or enslave them”²⁵⁵ as well. Thus, unlike liberalism’s emphasis on absolute gains, from a realist perspective, it is argued that, “driven by an interest in survival, states are acutely sensitive to any erosion of their relative capabilities, which are the ultimate basis for their security and independence in an anarchical, self-help international context”²⁵⁶. Unlike argued by liberals that states are atomistic, Joseph Grieco suggests that states are positional and this positionality constrains the willingness of states to cooperate.²⁵⁷

In the light of all, according to political realism, state positionality and the relative gain problem in cooperation reflect the uncertainty in international relations which results with the inability of states to predict or easily to control the future leadership or interests of partners.²⁵⁸ William Zartman and Saadia Touval in their article “Introduction: Return to the theories of cooperation” indicated that:

While there is conflict without cooperation, it appears that there is no cooperation without conflict. Cooperation is dependent on these being conflict to overcome. Indeed, attempts at cooperation may create conflict (to be overcome), since the parties’ attempt to work together brings out different interests to be tailored to fit- the costs of cooperation. By conflict, we do not mean war or violence, but rather perceptions of incompatibilities. Cooperating nations generally perceive both common and conflicting interests.²⁵⁹

²⁵⁴ Joseph Grieco, “Anarchy and The limits of Cooperation: A Realist Qritique of the Newest Liberal Institutionalism, *Neorealism and Neoliberalism The Contemporary Debate*, Columbia University Press, 1993, p. 117.

²⁵⁵ Joseph Grieco, *Op.cit*, p. 126.

²⁵⁶ Joseph Grieco, *Op.cit*, p.127.

²⁵⁷ Joseph Grieco, *Op.cit*, pp.127-128.

²⁵⁸ Joseph Grieco, *Op.cit*, p.128.

²⁵⁹ William Zartman and Saadia Touval, “ Introduction: Return to the theories of cooperation”, William Zartman and Saadia Touval (Eds.), *International Cooperation, The Extents and Limits of Cooperation*, Cambridge University Press, 2010, p. 3.

Considering all, in the light of the question “why do states conflict when they cooperate?”, it can be well stated that realism’s perception and analysis of the term “cooperation”, international system and state behavior makes cooperation strongly linked with conflict. The anarchical international system based on a self help system and uncertainty about states’ policies towards each other, though has place for cooperation, is mostly motivated by the national interests of states which has no institutionalized structure. Political realists believe that international cooperation ”is hard to achieve, difficult to maintain and dependent on state power”²⁶⁰. Further, the lack of trust between states combined with the lack of a common value makes the cooperation between states fragile and open to changes. Thus, unlike it is argued by liberals, it is most of the time impossible to guarantee a future perspective of cooperation among states through institutions due to the fact that institutions are regarded as tools or instruments of statecraft.

²⁶⁰ Bladwin, D. (Ed.), *Neorealism and Neoliberalism: The Contemporary Debate* (NewYork: Columbia University Press, 1993., cited in., Steven L. Lamy, “Neo-Realism and Neo-Liberalism”, John Baylis and Steve Smith (Eds.), *The Globalization of World Politics*, Oxford University Press, 2001, p.190.

CHAPTER IV

4. TURKEY'S RELATIONS WITH GEORGIA IN THE WIDER CONTEXT: RELATIONS WITH THE US AND RUSSIA

Turkey's and Georgia's relations with US and Russia had implications and effects on the nature and evolution of Turkey-Georgia relations in the post-Soviet era. Since Turkey's relations with Georgia can not be analysed independent from the US's and Russian policy in the region, on this part of the thesis, along with Turkey's relations with Russia and US, a general analysis of Georgia's relations with Russia and the US is done.

This part of thesis will help us better see how the general trend and ups and downs in relations with the US and Russia effected the nature of Turkey's relations with Georgia and played role in the emergence of conflict of interests in Turkey's relations with Georgia.

4.1 Turkey's Relations with Russia

Turkey's relations with Russia will be examined including diplomatic, security and economic aspect of relations. Considering all, areas of cooperation and conflict will be identified. By this way, how Turkey's relations with Russia effected relations with Georgia will be better understood.

4.1.1 Turkey's Diplomatic Relations with Russia

Turkey as a member of the Trans-Atlantic world and Russia as the representative and leader of the Soviet Bloc, during the Cold War, were in opposite sides. Nevertheless, after the collapse of the Soviet Union, how Turkey's relations with Russia would be transformed was unclear.

During 1990's, Turkey's relations with Russia were defined as "virtual rapprochement"²⁶¹. Duygu Bazoğlu Sezer in her article "Turkish-Russian relations: The Challenges of Reconciling Geopolitical competition with Economic Partnership" defines virtual rapprochement as:

A state of bilateral relations in which public manifestations of state-level adversity and hostility have nearly completely disappeared; the importance of cooperation in a range of fields for furthering respective national interests is mutually perceived and publicly articulated; governments desist from using inflammatory rhetoric so as not to arouse public hostility; and officials keep the lines of communication open in order to safeguard relations against the impact of sudden crisis. On the other hand, a hard kernel of mutual fear, mistrust, and suspicion remains in the minds of the decisionmakers and political elites.²⁶²

In the post-Cold War era, for Turkey, it was argued that the threat of the past 400 years –Russia- was virtually eliminated.²⁶³ Diplomatic relations were established through the treaty on the Principles of Relations between the Republic of Turkey and the Russian Federation signed in 1992. Furthermore, several agreements and protocols were signed between Turkey and Russia in different areas covering scientific, technical, educational, cultural, economic and military cooperation since 1992.

Concerning the South Caucasus region, practically both states perceived the other as a potential threat. For Russia, Turkey was perceived as a regional power which attempted to gain influence in the South Caucasus and Central Asia. Furthermore, for Russia, the region was named as the near abroad which referred that Russia would

²⁶¹ This term was first coined by the author in her chapter entitled, "Turkish-Russian Relations in the 1990s: From Adversity to Virtual Rapprochement," in Alan Makovsky and Sabri Sayan (eds.), *Changing Dynamics of Turkish Foreign Policy* (Washington, DC: Washington Institute for Near East Policy Press, forthcoming. Expected date of publication Spring 2000)., cited in Duygu Bazoğlu Sezer, "Turkish-Russian relations: The Challenges of reconciling geopolitical competition with economic partnetship", *Turkish Studies*, Vol.1, No.1, 2000, p. 62.

²⁶² Duygu Bazoğlu Sezer, *Op.cit*, p. 62.

²⁶³ Morton Abramowitz, "Foreword" to Graham E. Fuller and Ian O. Lesser (eds.), *Turkey's New Geopolitics: From the Balkans to Western China* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1993); Duygu Bazoglu Sezer, "Threat Perceptions in Southern Europe: The Case of Turkey," in Laszlo Valki (ed.), *Changing Threat Perceptions an Military Doctrines* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1992)., cited in Şener Aktürk, "Turkish-Russian Relations After the Cold War", *Turkish Studies*, Vol.7, No.3, September 2006, p. 340.

continue to dominate and influence states of these regions and keep them under its own sphere of influence. Since the newly independent states of the South Caucasus region were neighbours of Turkey, it was likely that Turkey would refrain from any Russian existence and domination on its north.

During 1990's, there was a "managed political rivalry"²⁶⁴ between Turkey and Russia. While the region was perceived by Russia of vital security and economic interests, after the end of the Cold War, the emergence of a power vaccum in the region caused Russia to feel a "security vaccum syndrome".²⁶⁵ Furthermore, as Duygu Bazoğlu Sezer indicated in her article, Pavel Felgenhauer linked the strategic significance of the South Caucasus for Russian security not simply to Turkey's aspirations but to Turkey's position as a NATO member.²⁶⁶ Turkey's policy towards the South Caucasus, on the other hand, was based on the consolidation of independence of the newly independent states, establish further ties with these states and promote their integration to Euro-Atlantic institutions. Based on this mutually exclusive interests of Turkey and Russia in the South Caucasus region, Duygu Bazoğlu Sezer in her article argues that:

In short, Russia's strategic approach to the southern Caucasus indicates a basic mistrust of Turkey, to say nothing of its NATO allies. The same policies feed into a vicious security dynamic, reinforcing Turkish fears of Russia. Turkey has been seriously troubled by Russia's post-1991 military presence in neighboring Georgia and Armenia and its continued violations of the CFE limits.²⁶⁷

²⁶⁴ Duygu Bazoğlu Sezer, *Op.cit*, p.63.

²⁶⁵ Dmitri Trenin, "Russia's Security Interests and Policies in the Caucasus Region," in Bruno Coppieeters (ed.), *Contested Borders in the Caucasus* (Brussels: VUB University Press, 1996), p.91., cited in Duygu Bazoğlu Sezer, *Op.cit*, p. 68.

²⁶⁶ See, "Text of FIS Report Presented by Primakov," FBIS-SOV-94-185, Sept. 23, 1994, p.3., cited in Duygu Bazoğlu Sezer, *Op.cit*, p.69.

²⁶⁷ Duygu Bazoğlu Sezer, *Op.cit*, p.72.

Drawing attention the conflicting interests of Turkey and Russia, Fiona Hill and Ömer Taşpinar in their article “Turkey and Russia: Axis of the Excluded” argues that:

For most of the 1990's, Moscow viewed Turkey as a proxy of the United States. Turkey encroached on Russia's position in the Caucasus and Central Asia by playing on its historic associations with the Turkic Muslim peoples of the regions. Because of the Balkan and Caucasian diasporas in Turkey, Russia and Turkey were in diametrically opposed camps on issues like Bosnia, Kosovo and Chechnya. Russia also saw American efforts to transform Turkey into a transit corridor for Caspian energy exports (especially Azeri oil and gas) to Europe as a strategic threat to its interests. Turkey's membership in NATO and NATO enlargement to Eastern Europe, including potentially to the Caucasus, further rankled Russia. This produced a tense bilateral relationship and the two states neglected each other politically. In spite of the end of the Cold War, there was no strategic rethinking on either side.²⁶⁸

Within this framework, till the end of the 1990's, Russian war in Chechnya and Turkey's attitude towards the Chechen war and the Kurdish seperatism in Turkey were the main issues in diplomatic and political relations between Turkey and Russia. Russia's reluctance to label the Kurdistan Worker's Party (PKK) as a terrorist organisation and Russia selling Russian arms to Greek Cypriots caused keeping bilateral relations between Turkey and Russia tense.²⁶⁹ Furthermore, Russia time to time warned Turkey concerning the rumors that Turkey has been selling arms to Chechnya.²⁷⁰ While the practical situation was such, in December 1996, then Foreign Minister of Turkey Tansu Çiller indicated that Turkey was respectful for the territorial integrity of other countries.²⁷¹ In 1997, during the visit of then Foreign Minister Tansu Çiller in Russia, the necessity to act more actively in areas of

²⁶⁸ Fiona Hill, Ömer Taşpinar, “Turkey and Russia: Axis of the Excluded”, *Survival: Global Politics and Strategy*, Vol.48, No.1, p. 83.

²⁶⁹ Hasan Kanbolat, “Turkish-Russian Relations after Gul's Moscow Visit,” *Journal of Turkish Weekly*, 15 February 2009., www.turkishweekly.net/news/64590/turkish-russian-relations-after-gul-39-s-moscow-visit.html, cited in Richard Weitz, “Russian-Turkish Relations: Steadfast and Changing”, *Mediterranean Quarterly*, Vol.21, No.3, 2010, p.62.

²⁷⁰ Anıl Gurtuna, “ Turkish-Russian Relations in the Post-Soviet Era: From Conflict to Cooperation?”, Unpublished M.S Thesis, Middle East Technical University, January 2006, p. 35.

²⁷¹ “Çiller'e Rus Morali”, *Milliyet*, 19 December 1996, cited in., Anıl Gürtuna, *Op.cit*, p. 35.

common interests were indicated.²⁷² In December 1997, during the visit of then Russia's Prime Minister to Turkey, the necessity to seek for 'cooperation' and 'trust' instead of 'competition' and 'suspicion' in relations was emphasized.²⁷³ Though during these visits, good will for the improvement of relations and establishment of cooperation between Turkey and Russia was declared, it was after the 1998 Russian economic collapse that practical improvements in political and economic relations between Turkey and Russia happened.²⁷⁴ In his article "Russian-Turkish Relations: Steadfast and Changing", Richard Weitz argues that:

One of the consequences of the 1998 Russian economic collapse following the Asian financial crisis was to force a softening of Moscow's approach toward Turkey. By then, Russian leaders had recognized that Turkey lacked the resources to establish a sphere of influence in Central Asia or the Black Sea region or take other measures that would weaken Russian primacy in the former Soviet Union. As part of their economic recovery efforts, Russian officials sought to expand economic relations with Turkey. They adopted corresponding political and security measures to improve the prospects of Russian-Turkish reconciliation.²⁷⁵

During the visit of then Turkish Prime Minister Bülent Ecevit in Moscow on 5-6 November 1999, several agreements including a declaration on Joint Anti-Terrorism and official commitment for the Blue Stream Project was signed.²⁷⁶ Ecevit's visit was defined as a turning point in relations between Turkey and Russia since it was argued that it laid the groundwork for better relations.²⁷⁷ Bülent Aras argued that, "Ecevit's visit resulted in Turkey's change of attitude on the Chechen question as an

²⁷² Vadim Markurshin, "Russia-Turkey: Doomed to be Eternal Neighbours", *Perceptions*, March-May 1997, Vol.2, p.2., cited in Anil Gurtuna, *Op.cit*, p. 35.

²⁷³ Nurşin Ateşoğlu Güney, "Rusya'nın Yeni Güvenlik Politikası ÇerçEVesinde Türkiye'ye Bakışı", *Türkiye'nin Komşuları*, İstanbul, İmge Kitabevi, 2002, p.371, cited in Anıl Gürtüna, *Op.cit*, p.36.

²⁷⁴ Richard Weitz, "Russian-Turkish Relations: Steadfast and Changing", *Mediterranean Quarterly*, Vol.21, No.3, 2010, p.62.

²⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁷⁶ Michael Reynolds, " Russian-Turkish Relations and Chechnya", *Insight Turkey*, April-June 2002, Vol.4, No.2,p.60.,cited in Anıl Gürtüna, *Op.cit*, p. 36.

²⁷⁷ Bülent Aras, "Turkey and the Russian Federation: An Emerging Multi-dimensional Partnership", *SETA*, August 2009,Brief No.39, p.5.

internal problem of Russia, in exchange for Russia's acceptance of a policy of non-involvement in the Kurdish problem”²⁷⁸.

The September 11 attacks also constituted an important cornerstone in the rapprochement between Turkey and Russia and created an appropriate environment for the struggle and cooperation against terrorism. During beginnings of 2000's, several official visits and meetings took place between Turkey and Russia. During these meetings, both Turkey and Russia decided to form common working groups to form common strategies in Eurasia concerning the issue of Nagorno Karabagh, energy and fight against terrorism.²⁷⁹ Furthermore, the Action Plan to develop cooperation between the Russian Federation and Turkey was signed and according to this document, several areas of cooperation in Eurasia were defined including supporting the political resolution of conflicts, promoting stability and creating conditions for sustainable economic development.²⁸⁰ According to the Action Plan, relations were targeted to reach to the level of strengthened constructive partnership.²⁸¹

Considering all, since the late 1990's and the beginning of the 2000's, changes started to occur in Turkey's relations with Russia..These changes were defined first with the abandonment of Turkey's quasi-expansionist policies in favor of much closer relations with Russia rather than with Turkic states of Central Asia.²⁸² Second, the increased military cooperation between Turkey and Russia was defined as an aspect of improvement in relations as it was the first time that Turkey and Russia

²⁷⁸ Aydin Mehtiyev, “Vstrecha Putina i Ecevita s tselom proshla uspeshno”, *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, November 6, 1999; Gayaz Alimov, “Bulent Ecevit: Chechnya – vnutrennoe delo Rossii”, *Izvestia*, November 4, 1999.,cited in Bülent Aras, *Op.cit*, p. 5.

²⁷⁹ Radikal, 8 June 2001., cited in Anıl Gürtuna, *Op.cit*, p. 37.

²⁸⁰ Anıl Gürtuna, *Op.cit*,p. 38.

²⁸¹ Bülent Aras, *Op.cit*,p. 5.

²⁸² Hooman Peimani, *Regional Security and the Future of Central Asia: The Competition of Iran, Turkey, and Russia* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1998),pp-96-101., cited in Şener Aktürk, “Turkish-Russian Relations After the Cold War”, *Turkish Studies*, Vol.7, No.3, September 2006, p. 345.

participated to a joint military contingent.²⁸³ Third, both sides committed for the fight against terrorism, which referred to equalizing the Chechen problem of Russia with the PKK problem of Turkey.²⁸⁴ Fourth, the common desire of Turkey and Russia for the stability of the Caucasus region was indicated as another aspect of improvement in Turkish-Russia relations.²⁸⁵ Last, both Turkey's and Russia's opposition to the United States' military campaign to Iraq had a role in the improvement of relations.²⁸⁶

Richard Weitz in his article Russian-Turkish Relations: Steadfast and Changing" argued that:

Despite Ankara's unease with Moscow's policies toward Chechnya and ties with Armenia, as well as concern over Russia's recent military resurgence, which has included talk of a revived Russian military presence in the Black Sea and the eastern Mediterranean, many Turkish leaders no longer believe they need NATO support to counter an imminent military threat from Moscow. Furthermore, the war in Iraq substantially weakened Turkish-American security ties and brought about a precipitous collapse in Turkey's previously favorable opinion of the United States.²⁸⁷

On 23-25 October 2000, during then Russia Prime Minister Mihail Kasyanov's visit to Turkey, Putin declared Turkey to be a "traditional and important partner" and Mihail Kasyanov expressed the desire "to upgrade the relations between Turkey and Russia to the level of a strategic partnership."²⁸⁸ Furthermore, in March 2002, General Tuncer Kılınç- the Secretary General of the Turkish National Security Council- declared that Turkey should form an "alliance" with Russia.²⁸⁹ In 2002,

²⁸³ Şener Aktürk, *Op.cit.*, p. 345.

²⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁸⁷ Richard Weitz, *Op.cit.*, p. 63.

²⁸⁸ Suat Kimiklioğlu, "Turkish-Russian Relations: The Anatomy of Kasyanov's Visit," *Avrasya Dösyası*, Vol.6, No.4, Winter 2001, p.155.

²⁸⁹ Richard Weitz, *Op.cit.*, p.63.

Tayyip Erdoğan as the leader of the Justice and Development Party visited Russia and was met by President Putin and Prime Minister Kasyanov.²⁹⁰ During this period, one of the most important event that effected Turkish-Russia relations was the refusal of the March 2003 motion that would give permission to US soldiers for their access to Iraq through Turkish territories.²⁹¹ Bülent Aras evaluated this situation as:

After Turkey's refusal of the motion, Russian policy-makers started to perceive Turkey as a more independent actor in foreign policy in contrast to the Cold war definition of a loyal U.S. ally. Turkey's independent attitude created trust and confidence to Russia that it will not automatically endorse U.S. interests in the neighboring regions.²⁹²

In the following period, one of the most important event testing the relations between Turkey and Russia was the August 2008 War. Turkey conducted its policy carefully during the War and aimed to contain the Russian-Georgian crisis in the Caucasus region and to prevent its expansion to the wider Black Sea region.²⁹³ Turkey's Prime Minister Erdoğan best summarized that policy as:

America is our ally and the Russian Federation is an important neighbor. Russia is our number one trade partner. We are obtaining two-thirds of our energy from Russia. We act in accordance to our national interests. [...] We cannot ignore Russia.²⁹⁴

The most concrete policy implementation during the 2008 August War took place when Turkey limited the passage of the US military ships to the Black Sea based on the Montreux Agreement that non-littoral states may have up to nine military ships in the Black Sea for the duration of 21 days with a total weight of 45,000 tones.²⁹⁵

²⁹⁰ Bülent Aras, *Op.cit.*, p.6.

²⁹¹ *Ibid.*

²⁹² *Ibid.*,p.6.

²⁹³ Bülent Aras, *Op.cit.*,p.10.

²⁹⁴ Fikret Bila, "Erdoğan: Rusya'yi Gozardi Edemeyiz," *Milliyet*, September 2, 2008., cited in Bülent Aras, *Op.cit.*, p.10.

²⁹⁵ Bülent Aras, *Op.cit.*, p. 10.

Following the 2008 August War, one of the most important visit took place in February 2009 when for the first time a Turkish president- Abdullah Gül- visited Moscow and met Russia's President Medvedev.²⁹⁶ During this visit, Russia's President defined relations between Turkey and Russia as "multifaceted cooperation and multidimensional partnership".²⁹⁷ Following that, in May 2010, Russian President Dimitri Medvedev visited Turkey and both stated agreed for visa free travel up to thirty days between Turkey and Russia.²⁹⁸ Also, an agreement to build the first nuclear power plant in Turkey, at an estimated value of \$20 billion was reached.²⁹⁹

During 2011, high level official visits continued. On 15-17 March 2011, Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan visited Russia. Concerning the visit, Turkish-Russian Inter-Parliamentary Friendship Group Chairman Salih Kapusuz stated that a high level of political trust that is unprecedented by historical standards was attained.³⁰⁰ During the visit, as well as several meetings in economic, trade and energy relations and projects between Turkey and Russia, Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan made a speech concerning Turkish-Russian relations at the Moscow Institute of State Diplomacy on 16 March 2011.³⁰¹

²⁹⁶ Richard Weitz, *Op.cit*, p.64.

²⁹⁷ "Press Statements Following the Russian-Turkish Talks," 13 February 2009, www.kremlin.ru/eng/speeches/2009/02/13/2131_type82914type82915_212893.shtml, cited in Richard Weitz, *Op.cit*, p. 64.

²⁹⁸ Sergey Markedonov, Natalya Ulchenko, "Turkey and Russia: An Evolving Relationship", 19 August 2011, <http://carnegieendowment.org/2011/08/19/turkey-and-russia-evolving-relationship>

²⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁰⁰ Stanislav Tarasov, "Visit by Erdogan to Moscow—a Challenging Dialogue Ahead," (Russian), <http://prim.regnum.ru/news/1383660.html>, cited in Sergey Markedonov, Natalya Ulchenko, *Op.cit*.

³⁰¹ Habibe Özdal, "Türkiye-Rusya İlişkileri Nereye? ", 19 March 2011, <http://www.usakgundem.com/yazar/2019/t%C3%BCrkiye-rusya-%C4%B0li%C5%9Fkileri-nereye.html>

One of the most striking aspect of the speech was that Recep Tayyip Erdogan stated that Turkey understands best Russia in struggle against terrorism.³⁰²

This rapprochement in Turkey's relations with Russia continued in the beginning of 2011, as well. On 25 January 2012, Foreign Minister of Turkey Ahmet Davutoğlu made a one day visit to Russia and participated to the second meeting of the Common Strategic Planning Group through which many topics were discussed including the Middle East (Iran's nuclear program, Syria), the Balkans, Central Asia, Caucasia (Nagorno-Karabakh), the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC) organization, energy and combating terrorism.³⁰³

Considering all, since the late 1990's and begining of 2000's, high level visits between Turkey and Russia gained momentum and several agreements on certain critical issues were signed. During this period, for defining Turkey's relations with Russia, the term multi-dimensional partnership has been used. Nevertheless, though important steps have been taken in the improvement of relations, Turkey and Russia still hold diverse views on how to deal with certain problems.³⁰⁴ Political scientist Igor Torbakov concerning the current stage of Turkish-Russian relations used the term "political dualism," meaning that they contain elements of both cooperation and rivalry.³⁰⁵

³⁰² *Ibid.*

³⁰³ Hasan Kanbolat, "Davutoğlu in Moscow: New Era in Turkish-Russian Relations", *Today's Zaman*, 23 January 2012,
<http://www.todayszaman.com/columnist-269380-davutoglu-in-moscow-new-era-in-turkish-russian-relations.html>

³⁰⁴ Sergey Markedonov, Natalya Ulchenko, *Op.cit.*

³⁰⁵ Igor Torbakov, "Turkey-Russia: Competition and Cooperation," Eurasianet, December 26, 2002,
www.eurasianet.org/departments/insight/articles/eav122702.shtml., cited in Sergey Markedonov, Natalya Ulchenko, *Op.cit.*

4.1.2 Turkey's Security Relations with Russia

Considering the nature of Turkey's security relations with Russia, one of the arguments was that after the collapse of the Soviet Union, for Turkey, the threat of the past 400 years- Russia- was eliminated.³⁰⁶ Further to this argument, by some analysts and academics, it was argued that relations between Turkey and Russia could be named as “strategic partnership” or as a cooperation that was going towards a strategic partnership.³⁰⁷ Contrary to that view, it was by other some analysts and academics argued that, Turkish-Russian relations could not be named as a strategic partnership but rather it was more a pragmatic cooperation due to the fact that both Turkey and Russia were aware of their capabilities and limitations.³⁰⁸ Considering these opposite arguments, the nature of Turkish-Russian security relations will be examined by including the main problematic issues and issues of common interest between Turkey and Russia.

Following the collapse of the Soviet Union, both Turkey and Russia found themselves in an newly emerging international system which required both states to redefine their international and regional roles and most important than adjust their foreign policies. During first years after the establishment of diplomatic relations, both states declared that they would respect their territorial integrity; would remain neutral in case of an attack to each state by a third country; would not interfere to the

³⁰⁶ Morton Abramowitz, “Foreword” to Graham E. Fuller and Ian O. Lesser (eds.), *Turkey's New Geopolitics: From the Balkans to Western China* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1993); Duygu Bazoglu Sezer, “Threat Perceptions in Southern Europe: The Case of Turkey,” in Laszlo Valki (ed.), *Changing Threat Perceptions and Military Doctrines* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1992)., cited in Şener Aktürk, “Turkish-Russian Relations After the Cold War (1992-2002)”, *Turkish Studies*, Vol.7, No.3, September 2006, p.340.

³⁰⁷ Gülşah Güreş, “Security Dimension of Turkey's Relations with Russia: 2000-2010”, “Unpublished M.S Thesis”, Middle East Technical University, January 2011, p. 4.

³⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, p.3.

internal affairs of each other and would not allow separatist activities in their territories targeting each other.³⁰⁹

Preceding the Treaty on 25 May 1992 on the Principles of Relations between the Republic of Turkey and the Russian Federation, when the Armenian-Azerbaijan conflict over Nagorno Karabakh broke out in 1992, Turkey and Russia took place in opposite camps due to the pro-Turkish stance of Elchibey. Then Turkish Prime Minister Süleyman Demirel stated that, Turkey did not eliminate the option of military intervention.³¹⁰ Furthermore, President of Turkey at the time, Turgut Özal made a supportive declaration of such a military intervention.³¹¹ Against these statements by Turkey, Russia showed a strong reaction and then Commander-in-Chief of the Joint Armed Forces of the CIS Marshal Shaposhnikov threatened with the outbreak of the Third World War if such a thing happens.³¹² While the tension rised in security relations between Turkey and Russia, the tension later diminished with the cease of Armenian attacks on Nakhichevan and statement of Russian Foreign Ministry condemning Armenian attacks.³¹³ Following these developments,

³⁰⁹ “Türkiye Cumhuriyeti ile Rusya Federasyonu Arasındaki İlişkilerin Esasları Hakkında Antlaşma”, 25 May 1992, Official website of Turkish Foreign Ministry, <http://ua.mfa.gov.tr/detay.aspx?5411>.

³¹⁰ Svante E. Cornell,; “Turkey and the Conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh: A Delicate Balance”, *Middle Eastern Studies*, January 1998, Volume 34, Number 1, p.61., cited in Gülsah Güreş, *Op.cit*, p. 24.

³¹¹ Kamer Kasim,; “The Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict From its Inception to the Peace Process”, *Armenian Studies*, June-July-August 2001, Issue 2, <http://www.eraren.org/index.php?Page=DergiIcerik&IcerikNo=227&Lisan=en>; “Özal: Asker Gönderin”, *Hürriyet*, 19 May 1992., cited in Gülsah Güreş, *Op.cit*, p. 24.

³¹² Dimitri Trenin, “Russia's Security Interests and Policies in the Caucasus Region” in *Contested Borders in the Caucasus*, (Ed.) Bruno Coppeters, Brussel:VUB University Press, 1996; Kasim, Kamer; “The Nagorno- Karabakh Conflict From its Inception to the Peace Process”, *Armenian Studies*, June-July-August 2001, Issue 2, <http://www.eraren.org/index.php?Page=DergiIcerik&IcerikNo=227&Lisan=en>., cited in Gülsah Güreş, *Op.cit*, p. 24.

³¹³ Kasim, Kamer; “The Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict From its Inception to the Peace Process”, *Armenian Studies*, June-July-August 2001, Issue 2, <http://www.eraren.org/index.php?Page=DergiIcerik&IcerikNo=227&Lisan=en>; “Ayn Tarihi”, Official Website of the Turkish Prime Ministry Directorate General of Press and Information, May 1992.,cited in Gülsah Güreş, *Op.cit*, p. 24

during Suleyman Demirel's visit to Moscow for the signing of the founding agreement establishing relations between sides, Turkey also guaranteed that they would not send soldiers to Nakhichevan.³¹⁴

Following all these developments, while Turkey described bilateral relations as the beginning of a bright period, Russia also declared its desire to have allied type relations with Turkey against extreme nationalist and religious tendencies in Central Asia and the Caucasus.³¹⁵ In the light of these statements, several agreements in military and security fields were signed between Turkey and Russia including a “Momerandum of Understanding between Defense Ministries of Turkey and Russia”³¹⁶ on May 11 1993, “a goodwill protocol on the cooperation in military and defense industry fields”³¹⁷ on 16 September 1993, “Agreement on Cooperation in Military Technical Matters and in the Field of Defense Industry”³¹⁸ on 20 April 1994 and “Protocol between Turkish General Staff and the Ministry of Defense of Russian Federation on Social and Cultural Exchange of Families of Armed Forces Personnel”³¹⁹ on 28 August 1995.

³¹⁴ Ömer Göksel İşyar, “Türkiye’nin Azerbaycan-Ermenistan Uyuşmazlığına Yönelik Politikaları: 1992-2004” in *Geçmişten Günümüze Dönüşen Orta Asya ve Kafkasya*, (ed. by Demirağ, Yelda&Karadeli, Cem), Ankara:Palme Yayıncılık, 2006, pp.252-253., cited in Gülşah Güreş, *Op.cit*, p. 25.

³¹⁵ “Ayın Tarihi”, Official Website of the Turkish Prime Ministry Directorate General of Press and Information, August 1992; “Ayın Tarihi”, Official Website of the Turkish Prime Ministry Directorate General of Press and Information, September 1992., cited in Gülşah Güreş, *Op.cit*, p. 25.

³¹⁶ “Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Hükümeti ile Rusya Federasyonu Hükümeti Arasında Askeri Teknik Konular ve Savunma Sanayii Alanında İşbirliği Yapılmasına Dair Anlaşma”, Official website of Turkish Foreign Ministry, 18 August 1994,
<http://ua.mfa.gov.tr/detay.aspx?5471>.

³¹⁷ “Ayın Tarihi”, Official Website of the Turkish Prime Ministry Directorate General of Press and Information, September 1993., cited in Gülşah Güreş, *Op.cit*, p. 27.

³¹⁸ “Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Hükümeti ile Rusya Federasyonu Hükümeti Arasında Askeri Teknik Konular ve Savunma Sanayi Alanında İşbirliği Yapılmasına Dair Anlaşma”, Official website of Turkish Foreign Ministry, 20 April 1994,
<http://ua.mfa.gov.tr/detay.aspx?5471>.

³¹⁹ “Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Genelkurmay Başkanlığı ile Rusya Federasyonu Savunma Bakanlığı Arasında Silahlı Kuvvetler Personel Ailelerinin Sosyal ve Kültürel Amaçlı Mübadelesine İlişkin Protokol”, Official website of Turkish Foreign Ministry, 28 August 1995,
<http://ua.mfa.gov.tr/detay.aspx?5716>.

Nevertheless, though the existence of such agreements of military and security cooperation, there emerged several other security problems between Turkey and Russia.

First, Turkey's attempt to prepare a regulatory statute pertaining to the Montreux Convention for the provision of security of the Turkish Straits caused tension in Turkey's security relations with Russia. Turkey argued that due to the dramatic change in the number, size and content of the ships passing through the Turkish Straits, there was a danger for the transfer of the oil.³²⁰ Russia, on the other hand, argued that there could not be any change of the free passage principle of the Montreux Convention.³²¹

A second problematic issue was Turkey's attitude during the first Russian-Chechen War. While before the war broke out, Chechen leader Dudayev's visit to Turkey and his acceptance by then President of Turkey Süleyman Demirel caused tension between Turkey and Russia, Russia warned Turkey for not repeating such action in the future.³²² Furthermore, during the Russian-Chechen War, Russia informed Turkey about the arms sale to Chechnya through Turkey and Turkish volunteers joining to War.³²³

A third problematic issue in security relations, was Russia's attitude towards the organisations and actions of PKK in its own territories. The organisation of a conference in Moscow by PKK in February 1994 where the Russian Ministry of

³²⁰ "Ayın Tarihi", Official Website of the Turkish Prime Ministry Directorate General of Press and Information, August 1993; Kohen, Sami; Boğazlar Boru Hattı Değil!..", *Milliyet*, 12 May 1998., cited in., Gülşah Güreş, *Op.cit*, pp. 29-30.

³²¹ "Ayın Tarihi", Official Website of the Turkish Prime Ministry Directorate General of Press and Information, February 1994., cited in., Gülşah Güreş, *Op.cit*, p.30.

³²² Gareth M. Winrow, *Turkey in the Post-Soviet Central Asia*, London: The Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1995, p.43., cited in., Gülşah Güreş, *Op.cit*, p. 31.

³²³ "Ayın Tarihi", Official Website of the Turkish Prime Ministry Directorate General of Press and Information, February 1995., cited in., Gülşah Güreş, *Op.cit*, p. 31.

Nationalities took place as co-organiser³²⁴, the existence of a PKK rehabilitation camp in Moscow³²⁵, another conference of the PKK organisations of the CIS region in Moscow on 28 October 1994³²⁶ and furthermore, the openings of a Kurdish house, a Kurdish Center and efforts for the establishment of a Kurdish Parliament in exile in Moscow all caused tension between Turkey and Russia.³²⁷ While Russia against the protest notes of Turkey, first denied organisations of such kind in its territories, later on declared that they would take the neccessary steps to prevent PKK activities in Moscow and that the Kurdish issue was an internal problem of Turkey.³²⁸ Furthermore, a protocol to Prevent Terrorism was signed between Turkey and Russia.³²⁹ Following the Protocol to Prevent Terrorism, a third conference of PKK- gathering of the Kurdish Parliament in Exile- in October 1995 in Moscow showed that practically this problem was not solved between Turkey and Russia.³³⁰ While Turkey again sent a protest note to Russia, Russia indicated that they never gave credits to the separatist movements and so to terrorist organizations.³³¹

³²⁴ Karagiannis, Emmanuel; *Energy and Security in the Caucasus*, London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2002, p. 102., cited in Gülsah Güreş, *Op.cit*, p. 31.

³²⁵ Karagiannis, Emmanuel; *Energy and Security in the Caucasus*, London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2002, p. 102., cited in Gülsah Güreş, *Op.cit*, p. 32.

³²⁶ *Ibid.*

³²⁷ Karagiannis, Emmanuel; *Energy and Security in the Caucasus*, London: Routledge Curzon, 2002, p. 103., cited in Gülsah Güreş, *Op.cit*, p. 32.

³²⁸ “Ayın Tarihi”, Official Website of the Turkish Prime Ministry Directorate General of Press and Information, January 1995; “Ayın Tarihi”, Official Website of the Turkish Prime Ministry Directorate General of Press and Information, August 1995., cited in Gülsah Güreş, *Op.cit*, p. 32.

³²⁹ “Ayın Tarihi”, Official Website of the Turkish Prime Ministry Directorate General of Press and Information, January 1995., cited in Gülsah Güreş, *Op.cit*, p. 32.

³³⁰ Karagiannis, Emmanuel; *Energy and Security in the Caucasus*, London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2002, p. 103., cited in Gülsah Güreş, *Op.cit*, p. 32.

³³¹ “Ayın Tarihi”Official Website of the Turkish Prime Ministry Directorate General of Press and Information, October 1995; “Ayın Tarihi” Official Website of the Turkish Prime Ministry Directorate General of Press and Information, November 1995., cited in Gülsah Güreş, *Op.cit*, p. 33.

Since the mid 1990's to the late 1990's, Turkey's security relations with Russia gained a more different characteristic. As well as the importance of the Second Chechen War in bilateral relations, one of the most important issue was Russia's sale of SAM 300-PMU-1 surface-to-air missile system (S-300) to Greek Cypriot. When on 5 January 1997, Russia decided to sell S-300's to Greek Cypriot, on the following day, on 6 January 1997, Turkey, through a press meeting, indicated that this was an unacceptable situation for Turkey and reminded Russia of its responsibilities bearing from its membership to OSCE and UNSC and further sent a warning note to Russia.³³² While Russia first argued that the sale of S-300's was just a trade issue, then Foreign Minister of Turkey, Tansu Çiller's statement that they would shoot if necessary, increased the tension more.³³³ Then Prime Minister of Turkey-Mesut Yılmaz further stated that Russia had to yield the precedence to its strategic interests in the region rather than few million dollars.³³⁴ Later on, Russia stated that the only way to abandon their sale decision was the demilitarisation of the island totally.³³⁵ It was till December 1998 when the Greek Cypriot government gave up from the deployment of S-300's to the island due to the increased pressure from the US and Turkey that this problematic issue remained as a crisis in bilateral relations between Turkey and Russia.³³⁶ Oktay F. Tanrısever stated that this problematic issue "convinced Turkey that its rivalry with Moscow could get extremely dangerous and even harms Turkey's relations with its NATO allies".³³⁷

³³² "Türkiye'den Moskova'ya Uyarı", *Milliyet*, 07 January 1997.

³³³ "Aynı Tarihi", Official Website of the Turkish Prime Ministry Directorate General of Press and Information, January 1997., cited Gülşah Güreş, *Op.cit*, p.36.

³³⁴ "Aynı Tarihi", Official Website of the Turkish Prime Ministry Directorate General of Press and Information, September 1997., cited Gülşah Güreş, *Op.cit*, p.36.

³³⁵ "Russia, Turkey at odds over Cyprus", *RFE/RL*, Vol 1, Number 127, 29 September 1997, <http://www.rferl.org/content/article/1141504.html>.

³³⁶ Bazoğlu Sezer, Duygu; "Russia: The Challenges of Reconciling Geopolitical Competition with Economic Partnership", *Turkish Studies*, Vol.1, No.1, Spring 2000, pp.60-61.

³³⁷ Oktay F. Tanrısever,; "Turkey and Russia in Eurasia" in *The Future of Turkish Foreign Policy*, (ed. By Lenore, Martin G.&Keridis, Dimitris), Cambridge: MIT Press, 2004, p. 141.

After the agreement signed on Blue Stream Project, relations between Turkey and Russia was started to be called as a strategic partnership³³⁸, and combined with the 1998 financial crisis in Russia which led to a devastating economy, Turkey and Russia started to cooperate in several areas rather than competing. On 18-22 May 1998, the visit of Turkish Chief of Staff General İsmail Hakkı Karadayı to Russia resulted with the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding on 20 May 1998.³³⁹ According to the Memorandum of Understanding, both countries would develop and diversify the existing military cooperation additional to provision of security beyond territorial waters and cooperation in the Black Sea welcoming the contribution of other littoral states.³⁴⁰

During Bülent Ecevit's visit to Moscow on 4-6 November 1999 , a "Joint Declaration on the Fight against terrorism"³⁴¹ was signed and more important than all, on 3 November 1999, Bülent Ecevit stated that Turkey saw the Chechen issue as Russia's internal problem and regards Russia's territorial integrity as Turkey's territorial integrity.³⁴² Following this development, another important development in Turkey's relations with Russia took place about the so called extradition of Öcalan. While Russia rejected the existence of Öcalan in Moscow and also argued that Russia would not give asylum to Öcalan, Duma's decision to accept the political

³³⁸ "Stratejik Ortaklık Önerisi", *Milliyet*, 17 December 1997; "Ayın Tarihi", Official Website of the Turkish Prime Ministry Directorate General of Press and Information, December 1997.,cited in Gülsah Güreş, *Op.cit*, p. 38.

³³⁹ "Moskova'da generaller zirvesi", *Hürriyet*, 17 May 1998; "Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Genelkurmay Başkanlığı ve Rusya Federasyonu Silahlı Kuvvetleri Genelkurmay Başkanlığı Arasında İmzalanan "Mutabakat Zaptri'nin Onaylanması Hakkında Karar", Official website of Turkish Foreign Ministry, 20 May 1998, <http://ua.mfa.gov.tr/detay.aspx?6120>.

³⁴⁰ "Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Genelkurmay Başkanlığı ve Rusya Federasyonu Silahlı Kuvvetleri Genelkurmay Başkanlığı Arasında İmzalanan "Mutabakat Zaptri'nin Onaylanması Hakkında Karar", Official website of Turkish Foreign Ministry, 20 May 1998, <http://ua.mfa.gov.tr/detay.aspx?6120>.

³⁴¹ Asim Oku, "Turkey-Russia Relations Dynamics", *Axis Information and Analysis (AIA)*, 12 May 2005,<http://www.axisglobe.com/article.asp?article=71>; "Ayın Tarihi", Official Website of the Turkish Prime Ministry Directorate General of Press and Information, November 1999., cited in., Gülsah Güreş, *Op.cit*, p. 41

³⁴² "Ayın Tarihi", Official Website of the Turkish Prime Ministry Directorate General of Press and Information, November 1999., cited in., Gülsah Güreş, *Op.cit*, p. 41

asylum of Öcalan confused Turkey.³⁴³ Turkey stated that in case political asylum is given to Öcalan, Turkish-Russian relations would be damaged severely and further Turkey would suspend common projects with Russia especially projects in energy field.³⁴⁴ Considering all, Russia's attitude either by denying or keeping its silence throughout this process led Turkey to feel suspicious of Russia's goodwill statements and declarations concerning the general nature of relations and both sides' commitment for the fight against terrorism. To sum up all, during this process, though there were good will intentions on both sides, practical developments did not always reflected the rhetoric.

During 2000's, with Putin's presidency in Russia, Turkey's relations with Russia gained a more different character. Based on "the 2000 Foreign Policy Concept of Russia"³⁴⁵, named as "cooperative pragmatism" by Richard Sakwa or as "pragmatic geo-economic realism" by Christian Torun, further development in security relations was experienced between Turkey and Russia.³⁴⁶ On 23-25 October 2000, during Russian Prime Minister Mikhail Kasyanov's visit to Turkey, the establishment of a Joint Military Cooperation Commission was decided.³⁴⁷ Considering this, on 16 November 2001, the "Action Plan for Cooperation in Eurasia-From Bilateral towards Multilateral Partnership" was signed in New York.³⁴⁸ According to the

³⁴³ Başlamış, Cenk; "Rusya Öcalan'a kucak açtı", *Milliyet*, 05 November 1998.

³⁴⁴ Cenk Başlamış; "Rusya'yı son kez uyardık", *Milliyet*, 09 November 1998; Nedim Şener,; "Ortak projeleri askıya alırız", *Milliyet*, 06 November 1998.

³⁴⁵ "The Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation", 28 June 2000, Official website of Russian Foreign Ministry,
<http://www.fas.org/nuke/guide/russia/doctrine/econcept.htm>.

³⁴⁶ Sakwa, Richard; Putin: Russia's Choice, London: Routledge, 2004, p. 209; Thorun, Christian; Explaining Change in Russian Foreign Policy: The Role of Ideas in Post-Soviet Russia's Conduct towards the West, Great Britain: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009, p.55., cited in Gülşah Güreş, *Op.cit*, p. 49.

³⁴⁷ "Mikhail Kasyanov's Visit", Official Website of the Turkish Prime Ministry Directorate General of Press and Information, <http://www.byegm.gov.tr/YAYINLARIMIZ/ta%C5%9Finan-newspot/2000/Nov-Dec/N5.htm>., cited in Gülşah Güreş, *Op.cit*, p. 50.

³⁴⁸ Şener Aktürk, "Turkish-Russian Relations after the Cold War (1992-2002)", *Turkish Studies*, September 2006, Volume 7, Number 3, pp. 344; "Turkey's Political Relations with Russian

Action Plan, radical changes in the world triggered a new era that both countries could develop bilateral and regional cooperation in every field including the fight against international terrorism within the spirit of friendship and trust, and both countries would be determined of upgrading the current relations to the level of the strengthened constructive partnership through transferring their current good relations, political consultations and economic cooperation to the Eurasian dimension.³⁴⁹

Following the Action Plan, as a result of reciprocal visits in high diplomatic levels between Turkey and Russia, several protocols and agreements were signed for the further development of cooperation in the military field. In 2002, after the Justice and Development Party government came to power, with the new foreign policy vision of Turkey's Foreign Ministry combined with the 2000 Foreign Policy concept of Putin's Russia, both Turkey and Russia refrained from taking steps that would drag themselves in a confrontial situation.³⁵⁰

Though potential problems between Turkey and Russia continued to exist, like some disturbing statements of Turkey concerning Chechnya and Turkey's attitude concerning the passage from the Turkish Straits and PKK activities in Russia, relations were mainly based on cooperation. The Iraq invasion by the US under the name of Operation Iraqi Freedom led to the rapprochement of Turkey and Russia more. The refusal of the March 2003 motion by the Turkish Parliament led Russia to think that Turkey could act independently in the region.³⁵¹

Federation”, Official website of Turkish Foreign Ministry, http://www.mfa.gov.tr/turkey_s-political-relations-with-russian-federation.en.mfa, cited in Gülsah Güreş, *Op.cit*, p. 51.

³⁴⁹ “Turkey’s Political Relations with Russian Federation”, Official website of Turkish Foreign Ministry, http://www.mfa.gov.tr/turkey_s-political-relations-with-russian-federation.en.mfa, cited in Gülsah Güreş, *Op.cit*, p.51.

³⁵⁰ Gülsah Güreş, *Op.cit*, p.54.

³⁵¹ Bülent Aras, “Turkey and the Russian Federation: An Emerging Multidimensional Partnership”, *SETA Policy Brief*, Brief No.35, August 2009, p.6

Russia's perception of Turkey as an independent actor in the region was most obviously seen in Turkey's policy during the August 2008 War. The August 2008 War was a challenge to the balance of power in the region, the war showed that Turkey's interests in the region were vulnerable. Bülent Ali Rıza argued that:

It also placed Turkey in a difficult diplomatic position, not only between two neighboring countries with which it has been cultivating close relations and cooperation, especially on energy, but also between the United States and Russia.³⁵²

The first critical event during the crisis through which Turkey's relations with Russia were tested was the passage of the US warships from the Straits to the Black Sea. While Russia stated that according to the Montreux Convention, ships belonging to non-littoral states may not remain in the Black Sea for longer than 21 days, this friction between Turkey and Russia about the US naval presence in the Black Sea was coincided with a trade crisis which thousands of Turkish trucks were held up in Russian border.³⁵³

While Russia concerning the crisis of Turkish trucks argued that the problem was not about politics but was more economic³⁵⁴, the perception by Turkey was that Russia tried to pressure Turkey to prevent the passage of the US warships through Turkish Straits.³⁵⁵ Cengiz Aktar evaluated this situation as Russia was “blackmailing Turkey by stopping these trucks and this is a warning that there could be more pain to come”³⁵⁶. Further, he added Turkey found itself “trapped” between Russia on the one hand and the U.S. and NATO on the other.³⁵⁷

³⁵² Bülent Ali Rıza, “Turkey and the Crisis in the Caucasus,” *CSIS Turkey Project Commentary*, September 9, 2008, www.csis.org/turkey., cited in, Igor Torbakov, “The Georgia Crisis and Russia-Turkey Relations, *Jamestown Foundation*, 2008, p.12.

³⁵³ Igor Torbakov, “Georgian Crisis and Russia Turkey Relations”, *Jamestown Foundation*, 2008, p. 14.

³⁵⁴ *Turkish Daily News*, September 2, 2008., cited in, Igor Torbakov, *Op.cit*, p. 15.

³⁵⁵ Igor Torbakov, *Op.cit*, p. 15.

³⁵⁶ Barker, “Turkey Threatens”, cited in Igor Torbakov, *Op.cit*, p.15.

³⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p.15.

Concerning this, the first reaction of Turkey came from Kürşat Tüzmen -Minister of Foreign Trade at that time- through his statements that: “whatever is being done to Turkish goods in Russia, we will do the same things to Russian goods”³⁵⁸. Immediately after the statement of Kürşat Tüzmen, Prime Minister Erdoğan realizing that this attitude could be harmful concerning Turkey’s energy supplies stated that “Otherwise, we would be kept in the dark”³⁵⁹. As well as reaction on state level, Turkish Businessmen Community also showed reaction by arguing that since Russia’s share in Turkish market was bigger than Turkish share in Russian market, thus, Turkey should think carefully and should not deceive itself.³⁶⁰

Considering all, one of the important consequences of the August 2008 War was argued to be that Turkey’s energy ambition appeared to have hit a wall.³⁶¹ Since this war showed that the existing pipelines through Georgia and Turkey were not secure ways of transporting the Caspian energy resources, the feasibility of building new lines through this corridor would be questioned. Soner Çağatay stated that:

By occupying Georgia, Russia has exhausted the U.S-Turkish plans to boost the East-West corridor and make Turkey an entrepôt of Caspian energy. Moscow has also preemptively blocked the EU’s plans to buy energy from the Caspian basin without having to go through Russia.³⁶²

³⁵⁸ Robert Tait, “Trade War Looms Between Moscow and Ankara,” *Guardian*, September 1, 2008., cited in., Igor Torbakov, *Op.cit*, p.15.

³⁵⁹ “Turkey Cannot Afford Disruption in Ties with Russia, Says Erdogan,” *Turkish Daily News*, September 1, 2008., cited in., Igor Torbakov, *Op.cit*, p.15.

³⁶⁰ *Turkish Daily News*, September 2, 2008., cited in., Igor Torbakov, *Op.cit*, p. 16.

³⁶¹ See Bruce Pannier, “Russia-Georgia Conflict Raises Concerns About Caspian Energy,” *RFE/RL*, August 13, 2008; “Caspian Basin: Russia Uses Its Georgia Position to Enhance Its Energy Leverage,” *EurasiaNet*, August 25, 2008., cited in., Igor Torbakov, *Op.cit*, p.16.

³⁶² Soner Çağatay, “The Caucasus: Small War, Big Damage,” *Turkish Daily News*, September 8, 2008., cited in., Igor Torbakov, *Op.cit*, p.18.

From a more general perspective, Igor Torbakov argued that:

The Kremlin, naturally, has sought to counter what it believed was the U.S.-sponsored Caucasus scenario. Russia's strategic objective has been to restore its geopolitical dominance in the Caucasus and tighten its grip on the region's energy resources. By invading Georgia, Moscow, in one move, has arguably achieved just that: it "has reestablished a hold over the narrow strategic corridor of the South Caucasus" and "reasserted its influence over energy supply routes and suppliers from the Caspian basin and Central Asia.³⁶³

Turkey's Initiative for the formation of Caucasus Stability Platform had also implications for Turkish-Russian relations. The main motivation of Turkey was to ensure the stability of its neighbourhood which was vital for its own national interests. Thus, concerning Turkey's strategy to be an energy hub in the transfer of the energy resources from East to the West, the stability in the region and security of the pipeline routes carried crucial importance. On the other hand, Russia's reaction and attitude towards Turkey's initiative was supportive. Russian Foreign Minister Lavrov argued that:

In my opinion, the Turks have very timely understood the uniqueness of the moment... which allows them to raise their profile in the region. They are the immediate neighbors of the Caucasus and at the same time [Turkey is] the actor that has good relations with almost all the countries of the Caucasus region. The Turkish idea that it is above all the regional countries that have to collectively think about [setting up] some platform for stability and cooperation in the Caucasus reflects the maturity of the Turkish diplomacy.³⁶⁴

Furthermore, Lavrov, in a press conference on 2 September 2008 in Istanbul, stated that:

We see the chief value in the Turkish initiative for the Caucasus Stability and Cooperation Platform in that it rests on common sense and assumes that countries of any region and, first of all, countries belonging to this region should themselves decide how to conduct affairs there. And others should help, but not dictate their recipes.³⁶⁵

³⁶³ *Financial Times*, August 26, 2008., cited in Igor Torbakov, *Op.cit*, p.20.

³⁶⁴ *Rossiyskaya gazeta*, October 7, 2008., cited in Igor Torbakov, *Op.cit*, p. 24.

³⁶⁵ "Transcript of Remarks and Response to Media Questions by Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs Sergey Lavrov at Joint Press Conference with Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs Ali Babajan, Istanbul, September 2, 2008", Official website of Russian Foreign Ministry, 03 September 2008, http://www.un.int/russia/new/MainRoot/docs/off_news/030908/newen3.htm., cited in., Gülsah Güreş, *Op.cit*, p. 62.

In the light of these declarations, it was further argued that Russian support to Turkey's initiative was tactical and conditional.³⁶⁶ It was stated that it was tactical due to the fact that Russia never let another actor, littoral or non-littoral, to take a leading role in the region which Russia considered as its own shpere of influence and domination.³⁶⁷ Furthermore, it was conditional due to the fact that it exluded the US.³⁶⁸ As Alexander Krylov argued, “the parties situated further away, such as the US and the EU, have little incentive to consider their moves carefully. In fact, their moves often run contrary to the interests of Turkey, Iran and Russia”³⁶⁹.

To conclude all, it was expected that the August 2008 War would led to a rapproachment between Turkey and Russia. According to Vadim Timokhin- a security analyst in Russian Military Newspaper in *Krasnaya Vezda*:

A rapprochement between Moscow and Ankara gives a chance to turn the Transcaucasus into a zone of stability and cooperation while neutralizing the efforts of the ‘third parties aimed at maintaining geopolitical instability in the region.³⁷⁰

After the August 2008 War, high level visits between Turkey and Russia continued and it was on 12-15 February 2009 that President of Turkey Abdullah Gül visited Moscow. During this visit, Turkey and Russia signed a Joint Declaration between the Republic of Turkey and the Russian Federation on Progress towards a New Stage in Relations and Further Deepening of Friendship and Multidimensional Partnership.³⁷¹

³⁶⁶ Ruben Safrastyan, “On Turkey’s New Undertaking in South Caucasus”, Noravank Foundation, 29 September 2008, http://www.noravank.am/eng/articles/detail.php?ELEMENT_ID=3487&sphrase_id=1077., cited in., Gülsah Güreş, *Op.cit*, p. 62.

³⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁶⁸ Gülsah Güreş, *Op.cit*, p.62.

³⁶⁹ Alexander Krylov, “Caucasian Conflict Improves Russia-Turkey Relations,” *Today’s Zaman*, September 13, 2008., Igor Torbakov, *Op.cit*, p. 23.

³⁷⁰ Vadim Timokhin, “Ankara: smena vekh?” *Krasnaia zvezda*, August 28, 2008., cited in Igor Torbakov, *Op.cit*, p. 26.

³⁷¹ “Joint Declaration between the Republic of Turkey and the Russian Federation on Progress towards a New Stage in Relations and Further Deepening of Friendship and Multidimentional Partnership, Moscow, 13 February 2009”, Official website of Turkish Foreign Ministry,

In this Joint Declaration, both sides expressed their satisfaction from the existing level of cooperation and declared their desire to further improve the existing partnership especially in the security field.³⁷² Following that, a critical development occurred through an arms sale contract between Russia and Turkey's Defense Ministry at the value of 70 million dollar at the end of August.³⁷³ While the Turkish Defense officials argued that "Over the last eleven years, it is the first contract envisaging the delivery of Russian hardware to Turkey, which is a NATO member"³⁷⁴, on the other hand, drawing attention to the timing of the arms deal, it was argued that there was no clear military need for Turkey to get these anti tank guided missiles from Russia.³⁷⁵

On the following year, on May 2010, Russian President Medvedev paid an official visit to Turkey and again several agreements and protocols were signed between the sides and during this visit, Medvedev stated that a real strategic partnership existed between Turkey and Russia.³⁷⁶

Considering all, while it seems as if the 2008 August War and recent developments resulted with a rapprochement between Turkey and Russia which was even named as a strategic partnership, it was further argued that the war showed Turkey's

http://www.mfa.gov.tr/joint-declaration-between-the-republic-of-turkey-and-the-russian-federation-on-progress-towards-a-new-stage-in-relations-and-furtherdeepening-of-friendship-and-multidimentional-partnership_-moscow_-13-february-2009.en.mfa., cited in Gülşah Güreş, *Op.cit*, p. 68.

³⁷² *Ibid.*

³⁷³ *Interfax-AVN*, September 16, 2008., cited in Igor Torbakov, *Op.cit*, p. 28.

³⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁷⁵ "Russia, Turkey: A Reduction in Tensions," *Stratfor*, September 19, 2008., cited in Igor Torbakov, *Op.cit*, p.28.

³⁷⁶ "Türkiye-Rusya Federasyonu Siyasi İlişkileri", Official website of Turkish Foreign Ministry, <http://www.mfa.gov.tr/turkiye-rusya-federasyonu-siyasi-iliskileri.tr.mfa>; "Ayn Tarihi", Official Website of the Turkish Prime Ministry Directorate General of Press and Information, May 2010., cited in., Gülşah Güreş, *Op.cit*, p. 70.

vulnerability and weakness against Russia and its lack of leverage with Moscow.³⁷⁷

Igor Torbakov argued that:

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.³⁷⁸

Nevertheless, Russia's assertive policy in the region is evaluated as an important factor that may limit this existing cooperation between Turkey and Russia and in the long run, an increasing Russian assertiveness may conflict with Turkey's interests in the region.³⁷⁹ Considering also the point that, the strengthening of Turkey's influence in the region may threaten Russia's interests, how Turkey will be able to check Russia and its assertive policies becomes important.

4.1.3 Turkey's Economic Relations with Russia

During the Post-Cold War era, one of the most important argument concerning Turkey's economic relations with Russia, was that the nature and characteristics of economic relations played the role of catalyst for the improvement of overall relations.³⁸⁰ Furthermore, it was argued that the level in economic relations helped the traditional belief that there was a lack of trust in relations to disappear.³⁸¹ Whether this argument is true or the nature of economic relations have carried a conflictual characteristic require a further analysis of the evolution of economic relations.

³⁷⁷ Igor Torbakov, *Op.cit*, p.29.

³⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p.30.

³⁷⁹ Barcin Yinanc, "The Need to Check Russia," *Turkish Daily News*, August 12, 2008., cited in., Igor Torbakov, *Op.cit.*, p.31.

³⁸⁰ Anil Gürtuna; "Turkish- Russian Relations in the Post-Soviet Era", Unpublished M.A. Thesis, Ankara:METU, 2006, p. 98.

³⁸¹ *Ibid*, p. 76.

Turkey's economic relations with Russia may be analysed under two different categories including bilateral trade relations and energy which constitute the most important aspects of relations. Further, in this part, the unequal development of economic relations and strong dependency of Turkey to Russia will be emphasized.

a. Turkey's Bilateral Trade Relations with Russia

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, concerning Turkey's bilateral trade relations with Russia, it was argued that "the complementary character of Turkish and Russian economies played an important role to develop trade and economic relations in the second half of the 1980's and 1990's in various sectors."³⁸² The increasing trade between Turkey and Russia was explained in two different perspective. First, it was argued that for Russia, it was the need of a transition economy for capital and goods.³⁸³ For Turkey, on the other hand, it was the search of new markets and economic regions that initiated increase in trade relations between Turkey and Russia.³⁸⁴

³⁸² Kazgan, Gülsen; "A Survey of Turkish-Russian Economic Relations in the 1990s", *Insight Turkey*, 2002, Vol. 4, No. 2, p.101., cited in Anil Gürtuna; "Turkish- Russian Relations in the Post-Soviet Era", Unpublished M.S. Thesis, Ankara:METU, 2006,p. 77.

³⁸³ Sezer, Duygu Bazoğlu; "Turkish-Russian relations: The challenges of reconciling geopolitical competition with the economic partnership", *Turkish Studies*, 2000, Vol. 1, No.1, p.61.

³⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

Table 1. Turkish-Russian Trade Relations between 1992-1999³⁸⁵

	Export (Million Dollar)	Import (Million Dollar)	Trade Volume	Trade Balance
1992	441	1.040	1.481	-599
1993	504	1.496	2.000	-992
1994	820	1.044	1.864	-224
1995	1.238	2.082	3.320	- 844
1996	1.511	1.921	3.432	-410
1997	2.056	2.174	4.230	-118
1998	1.348	2.155	3.503	-807
1999	586	2.371	2.957	-1.785

Source: Ministry of Economy of Turkey

While evaluating the table above, it can be argued that Turkey's export to Russia showed a steadily increasing trend from 1992 till 1998. While in 1997, the export rate to Russia reached to 2.056 million dollar, due to the economic crisis in Russia in 1998, the export rate of Turkey decreased in 1998 to 1.348 million dollar. Furthermore, the decrease in Turkey's export continued further in 1999 and became 586 million dollar. Concerning Turkey's import from Russia, the situation was a bit more different. It can be seen that import rates showed slow decreases in 1994, 1996 and 1998. Thus, the import rates do not seem to be effected from the economic crisis much compared to export rates. Nevertheless, concerning the trade balance, it seems that the trade balance was always on behalf of Russia and it was in 1999 that the trade deficit reached a peak.

³⁸⁵ Ministry of Economy, Foreign Trade by countries,
<http://www.ekonomi.gov.tr/index.cfm?sayfa=7155BE01-D8D3-8566-45208351967592CF>

Table 2. Turkish-Russian Trade rates between 2000-2012

	Export (Million Dolar)	Import (Million Dolar)	Trade Volume	Trade Balance
2000	628	3.864	4.492	-3.236
2001	922	3.435	4.357	-2.513
2002	1.172	3.891	5.063	-2.719
2003	1.366	5.425	6.791	-4.059
2004	1.858	9.027	10.885	-7.069
2005	2.377	12.906	15.283	-10.529
2006	3.238	17.806	21.044	-14.568
2007	4.727	23.508	28.235	-18.781
2008	6.483	31.364	37.847	-24.881
2009	3.202	19.450	22.652	-16.248
2010	4.628	21.601	26.229	-16.973
2011	5.993	23.953	29.946	-17.960
2012 (January- April)	2.059	8.078	10.137	-6019

Source: Ministry of Economy of Turkey³⁸⁶

While evaluating the table above, it can be well seen that Turkey's export rate to Russia reached to the peak in 2008 with the amount of 6.483 million dollar. It was also in 2008 that the import from Russia reached to the peak with 31.364 million

³⁸⁶ Ministry of Economy, Foreign Trade by countries,
<http://www.ekonomi.gov.tr/index.cfm?sayfa=7155BE01-D8D3-8566-45208351967592CF>

dolar. While the trade deficit is always on behalf of Russia, it reached to 24.881 million dolar in 2008 as the highest rate. While in 2009 both Turkey's export to and import from Russia decreased by a considerable level, in following years, it started to increase again.

While the unbalanced export and import rates and trade deficit on behalf of Russia was obviously the result of the overall energy dependency of Turkey to Russia, one of the most important sector in bilateral trade relations between 1991-96 was also the unofficial trade called shuttle trade with the annual volume of 6-10 billion dolar.³⁸⁷ However, in following years, the volume of shuttle trade decreased and no more constituted a considerable effect to the bilateral trade relations compared with previous periods.³⁸⁸

Considering the overall trade relations, it is seen that the distribution of revenues between Turkey and Russia has never been balanced. More specifically, Russia's export to Turkey has always been about 4 times more than Turkey's export to Russia. This situation may be best examined with the difference in the export and import materials. While Turkey's export materials mainly consist of manufactured goods, textile products and vegetables and fruits, Russia's export to Turkey mainly consist of energy resources and raw materials which have low elasticity.³⁸⁹ All statistics show that Turkey has been definitely in a disadvantaged position in trade relations with Russia and this situation without any doubt had reflections and implications on the diplomatic and security aspects of relations with Russia.

³⁸⁷ Duygu Bazoğlu Sezer, "Turkish-Russian Relations: Challenges of Reconciling Geopolitical Competition with Economic Partnership", *Turkish Studies*, Vol.1, No.1, Spring 2000, p.73.

³⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

³⁸⁹ Anıl Gürtuna, "Turkish-Russian Relations in the Post-Soviet Era: From Conflict to Cooperation", Unpublished M.S Thesis, Middle East Technical University, p.79.

b.Energy

Energy, to say more specifically, Turkey's dependence to Russia in energy, has constituted the most important aspect of not only Turkey's economic relations with Russia but of the general structure of Turkey's relations with Russia. In 1984 with the Natural Gas Agreement, the beginning of the energy transaction between Turkey and Russia which has had implications in politics and security began. As it was argued, "the agreement on the sale of natural gas by the USSR from 1985 and by the Russian Federation from 1992 onward had served as the major basis on which economic relations expanded."³⁹⁰

With the beginning of the energy relations between Turkey and Russia, energy started to constitute the biggest share in trade volume. On 15 December 1997, Russia and Turkey signed the agreement for the construction of the Blue Stream Pipeline Project.³⁹¹ According to the agreement signed for a period of 25 years, by a pipeline passing through the Black Sea and starting in Russia, annually 16 billion m³ natural gas would be transferred to Turkey.³⁹² Furthermore, during 25 years, a total amount of 365 billion m³ natural gas was planned to be transferred from Russia.³⁹³ The Project officially started to operate on 30 December 2002.³⁹⁴

The Blue Stream Pipeline Project caused many reaction in Turkish public opinion concerning the argument that it would increase Turkey's dependence to Russia and

³⁹⁰ Kazgan, Gülsen, "The Political Economy of Relations between Turkey and Russia" in *The Political Economy of Turkey in the Post-Soviet Era: Going West and Looking East?* (ed. by Rittenberg, Libby), Connecticut: Praeger, 1998, p.146., cited in., Müberra Pirinçci, *Op.cit.*, p. 47.

³⁹¹ Sinan Oğan, " Bir Enerji Stratejisi ve Stratejisizlik Örneği", *Stradigma*, Vol.7, August 2003, http://www.stradigma.com/turkce/agustos2003/makale_04.html

³⁹² *Ibid.*

³⁹³ *Ibid.*

³⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

this would have negative consequences for energy supply security. Necdet Pamir argued that, the Blue Stream project had a high investment cost, was unable to provide diversity in energy resources and on the contrary would increase the existing dependency of Turkey to Russia on natural gas supply.³⁹⁵ Whereas, there were also views arguing that the project should be evaluated according to the conditions of that time.³⁹⁶ Further, by a Turkish official, it was argued that considering the uncertainty in the transportation of the Turkmen gas and the status of Caspian, in the light of the increasing natural gas demand, the project came out as a necessity.³⁹⁷ In the light of these arguments, it becomes important to analyse the share of Russian natural gas in Turkey's natural gas demand market, Turkey's natural gas demand and consumption by years.

³⁹⁵ Personal Interview done with Necdet Pamir by Esra Kızılbuğa- Instructor at Bilkent University (World Energy Politics); Chairman of Energy Commission, Republican People's Party (CHP); Chairman of Committee on Energy Policies, Chamber of Petroleum Engineers; Chief Editor in enerjienergy.com; Chairman of Organising Committee on Energy, Eurasian Economic Summit, 7 May 2013.

³⁹⁶ Personal Interview done with a Turkish official by Esra Kızılbuğa on 7 May 2013 in Ankara. (Name of the official and institution are not written due to the preference of the official)

³⁹⁷ Personal Interview done with a Turkish official by Esra Kızılbuğa on 7 May 2013 in Ankara. (Name of the official and institution are not written due to the preference of the official)

Table 3. Natural Gas Agreements of Turkey

Current Agreements	Ammount Billion m ³ /year	Date of Agreement	Duration	Position
Russian Fed.(West)	6	14 February 1986	25	Operating
Algeria (LNG)	4	14 April 1988	20	Operating
Nijeria (LNG)	1.2	9 November 1995	22	Operating
Iran	10	8 August 1996	25	Operating
Russian Fed.(Black Sea)	16	15December 1997	25	Operating
Russian Fed. (West)	8	18 February 1998	23	Operating
Turkmenistan	16	21 May 1999	30	-----
Azrbaijan	6.6	12 March 2001	15	Operating

Source. BOTAS (Petroleum Pipeline Corporation)³⁹⁸

Concerning the data above, it can be well argued that considering all operating natural agreements, the total ammount of natural gas that will be provided from Russian Federation is 30 billion m³. Regarding the ammount of natural gas that will be provided from other countries, the ammount of natural gas from Russia constitute more than half of the total ammount.

³⁹⁸ "Natural Gas Import Agreements",
<http://www.botas.gov.tr/index.asp>

Table 4. Share of Russian natural gas in Turkish market by years

Milyar M ³	2003	2005	2010	2015	2020
Rusya (Toplam)	16	20	30	24	24
Digerleri	10.2	14.2	21.8	17.8	17.8
Toplam	26.2	34.2	51.8	41.8	41.8
Rusya'nın Payı (%)	61	58.5	57	57	57

Source. Prepared in accordance of BOTAS data.³⁹⁹

As it may be seen from the table above, while in 2003, the share of Russian natural gas in Turkish market was % 61, in 2005 it was %58.5, in 2010 it was %57 and in 2015 and 2020, it was expected to be %57. Though, compared with 2003, there is small decrease, %57 is still a strategic amount that needs to be taken seriously. This situation definitely creates a dependence to Russia in natural gas. Considering the fact that Turkey's energy need increases by years, this dependency to Russia becomes more important and strategic by years

³⁹⁹ Sinan Oğan, *Op.cit*,
http://www.stradigma.com/turkce/agustos2003/makale_04.html

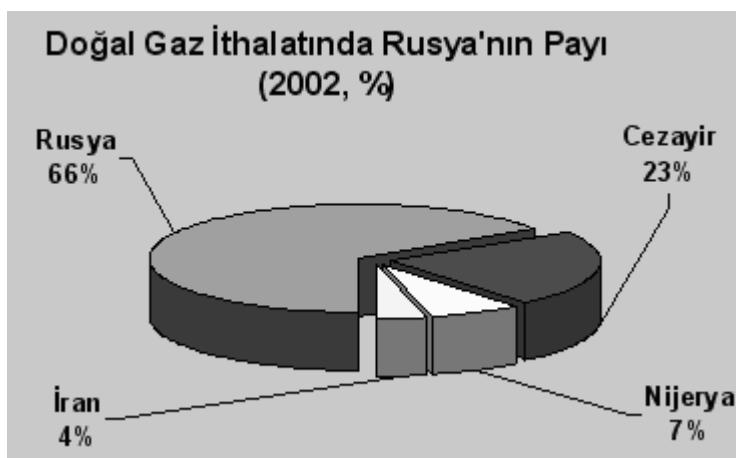


Figure 1. The Share of Russian natural gas in natural gas import by 2002⁴⁰⁰

Beyond Turkey's dependency to Russia, considering the fact that a great percentage of Russia's economy depend on its energy export including oil and natural gas, it is by some analysts argued that there is a mutual interdependency between Turkey and Russia.⁴⁰¹ Nevertheless, even if it is the case, the nature and characteristics of the relations between Turkey and Russia should not prevent Turkey to ensure its own energy security which is a strategic matter.

Regarding the fact that Turkey's energy dependency to Russia in 2011 on natural gas is %58⁴⁰² and in 2012 on oil is %11 (among the top 4 countries)⁴⁰³, recent developments in Turkey's energy relations with Russia should be evaluated properly. Further , Turkey's intention to give the construction of a rafinery in Ceyhan to a

⁴⁰⁰ Sinan Oğan, *Op.cit*,
http://www.stradigma.com/turkce/agustos2003/makale_04.html

⁴⁰¹ Dimitri Trenin, “ Really Burrying the Hatchet: Russia and Turkey Find Themselves on the Same Side”, *Insight Turkey*, April-June 2002, Vol.4, No.2, p.13, cited in Anıl Gürtuna, *Op.cit*, p.6.

⁴⁰² “Dünya'da ve Türkiye'de Enerji Görünümü”, *Enerji ve Tabii Kaynaklar Bakanlığı*, p.29.
http://www.enerji.gov.tr/yayinlar_raporlar/Dunyada_ve_Turkiyede_Enerji_Gorunumu.pdf

⁴⁰³T.R Energy Market Regulatory Authority, Petroleum Market Department, Ankara, 2013.,
http://www.emra.org.tr/documents/petroleum/publishments/Ppd_EMRA_SectoReport_2012_sgJPfn2bF6Qg.pdf

Russian company would serve to increase Turkey's dependency to Russia more.⁴⁰⁴ Furthermore, the claim that a Turkish company which has the license of natural gas distribution to 23 cities would merge with Gazprom, caused criticisms to emerge that as well as a dependency to Russia on supply, a dependency on the distribution of natural gas would also happen.⁴⁰⁵ Adding to all, the intention of Turkey to give Russia the right for the construction of a nuclear power station caused reactions regarding the possible outcome that our dependency to Russia would increase more.⁴⁰⁶

Another recent development in Turkey-Russia energy relations is the agreement reached on the South Stream project by which permission has been given to Russia for the construction and operation activities in the Black Sea exclusive economic zone.⁴⁰⁷ The South Stream project aims to transport annually 61 billion m³ Russian natural gas to Europe and about 900 km of the line is planned to be passed under the Black Sea.⁴⁰⁸ Regarding its capacity, with the South Stream project, Russia well aims to reinforce its position as the sole Russian gas exporter to Europe.⁴⁰⁹ Considering Turkey's previous status and position in the NABUCCO project, developments concerning the South Stream Project with Russia caused criticisms to emerge that the South Stream Project would clearly diminish the possibility of NABUCCO and other

⁴⁰⁴ Necdet Pamir, "Ruslar ile Anlaşma: Dostlar 'Alış VERİŞ'te Görsün", 24 May 2010, http://www.enerjienergy.com/artikel.php?artikel_id=124

⁴⁰⁵ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰⁷ Necdet Pamir, "Enerjide Rusya'ya Bağımlılık Artıyor", 02.01.2012, <http://www.euractiv.com.tr/yazici-sayfasi/interview/pamir-enerjide-rusyaya-bagimlilik-artiyor-023318>

⁴⁰⁸ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰⁹ *Ibid.*

such projects that aim to bypass Russia.⁴¹⁰ Thus, this situation was evaluated by Necdet Pamir as a big strategic mistake.⁴¹¹

Unless Turkey's energy policy is based on the diversification of energy supply resources that would slow down the dependency to Russia especially in natural gas, Turkey's natural gas policy will be more under the control of Russia. This situation as well as causing the economic disadvantage for Turkey to continue and increase, by increasing the deficit in the trade balance on behalf of Russia, it will also carry a strategic importance by deeply effecting the general characteristics of Turkey's relations with Russia. This dependency to Russia was explained by Necdet Pamir with a dangerous excessive dependency in return for gaining big money by some private companies.⁴¹²

4.2 Turkey's Relations with US

Turkey's relations with the US will be examined including diplomatic, security and economic aspect of relations. As well as areas of cooperation, events and issues where there are conflicts of interest will be outlined. By this way, reflections on Turkey's relations with Georgia are aimed to be understood more adequately.

4.2.1 Turkey's Diplomatic Relations with the US

During the Cold War, while Turkey served as a barrier against the expansion of the Soviet power, following the end of the Cold War, there emerged an anxiety on Turkey's side that its strategic importance for the US could decrease. This anxiety

⁴¹⁰ *Ibid.*

⁴¹¹ Personal Interview done with Necdet Pamir by Esra Kizilbuga- Instructor at Bilkent University (World Energy Politics); Chairman of Energy Commission, Republican People's Party (CHP); Chairman of Committee on Energy Policies, Chamber of Petroleum Engineers; Chief Editor in enerjienergy.com; Chairman of Organising Committee on Energy, Eurasian Economic Summit, 7 May 2013.

⁴¹² *Ibid.*

proved to be irrelevant considering the post-Soviet era, nevertheless, Turkey's relations with the US got a different characteristics considering the new emerging regions as new foreing policy areas.

Turkey was in the middle of three instable regions where the US had also interests-the Caucasus, the Balkans and the Middle East. During the 1990's, according to the US, Turkey could be a key country in US policy towards Iraq, a model country for the Central Asia states, a bridge between the West and the region, a balancing country against Russia and Iran in the region, a gate in the transport of the energy resources to the Western markets and provider and protector of peace in the Balkans.⁴¹³ Considering the changing international conjuncture, Caucasus emerged also as a new foreign policy area. Kamer Kasım in his book "Caucasus After the end of the Cold War" indicated that since Turkey became important with its role in regional problems, relations of the US with Turkey has been shaped within the framework of regional problems.⁴¹⁴

Till mid 1990's, the US policy towards the South Caucasus was based on a Russia first policy which was mainly based on respecting Russia's concerns in South Caucasus.⁴¹⁵ It was further argued that:

For the first four years of the Clinton Administration, Russia was the center of US policy in the Newly Independent States and American policymakers attached importance on the democratisation and economic development of Russia, because the US officials thought that the transformation of Russia to a democratic state would be in favor of the United States and the Caucasian states.⁴¹⁶

⁴¹³ Alan Makovsky, "US Policy toward Turkey: Progress and Problems", içinde Morton Abramowitz (ed.), *Turkey's Transformation and American Policy*, (New York: The Century Foundation Press, 2000), ss. 221-222., cited in Ayşe Ömür Atmaca, "Yeni Dünyada Eski Oyun: Eleştirel Perspektiften Türkiye-Amerikan İlişkileri", *Ortadoğu Etütleri*, Temmuz 2011, Vol.3, No.1., p. 171.

⁴¹⁴ Kamer Kasım, *Soguk Savaş Sonrası Kafkasya*, USAK Yayınları, Ankara, 2011,p.203.

⁴¹⁵ Fiona Hill, "A Not-So-Grand Strategy: United States Policy in the Caucasus and Central Asia since 1991," *Politique étrangère*, February 2001, <http://www.brook.edu/dybdocroot/views/articles/fhill/2001politique.htm>, cited in Halil Sıdık Ayhan, "Dynamics of the Alliance Between Turkey and USA: The South Caucasus Case", Unpublished M.S Thesis, Bilkent University, July 2003, Ankara, p.97.

⁴¹⁶ Halil Sıdık Ayhan, *Op.cit*, p.97.

The US conducted a policy of supporting Turkey as a model for the newly independent states but, till 1995, the US refrained from provoking Russia.⁴¹⁷ One of the biggest motivation of the US in supporting the Turkish model for the newly independent South Caucasus states was to prevent the influence of political Islam by Iran in the region.⁴¹⁸ The so called democratic and secular characteristics of Turkey's political structure and its market economy were expected to be a model for these states. Considering the expected role from Turkey, it was well argued that this role of Turkey would not take place automatically but instead there was need for an active policy.⁴¹⁹ According to security document which was completed in 1995- "Engagement and Extension: National Security Strategy"⁴²⁰, the US policy included the principles of promotion of human rights, free trade, market economy and democracy in Eurasia region and expected that this would increase stability and help to the establishment of peace in these regions. Considering the US policy towards Turkey, on the other hand, during the 1990's, the US paid importance to the promotion of democracy and human rights in Turkey due to the "model" role Turkey was expected to play for the newly independent states in Central Asia and South Caucasus.⁴²¹

Within this general framework, relations which was named as enhanced partnership in 1992, was started to be taken up in 1997 during then Prime Minister Mesut Yilmaz's visit to the US in the light of five agenda items which were regional cooperation, economy and trade, energy, Cyprus, defense and security

⁴¹⁷ Stephen Blank, "American Grand Strategy and the Transcaspian Region", *World Affairs*, 163:2, (Fall2000) p.68., cited in., Halil Sıdık Ayhan, *Op.cit*, p. 98.

⁴¹⁸ Leila Aliyeva "The Foreign Policy of Azerbaijan," Central Asian and Caucasian Prospects, Briefing Paper no.9, October 1996, <http://www.riia.org/Research/rep/bp9.html>, cited in., Halil Sıdık Ayhan, *Op.cit*, p. 97.

⁴¹⁹ İlhan Uzgel, " ABD ve NATO'yla İlişkiler", Baskın Oran, (Ed.), *Türk Dış Politikası Kurtuluş Savaşından Bugüne Olgular, Belgeler, Yorumlar*, Cilt II: 1980-2001, p.251.

⁴²⁰ İlhan Uzgel, " ABD ve NATO'yla İlişkiler", Baskın Oran, (Ed.), *Türk Dış Politikası Kurtuluş Savaşından Bugüne Olgular, Belgeler, Yorumlar*, Cilt II: 1980-2001,p. 247.

⁴²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 252.

cooperation.⁴²² Furthermore, in 1999, during Ecevit's visit to the US by Clinton's invitation, relations between the US and Turkey were named as strategic partnership.⁴²³ Considering the strategic level of relations between the US and Turkey, it was argued that this strategic partnership between two countries continued and deepened independent from the changing governments.⁴²⁴ It was further indicated that Turkey was a country the US was cooperating in sensitive regions and the US was a superpower, Turkey was getting its support in these regions.⁴²⁵

One of the regions where interests of both the US and Turkey converged was the South Caucasus. During the 1990's, to keep these newly independent countries out of Russia and Iran's influence politically was one of the common motivation of both Turkey and the US. For this sake, except Tajikistan, regional countries were included to the Partnership for Peace Program under the framework of NATO in 1994.⁴²⁶ Furthermore, in order to prevent the spread of radical Islam by Iran, the promotion of the secularism by Turkey in the region was supported by the US. Economically, in order to keep these countries out of Russian control, promotion of market economy was supported by the US.

As well as Turkey's critical role for the US policy towards the newly independent states, the pipeline factor also contributed in a great extent to the deepening of the Turkey's relations with the US. Kamer Kasim in his book "Caucasus After the End of the Cold War", argued that Turkey was betrayed as the most important country in the East-West energy corridor.⁴²⁷ Since the mid-1990's, the US support for energy projects in the East-West energy corridor became more apparent. The Baku-Ceyhan

⁴²² *Ibid.*, p.253.

⁴²³ *Ibid.*, p.253.

⁴²⁴ *Ibid.* p. 253.

⁴²⁵ *Ibid.*, p.253.

⁴²⁶ *Ibid.*, p.280.

⁴²⁷ Kamer Kasim, *Op.cit*, p. 203.

pipeline project was the most concrete energy cooperation project between Turkey and the US. In the Baku- Tibilisi- Ceyhan pipeline project strategical and political priorities were more determining than economic priorities.⁴²⁸ The project became important in order to ensure the newly independent states to stand on their own feet and so was an important step for the economic and political independence of Georgia.⁴²⁹ To break up the Russian hegemony and dependency of the newly independent states to Russia in energy and to ensure the secure and durable transfer of Caspian energy to the Western markets constituted main principles of the US energy policy in the region. Nevertheless, it is not the case that with this project alone, the Russian monopoly would be broken up.⁴³⁰ In 1999, in the OSCE Summit in Istanbul, under the supervision of then President of the US Clinton, agreement for the construction of the Baku-Tibilisi-Ceyhan pipeline was signed.⁴³¹ Furthermore, it should not be a coincidence that it was in 1999 that relations between Turkey and the US were named as strategic partnership.

More specifically, concerning Turkey's relations with Georgia, one of the strong arguments is that Turkey's policy towards Georgia has been in line with the US and the European countries. Mitat Çelikpala in his article "Turkey and the Caucasus: From a Reactive Foreign Policy to Proactive Rythmic Diplomacy", indicates that one of the important sides of Turkey's Eurasian Policy including the Caucasus region was that the policy was implemented in harmony and cooperation with Western countries and institutions but specifically with the US.⁴³² Furthermore, Mitat

⁴²⁸ Personal Interview done with Necdet Pamir by Esra Kizilbuga- Instructor at Bilkent University (World Energy Politics); Chairman of Energy Commission, Republican People's Party (CHP); Chairman of Committee on Energy Policies, Chamber of Petroleum Engineers; Chief Editor in enerjienergy.com; Chairman of Organising Committee on Energy, Eurasian Economic Summit, 7 May 2013.

⁴²⁹ *Ibid.*

⁴³⁰ *Ibid.*

⁴³¹ Ilhan Uzgel, *Op.cit*, p. 281.

⁴³² Sabri Sayari, "Turkey and The United States: Changing Dynamics of and Enduring Alliance, Ismael and Aydin, *Turkey's Foreign Policy in the 21 th century*, p.27-38; Oktay Tanrisever, "Turkey and Russia in Eurasia", L.G Martin and Dimitris Keridis (Ed.), *The Future of Turkish Foreign Policy*,

Celikpala argues that as a natural outcome of the collapse of the Soviet Union, Turkish foreign policy decision makers did not see any difference between the regional interests of Turkey and the Western world including security.⁴³³

Till the mid 1990's, the US policy towards Georgia was a mainly Moscow based policy. Concerning the ethnic and territorial conflicts in Georgia, though Georgia looked to the West especially to the US in order to get over the dominance of Russia, the US support was only limited to humanitarian assistance.⁴³⁴ Then President of the US Bill Clinton announced that the US would provide Georgia 70 million Dollar humanitarian aid.⁴³⁵ Concerning the US humanitarian assistance, then President of Georgia Shevardnadze stated that the US humanitarian aid made a critical difference in averting famine in Georgia in early 1990s and helped Georgia maintain its stability and independence.⁴³⁶ Furthermore, the US supported the territorial integrity of Georgia. Beyond humanitarian assistance, bilateral assistance programs and allocating fund to international nongovernmental organisations were important tools

Massachusetts, The MIT Press,2004, pp. 129-130, cited in Mitat Celikpala, "Turkiye ve Kafkasya: Reaksiyoner Dış Politikadan Proaktif Ritmik Diplomasiye Geçiş", *Uluslararası ilişkiler*, Vol.7, No. 25, 2010, p. 95.

⁴³³ For further information concerning 1990's see., Ali L. Karaosmanoğlu, "The Evaluation of the National Security Culture and Military in Turkey", *Journal of International Affairs*, Vol.54, No.1, 2000, pp.199-216; Mustafa Aydin, "Securitization of History and Geography: Understansing of Security in Turkey", *Southeast European and Black Sea Studies*, Vol.3, No.2, 2003, pp. 163-184; Ziya Öniş, "Turkey in the Post-Cold Era: In Search of Identity", *Middle East Journal*, Vol. 49, No.1, 1995, pp. 48-68; F.S. Laranbee ve I.O Lesser, *Turkish Foreign Policy in the Age of Uncertainty*, Arlington, RAND, 2003., cited in Celikpala, *Op.cit*, p. 96.

⁴³⁴ Halil Sıddık Ayhan, " Dynamics of Alliance Between Turkey and the US: The Case of South Caucasus", Unpublished M.S Thesis, Bilkent University, Ankara, July, 2003, p.132.

⁴³⁵ Liz Fuller, RFE/RL, No. 46, "Transcaucasia and Central Asia: Shevardnadze in Washington," 8 March, 1994,
<http://www.friendspartners.org/friends/news/omri/1994/03/940308.html>(opt.mozilla,umix,english,,new)

⁴³⁶ Jim Nichol and Julie Kim, "Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia: Political Developments and Implications for U.S. Interests.", *CRS Issue Brief for Congress*, 3 December 2001,
www.fas.org/man/crs/IB95024.pdf, cited in Halil Sıddık Ayhan, *Op.cit*, p.134.

of the US policy in Georgia.⁴³⁷ The US also supported activities of organisations such OSCE and become a member of Friends of Georgia for the promotion of a settlement in the Abkhaz-Georgian conflict.⁴³⁸ During the mid 1990's, the US policy through multilateral institutions just served for the partial internationalization of the Abkhaz-Georgian conflict but the US whether unilaterally or under NATO framework, refrained from any military engagement in Georgia. When Shevardnadze called for an international peace enforcement operation based on a Bosnian model which meant using forces from outside countries as a way to restore Georgia's control over Abkhazia, the US acted reluctantly and did not want provoke Russia.⁴³⁹ During his visit to the US in July 1997, Shevardnadze asked the US policy makers for any possible NATO intervention, nevertheless, the US policy makers reacted coldly and indicated that any NATO force would jeopardize Russian support for international efforts to resolve the conflict.⁴⁴⁰ Thus, while Shevardnadze looked for ways to internationalize the conflict and get the US and Western support, the US officials urged Shevardnadze to remain patient and insisted that he pin his hopes on a UN sponsored effort to resolve the conflict through the Friends of Georgia at the United Nations.⁴⁴¹

⁴³⁷ Halil Siddik Ayhan, *Op.cit*, p. 132.

⁴³⁸ Robert M. Cutler, "Georgia/Abkhazia", Foreign Policy Focus, p.3.,
http://carleton-ca.academia.edu/RobertMCutler/Papers/219049/Georgia_Abhazia

⁴³⁹ See *Jamestown Monitor*, January 5, 1998, cited in Glen E. Howard, "NATO and the Caucasus: the Caspian Axis," in (ed) Stephen J. Blank, *NATO After Enlargement: New Challenges, New Missions, New Forces*, September, 1998,p. 203.,
<http://www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/pdffiles/pub140.pdf>

⁴⁴⁰ Glen E. Howard, "NATO and the Caucasus: The Caspian Axis", in (ed) Stephen J. Blank, *NATO After Enlargement: New Challenges, New Missions, New Forces*, September, 1998,p. 202
<http://www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/pdffiles/pub140.pdf>

⁴⁴¹ The U.N. option for resolving the conflict is to hold an international conference to settle the Abkhazia conflict that would include the participation of the OSCE, Russia, and the Friends of Georgia group of countries at the United Nations. This group includes the United States, Germany, Russia, the United Kingdom, and France. Interestingly enough, Shevardnadze has explored the option of diluting Russian diplomatic leverage in the Friends of Georgia Group. By asking that Ukraine be added to the list of members. See *Jamestown Monitor*, July 22, 1997., cited in Glen E. Howard, *Op.cit*, p.202

Till the mid 1990's, the US did not rely on military power due to its Moscow centered policy in the South Caucasus but since 1997, the US started to make military aid to Georgia. Since the mid 1990's till 2001, the US started to give priority to more cooperation with regional countries and improvement in relations.⁴⁴² The US officials were aware that Georgia was vital for the US interests since Georgia was the principal outlet for bringing Caspian oil and gas to international markets.⁴⁴³ Furthermore, concerning the intensification of relations, Georgia's role for the counter-proliferation attempts of the US in the South Caucasus became important. In early 1998, the US and Georgia signed an agreement to provide more than 1.3 million Dolar in material and equipment to combat proliferation.⁴⁴⁴ Within the framework of this agreement, the US provided Georgia equipment and training for export controls in order to prevent the movement of weapons of mass destruction and provide the safe storage of weapon materials, equip border forces and train Georgian personnel in counter-proliferation efforts.⁴⁴⁵

One of the major turning point in the US- Georgian cooperation was 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks to the US and the increasing strategic importance of Georgia in the US struggle against terrorism. Within the framework of struggle against terrorism, 21 months Training and Supplies Program which aimed the training of 2000 Georgian soldier was started.⁴⁴⁶ Thus, after 2001, the US started to become

⁴⁴² Elnur Hasan Mikail, "ABD'nin Kafkasya Politikası", 5 September 2010.,
<http://politikadergisi.com/konuk-yazar/abdnin-kafkasya-politikasi>

⁴⁴³ James A. Baker, "America's Vital Interest in the 'New Silk Road'," *New York Times*, July 21, 1997., cited in Halil Sıdık Ayhan, *Op.cit*, p.135.

⁴⁴⁴ Glen E. Howard, " NATO and the Caucasus: The Caspian Axis", in (ed) Stephen J. Blank, *NATO After Enlargement: New Challenges, New Missions, New Forces*, September, 1998,p. 165.,
<http://www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/pdffiles/pub140.pdf>

⁴⁴⁵ .Accord Signed with U.S. on Training Border Guards., *New Europe*, February 22-28, 1998, p. 36., cited in Glen E. Howard, *Op.cit*, p.165.

⁴⁴⁶ Kamil Ağacan, "ABD'nin Kafkasya Politikası", *Değişen Dünya Düzeninde Kafkasya*,(Ed. Okan Yeşilot), Kitabevi Yayınları, İstanbul, 2005, p. 33.,cited in Elnur Hasan Mikail, "ABD'nin Kafkasya Politikası", 5 September 2010.,
<http://politikadergisi.com/konuk-yazar/abdnin-kafkasya-politikasi>

more influential and active in its South Caucasus and Georgia policy. While Georgia gave unequivocal support to the US and offered unlimited access to its air space after the September 11 attacks, the US for the first time in history decided to deploy its troops in the Caucasus region.⁴⁴⁷ Considering the US anti-terrorism campaign, 64 million Dollar on training and 100 million Dollar as development aid was given to Georgia.⁴⁴⁸ Furthermore, the US equipped 1200 Georgian forces and deployed 180 troops in order to train Georgians for anti-terrorism purposes.⁴⁴⁹ Considering all, it is argued that the US made clear to Russia that no excuse that endangered Georgia's stability and territorial integrity would be acceptable.⁴⁵⁰

Considering the US and Turkey's policy towards Georgia till 2001, convergence in the interests of both Turkey and the US is perceived. While during this period, Turkey's policy was in line with the US policy in Georgia, for both countries, the security and stability of Georgia, territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence were important foreign policy objectives. Considering 11 September 2001, Mitat Çelikpala argues that developments after 11 September which is named as the new global turning point, turned Georgia centered Caucasus as the new practice arena of the global rivalry.⁴⁵¹

⁴⁴⁷ Halil Sıdık Ayhan, *Op.cit*, p. 136.

⁴⁴⁸ Georgia also received "...\$5.35 million in FMF funds in 1998, and \$7.9 million in 1999." See Robin Bhatty and Rachel Bronson, "NATO's Mixed Signals in the Caucasus and Central Asia," *Survival*, vol.42, no.3, (Autumn 2000), pp.133-34,, cited in Halil Sıdık Ayhan, *Op.cit*, p. 136.

⁴⁴⁹ Halil Sıdık Ayhan, *Op.cit*, p. 135

⁴⁵⁰ Zeyno Baran "United States Will Help Georgia Fight Terrorism and Strengthen Internally," at www.csis.org/ruseura/georgia/gaupdate_0203.htm , Ilgar Aliyev, *The US Strategic Engagement in the South Caucasus 1991-2002*, (Ankara: Bilkent University, (Master's Thesis, 2002), p.113, Vicken Cheterian , "Central Asia: America's rear base," at <http://mondediplo.com/2003/02/05oil>., cited in Halil Sıdık Ayhan, *Op.cit*, pp.135-136.

⁴⁵¹ Mitat Celikpala, "Turkiye ve Kafkasya: Reaksiyoner Dış Politikadan Proaktif Ritmik Diplomasiye Geçiş", *Op.cit*, p. 103.

While defining this new global rivalry, Mitat Celikpala indicated that:

During the global rivalry which reached peak levels with the August 2008 War, it is seen that firstly the US and the Western partners tried to be influential in the political and economic structure of the region through coloured revolutions, appointed special representatives to Caucasus within the perspective of membership to NATO and the EU and shaped new policies towards the region.⁴⁵²

Considering the South Caucasus region, a litmus test in Turkey's relations with the US was the 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks. Kamer Kasim indicated that:

After the 11 September 2001 terror attacks, since the US brought to the foreground the Caucasus and Central Asia with security dimension and settled in the region, the US-Turkey relations came to the agenda with the Caucasus and Central Asia dimension.⁴⁵³

After 11 September 2001, there were radical changes in the geopolitic expressions of the US. Different than the post-Soviet era, the US defined its enemy as international terrorism.⁴⁵⁴ The US policy which was shaped in accordance of this new geopolitic expression, sure had important reflections on the US policy in South Caucasus and Central Asia. The first implementation of US policy was seen in Afghanistan where with the support of NATO and the United Nations, "Permanent Freedom Operation" was started.⁴⁵⁵ As well as defining its enemy as international terrorism, President Bush defined Iraq, Iran and North Korea as rogue states and in order to prevent the US from any possible attack of these states, the US defined preventive war as a legitimate policy.⁴⁵⁶

Within this newly emerged conjonkture, the turning point in Turkey's relations with the US was the US declaration of war to Iraq on 20 March 2003. Turkey did not prefer to take place near the US in the war against Iraq. On March 1, 2003, the

⁴⁵² *Ibid.*

⁴⁵³ Kamer Kasim, *Op.cit.*, p.203.

⁴⁵⁴ Ayşe Ömür Atmaca, *Op.cit.*, p. 175.

⁴⁵⁵ Ayşe Ömür Atmaca, *Op.cit.*, p.175.

⁴⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 175.

Turkish Parliament voted the motion that would allow the US air forces to use Turkish air space and send Turkish military to Northern Iraq but the motion was rejected by the Parliament.⁴⁵⁷ While the rejection of the motion by Turkey was met by confusion by the US, this situation had important implications and reflections on Turkish foreign policy in South Caucasus and on Turkey's relations with the US in this region.

After 11 September 2001, based on its new foreign policy, the US started to increase its military presence in the South Caucasus and Central Asia. The Black Sea Security became one of the most critical issue in the US-Turkey relations. The US thought that there was a vacuum of security in the Black Sea and that the NATO Force-Operation Active Endeavour- which was operating in the Mediterranean should have expanded also the Black Sea.⁴⁵⁸ Though the US after one year of negotiation with Turkey, gave up this idea, this plan of the US was supported by Romania, Bulgaria, Ukraine and Georgia due to the fact that this plan would help to limit Russia's influence in the Black Sea.⁴⁵⁹ Turkey, on the other hand, did not support the US plan because this would mean the violation of the Montreux Agreement and also this would cause counteraction to initiatives leaded by Turkey.⁴⁶⁰

Kamer Kasim indicated Turkey's policy as:

Turkey wants to continue its status as an active regional power in the Black Sea. At that point, it is Turkey's policy that, Turkey's initiatives such as the BLACKSEAFOR and Operation Black Sea Harmony are sufficient and all Black Sea countries should cooperate under the framework of these mechanisms.⁴⁶¹

⁴⁵⁷ Ahmet Ceylan, Isa Uslu, "1 Mart Tezkeresi'nin Türk Dış Politikası'na Yansımaları", *, Uluslar arası Politika Akademisi*, 15 Haziran 2012,
<http://politikaakademisi.org/?p=1118>.

⁴⁵⁸ For More Information look at NATO website, <http://www.nato.int>., cited in Kamer Kasim, *Op.cit*, p. 204.

⁴⁵⁹ Kamer Kasim, "Turkish-American Relations at the Center of Regional Strategies", *Journal of Turkish Weekly*, www.turkishweekly.net, 26 April 2006., cited in Kamer Kasim, *Op.cit*, p. 204.

⁴⁶⁰ Kamer Kasim, *Soğuk Savaş Sonrası Kafkasya*, *Op.cit*, p. 204.

⁴⁶¹ Kamer Kasim, "Türkiye'nin Karadeniz Politikası: Temel Parametreler ve Stratejiler", *Orta Asya ve Kafkasya Araştırmaları*, Yıl.3, Sayı.5,2008, p.p172-180; Kamer Kasim, Türk Amerikan ilişkilerinde Temel Parametreler", *Global Strateji*, Yıl.2, Sayı.7, Sonbahar, 2006, pp.39-49, Kamer Kasim,

After 11 September 2001, the US also get military bases in South Caucasus in Georgia. Since Georgia permitted the US to use its air base in the military operation in Afghanistan, Georgia's military cooperation with the US continued with the US sending military personnel to Georgia for the training of Georgia's military personnel for the struggle against terrorism.⁴⁶² Furthermore, through the defense cooperation agreement between the US and Georgia, the US personnel also get some privileges in Georgia such as the right of entry without any visa requirement and exemption of Georgian jurisdiction.⁴⁶³

Considering the US' increasing influence and existence in the South Caucasus after 11 September, this rapprochement between the US and Georgia was perceived as a threat by the Russian Federation and it was stated that this rapprochement between the US and Georgia would give harm to Russian-Georgian relations.⁴⁶⁴

Considering the US' and Turkey's interests in the Black Sea, though it seems as if interests of both countries converge in the region, there seemed some differences in their approaches and policies in the region. In order to summarize the US interests in the Black Sea, the first interest was that the NATO enlargement should also spread to the Eastern parts of the region.⁴⁶⁵ Second, it is argued that the US perceived the region as a strategic asset for the control of the "Wider Black Sea" region.⁴⁶⁶ This strategic interest of the US required the US to increase its political and military presence in the region.⁴⁶⁷ Third, to ensure the energy security constituted one of the US' strategic interest in the region in order to decrease the dependency to Russia in

"ABD'nin Karadeniz Politikası", *Global Strateji*, Yıl.3, Sayı.12, Kış, 2008, pp.108-119., cited Kamer Kasım, *Soğuk Savaş Sonrası Kafkasya*, *Op.cit*, p.119.

⁴⁶² Kamer Kasım, *Soğuk Savaş Sonrası Kafkasya*, *Op.cit*, p. 188.

⁴⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 188.

⁴⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p.188.

⁴⁶⁵ Özgür Özdamar, "Security and Military Balance in the Black Sea region", *Southeast European and Black Sea Studies*, Vol.10, No.3, September 2010, p.344.

⁴⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 344.

⁴⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p.344.

energy.⁴⁶⁸ For this sake, the Black Sea region emerged as an important transit route carrying great strategic importance for the US.

In the light of these US interests in the region, Turkey's concern towards the region was explained as:

Since the end of the Cold War, Turkey has championed regional cooperation schemes, both on economic and security matters. However with the changing security environment after 9/11, Turkey's uneasy relations with the US regarding Iraq and growing tensions between Russia and the EU-NATO couple led Turkey to follow a policy of caution on matters concerning the Black Sea. In order to prevent the existing regional initiatives from being harmed by the new rivalry between the West and Russia, Turkey has chosen to defend the status quo in the region.⁴⁶⁹

Considering all, provision of maritime security and preserving the balance of power in the region were the main concerns of Turkey in the region.⁴⁷⁰ Maritime security for Turkey meant dependency to the principles of the 1936 Montreux Convention through which the sovereignty of Turkey over the two straits is defined; the free passage of commercial ships are regulated and the stay of military ships of non-littoral ships are limited.⁴⁷¹ Thus, any outside power existence such as a large US Navy presence in the Black Sea that may threaten the maritime stability and security of the Black Sea was opposed by Turkey. Furthermore, any change in the balance of power in the region that would cause Russia to feel more contained was one of the important concern of Turkey.⁴⁷² According to Turkey, the balance and security in the region should be maintained by the inclusion of all littoral states in any security arrangement in the region.

⁴⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p.344.

⁴⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p.344.

⁴⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p.345.

⁴⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p.345.

⁴⁷² *Ibid.*, p.345.

Considering Georgia's NATO membership, while the US and Turkey both supported Georgia's NATO membership, there seemed some differences in their approaches. It is a well known fact that Turkey, since the independence of Georgia, supported the integration of the country to the international system. Turkey's policy, anyway, was shaped on supporting Georgia to reach NATO standards. Thus, when considered with the US approach, it is argued that Turkey wants a slower pace than Washington for Georgia's NATO membership.⁴⁷³ As if the fact that, some European countries such as Germany and France did not support Georgia's NATO membership due to their energy dependency to Russia⁴⁷⁴, Turkey, though not that much obvious, does not support any development that may change the statusquo in the region and give harm to its relations with Russia in the existing conjonkture.

The August 2008 War was also another important cornerstone in relations between the US and Turkey. Turkey's policy caused reactions in the US. The Caucasus Stability and Cooperation Platform offered by Turkey was met with suspicion by the US. The reason of that suspicion was that Turkey acted independently from the US and Western partners in her offer while the US and Western partners at that time was trying to form a common approach under the umbrella of the EU and NATO.⁴⁷⁵ Since the Caucasus Stability and Cooperation Platform was focusing on regionality and was offered to Russia first, the US seemed to be excluded from the process since the beginning.

⁴⁷³ Fiona Hill and Omer Taspinar, "Turkey and Russia: Axis of the Excluded", *Survival: Global Politics and Strategy*, Vol.48, No.1, 2006, p.87.

⁴⁷⁴ Gökhan Özkan, "Georgia's NATO Membership Within Context of the Black Sea Dimension of the New Great Game", *Karadeniz Araştırmaları*, No.27, Güz 2010, p. 3.

⁴⁷⁵ Zeyno Baran, "Will Turkey Abandon NATO", *Wall Street Journal*, 29 August 2008, <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB121997087258181935.html> (Erişim Tarihi: 1 September 2008); Sedat Laçiner, "Is Turkey Getting Away from the US in the Caucasus", *Journal of Turkish Weekly*, 31 August 2008, <http://www.turkishweekly.net/comments.php?id=2973> (Erişim Tarihi 2 Eylül 2008), cited in Mitat Çelikpala, *Op.cit*, p.110.

Sedat Laçiner in his article “ Is Turkey Getting Away from the US in the Caucasus” argues that:

The US was unable to work together closely with Turkey and other allies regarding the Georgia issue. The main surprising issue for Turkish side is offering the "Caucasus Platform" to Russia at first. In other words, Ankara is not making an offer to her most important ally in Caucasus, but to Moscow which invades the Georgia with armed forces.⁴⁷⁶

Concerning the geographical base, as Sedat Laçiner argued, the proposal excluded the US whereas included Russia too much.⁴⁷⁷ It was further argued that the US was especially excluded.⁴⁷⁸ One of strong arguments supporting this view was that Turkey had a fear that the United States might ruin the Caucasus like Iraq and Afghanistan with using Georgia as a cover and that Turkey did not want to break relations with Russia because of Georgia.⁴⁷⁹

Considering all, Turkey's and the US' policies and interests in many areas are cooperative. Nevertheless, this is not a guarantee against divergent and conflicting interests in certain critical issues. Both Turkey and the US support the territorial integrity of Georgia and pay special attention to the promotion of stability and security in Georgia. Nevertheless, the standing of Turkey and the US against the August 2008 War was different. Turkey did not want to include the US to her Georgia policy. Nevertheless, concerning the US policy after the August 2008 War through the Obama administration, it is also argued that the US conducts a more balanced policy in Georgia against Russian presence in the region.⁴⁸⁰

⁴⁷⁶ Sedat Laciner ““Is Turkey Getting Away from the US in the Caucasus”, *Journal of Turkish Weekly*, 1 September 2008, <http://www.turkishweekly.net/comments.php?id=2973>

⁴⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

⁴⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

⁴⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁸⁰ For more information see, Ahmet Öztürk, “Obama Adminstration’s foreign Policy towards Georgia: 2008-2010”, *OAKA*, Vol.5, No.9, 2010.
<http://www.usak.org.tr/dosyalar/dergi/SAfksPEXAY7hB97NGcldg6QgK1iHrh.pdf>

In the wake of the August 2008 War and its aftermath, one of the important developments effecting Turkey-US relations have been the change in the US Administration. With Obama coming to power, it was argued that there would be a more positive attitude regarding the future of bilateral relations.⁴⁸¹ It was further argued that Obama in his victory speech said that “the American administration’s cooperation with a critical ally like Turkey will be a determining factor not only for starting a recovery process in the relations, but also for achieving peace and stability in Eurasia and Middle East”⁴⁸².

Concerning the South Caucasus region, while Turkey was trying to keep a balance between Russia and the US, it was argued that, “the relatively more nuanced and constructive approach of Obama administration regarding Russia is more in tune with the current Turkish position and interests”⁴⁸³. Based on that argument, any improvement and development in the US-Russia relations would have direct implications on relations with Turkey, as well. Another important dimension would be the future of US-Georgian relations during the Obama administration. Ahmet Öztürk argued that:

The foreign policy approach of the Obama administration based on the ‘reset’ understanding especially against Russia, meant that the US would put improvement of relations with Russia to the center of its policies towards East European and former Soviet Republics and so that the US-Georgia relations compared with the former period, during the new period, would remain in the second plan and would take place the most in micro scale in the regional and large foreign policy plannings.⁴⁸⁴

Supporting this view, Obama prefered to remain frosty to Sakkashvili and abstained from giving binding support compared with the Bush administration.⁴⁸⁵ Even, it was stated that the Obama administration might prefer a change of power in Tbilisi

⁴⁸¹ “Rebuilding a Partnership: Turkish-American Relations in a new Era A Turkish Perspective”, *TUSIAD*, Publication No. T-2009-04-/490, April 2009, p.20.

⁴⁸² *Ibid.*, p.20.

⁴⁸³ *Ibid.*, p.71.

⁴⁸⁴ Ahmet Öztürk, *Op.cit*, p.8.

⁴⁸⁵ Ahmet Öztürk, *Op.cit*, p. 19.

instead of Saakashvili who would approach Russia more calmly and logical in order to conduct its policies in the region efficiently.⁴⁸⁶

Considering all, after the August 2008 War and with the Obama administration coming to power, the US, continued to declare its support for Georgia's independence and territorial integrity. Thus, it was more the characteristic and nature of the relations with Russia that would determine the level of US-Georgia relations. Nevertheless, compared with the Bush administration it seems that during the Obama administration, the US-Turkey relations concerning the South Caucasus region and Georgia will be conducted more in harmony. Sure, this does not mean that there will be no differences in their foreign approaches and policies. Thus, relations with Russia has started to become more determining over the characteristic and nature of relations with Georgia.

4.2.2 Turkey's Security Relations with the US

During the Cold War, due to the fact that Turkey was in an important geostrategic location considering the Soviet threat on the north, in order to strengthen Turkey's military, the US military aid carried a strategic meaning. The US military aid which began with the Truman Doctrine, continued during the Cold War, nevertheless, after the end of the Cold War, within the US, the aim and content of the aid was started to be discussed and questioned. Related with that, one of the important development in the US was that the Congress had limited the budget of foreign aid.⁴⁸⁷ There were important and radical changes in the content and amount of the military aids. During 1990's, while the rate of the Economic Support Fund decreased to much, purchase of weapons increased too much.⁴⁸⁸

⁴⁸⁶ Alexander Jackson, "The Obama Administration's Emerging Caucasus Policy", *Caucasian Review of International Affairs*, Sayı: 31, 27 Nisan 2009., cited in Ahmet Öztürk, *Op.cit*, p.19.

⁴⁸⁷ İlhan Uzgel, "ABD ve NATO ile İlişkiler", *Türk Dış Politikası, Kurtuluş Savaşından Bugüne Olgular, Belgeler, Yorumlar*, Baskın Oran (Ed.), Cilt II, İstanbul, İletişim Yayıncılı, 2002, p. 284.

⁴⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 285.

Table 5. US Military Aid to Turkey (1991-97) (Million Dolar)

	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
Military							
Grant	500	475	-	-	-	-	-
Credit	50	25	450	405	364	320	175

Source: Ammount of US military aid between 1991 and 97⁴⁸⁹

As it may be seen from the table above, since 1993, grant share in the Foreign Military Financing program was annulled and all grants were transferred to credits. While during 1991 and 1992, because of Turkey's role during the Gulf War, the grant rates were relatively high, since 1994, there was decrease also in the rate of credits. During 1990's, the US Congress continued to use the military aids in return of getting some political concessions. In 1994, the major reason in the decrease of credit was the US Congress' condition for giving %10 of the credits in return of getting some improvement in the Cyprus problem and human rights.⁴⁹⁰

During 1990's, another important aspect of the US-Turkey military relations was the weapon purchase of Turkey from the US. Turkey purchased weapons from the US through different channels which are first the Foreign Military Sales, second, Direct Commercial Sales and Excess Defense Article and Cascading.⁴⁹¹

⁴⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, p.285.

⁴⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 286.

⁴⁹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 287.

Table 6. Weapon Purchase from the US (1990-99)-(Million Dollar)

1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
9 43	697	741	878	951	536	547	1.270	642	803

Source: Amounts of Weapon Purchase from the US⁴⁹²

As may be seen from the table, while the lowest rate was in 1995 with 536 million dollar, the highest rate was in 1997 with 1.270 million dollar. While there were several reasons for the increase of Turkey's purchase of weapon, it was argued that during that period, the US supported Turkey to have a strong military and emerge as a strong regional power due to the fact that the US was in cooperation with Turkey in the surrounding regions of Caucasus, Central Asia, the Middle East and Balkans.⁴⁹³

While the military aid provided Turkey by the US, constituted an important dimension of security relations, since the end of the Cold War, there have been several challenges to the security dimension of Turkey's relations with the US. The Gulf War in 1990-1991, was one of the most critical challenges for the US-Turkey security relations just after the end of the Cold War. As Stephen Laranbee indicated though for the US, US-Turkey cooperation was a kind of golden age in relations⁴⁹⁴, for Turkey as argued by Ian Lesser, the Gulf War was "where the trouble started".⁴⁹⁵

⁴⁹² *Ibid.*, p.287.

⁴⁹³ *Ibid.*, pp.287-288.

⁴⁹⁴ Stephen Laranbee, "Troubled Partnership: US-Turkey Relations in an Era of Global Political Change, *RAND Project Air Force*, 2010, p. 7.

⁴⁹⁵ See Ian O. Lesser, "Turkey, the United States, and the Geopolitics of Delusion," *Survival*, Vol. 48, No. 3, Autumn 2006, p. 2., cited in Stephen Laranbee, *Op.cit*, p. 7.

While Turkey carried great expectations from its support to the US during the Gulf War, regarding the implications of the War, Stephen Laranbee argued that:

The overall impact of the Gulf War was to heighten U.S.-Turkish discord. On the one hand, the Turks felt they had not been sufficiently compensated for either the support they had given the United States or the economic losses they had incurred as a result of that support. On the other hand, the war exacerbated the security challenges on Turkey's southern border, especially the Kurdish problem, which Turkish officials regarded as an existential threat to the territorial integrity of the Turkish state.⁴⁹⁶

While the Gulf War had implications on Turkey's security relations that lasted for years, in 1999, some radical developments concerning the US aid occurred. The US decided to annul the Foreign Military Sales (FMS) Credits completely by arguing that Turkey was economically self-sufficient enough to meet their defense spendings.⁴⁹⁷ Since the beginning of the 2000's, security relations between the US and Turkey got a new dimension, as well. After the 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks, the US defined its new enemy as international terrorism and this new foreign policy adaptation of the US had implications on Turkey security relations with the US. Concerning the security relations in South Caucasus, the US, after the 11 September attacks, conducted a policy of increasing its existence and influence in the region. Any autocratic structure in the region was perceived as a potential source of terrorism. Thus, it was argued that:

While the US was partly limiting the hegemonic intentions and support of Russia for the authoritarian political structure in the region, the US had defined the democratisation of the South Caucasus countries and their integration to the Euro-Atlantic region as a very important strategic objective.⁴⁹⁸

Regarding this strategic objective of the US, relations of the South Caucasus countries with NATO under the framework of the Partnership for Peace Program became important. Turkey was also pleased of the security relations of the regional

⁴⁹⁶ Stephen Laranbee, *Op.cit*, p. 9.

⁴⁹⁷ İlhan Uzgel, "ABD ve NATO'yla İlişkiler", Baskın Oran, (Ed.), *Türk Dış Politikası Kurtuluş Savaşından Bugüne Olgular, Belgeler, Yorumlar*, Cilt II: 1980-2001, p.286.

⁴⁹⁸ Leyla Alieva, "South Caucasus: Going West", Ronald D. Asmus, Konstantin Dimitrov ve Joerg Forbrig (Der.), *A New Euro-Atlantic Strategy for the Black Sea Region*, (Washington, DC: GMFUS, 2004), ss. 65–76., cited in Oktay F. Tanrısever, "Regional Security in the Caucasus in the post- 9/11 Era: Old Conflicts and New Openings", *OEKA*, Vol.6, No.11, 2011, p. 5.

countries with NATO members states through Partnership for Peace.⁴⁹⁹ It was even argued that Turkey was content of the new cooperation atmosphere led by the US in the region.⁵⁰⁰ More specifically, Kamer Kasim argued that:

Turkey required protection of the territorial integrity of Georgia and Azerbaijan for the future of the Baku-Tiblisi-Ceyhan Pipeline thus the increasing influence of the US in the region meant the implementation of more effective policies for the security of these countries for Turkey.⁵⁰¹

Nevertheless, the level of US presence in the region played a critical role regarding its potential effect on Turkey's relations with Russia in the region. Thus, while Kamer Kasim argued that Turkey prefered the US presence in the region⁵⁰², by time, the US military existence and military bases in the region caused Russia to feel anxiety of the US policies in the region. This changed conjonkture in the region was followed with governmental changes in the region as witnessed in Georgia in 2003 through the Rose Revolution. The governmental change in Georgia caused Georgia and Russia to fall apart from each other more. Thus, while both the US and Turkey wanted democratisation, stability and integration of the regional countries to the Euro-Atlantic world, the US and Turkey had different reservations for the provision of security in the region.

Before the August 2008 War, one of the major blow to the security relations between Turkey and the US occured during the US invasion of Iraq and rejection of the motion by the Turkish Grand National Assembly to allow the US to use Turkish territories in order to open a second front against Iraq.⁵⁰³ This was followed, later by the US rejection to assist Turkey in its struggle against PKK which had a negative

⁴⁹⁹ Kamer Kasim, "11 Eylül Sürecinde Kafkasya'da Güvenlik Politikaları", *OAKA*, Vol.1, No.1, 2006, p. 34.

⁵⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, pp.34-35.

⁵⁰¹ *Ibid.*, p.35.

⁵⁰² *Ibid.*, p.36.

⁵⁰³ For more information See, Stephen Laranbee, *Op.cit*, p. 80.

effect on military relations.⁵⁰⁴ Stephen Laranbee in defining this situation indicated that, “The Turkish military regarded the struggle against the PKK as a major national-security priority and as the litmus test of the value of the U.S.-Turkish security partnership”⁵⁰⁵. Nevertheless, this downturn in relation continued till Prime Minister Erdoğan’s visit to the US in November 2007 when the US accepted to provide actionable intelligence and the overall military relations got an improvement.⁵⁰⁶

Considering all, these up and downs in US-Turkey relations have also important reflections on the security relations in the Caucasus and the Black Sea. Concerning the Black Sea maritime security, Turkey opposed any expansion of both the US and NATO in the Black Sea due to the fact that Turkey regarded the Black Sea as a “Turkish lake”.⁵⁰⁷ Stephen Laranbee argued that, “Turkey feared that an increased US or NATO military presence in the Black Sea could exacerbate tensions with Russia. Turkish officials argue that Black Sea security should be provided by the littoral countries of the Black Sea”⁵⁰⁸.

More specifically, conflict of interests between the US and Turkey took place when the US initiated to expand NATO’s Operation Active Endeavor in the Black Sea. Against this initiative of the US, Turkey proposed expanding the Black Sea Naval Cooperation Task Force (BALCKSEAFOR) that included Russia, Bulgaria, Romania, Ukraine and Georgia.⁵⁰⁹ Furthermore, Turkey carried great sensitivity for any US and NATO initiative that could change the Black Sea maritime statusquo in

⁵⁰⁴ *Ibid*, p. 80.

⁵⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, p.80.

⁵⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, p.81.

⁵⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, p.84.

⁵⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, p.84.

⁵⁰⁹ Serkan Demirtas, “Blackseafor to Be Expanded,” *Turkish Daily News* (Istanbul), September 19, 2008., cited in Stephen Laranbee, *Op.cit*, p. 85.

the region.⁵¹⁰ This sensitivity of Turkey was also reflected to Turkey's attitude towards the NATO expansion for the inclusion of Georgia and Ukraine as NATO members in the region. Though, Turkey supported Georgia's NATO membership, Turkey always added her reservations that this should be realized when the required conditions were met. Turkey was aware that any possible NATO membership could lead tension between NATO, the US and Russia. Thus, Turkey concerning its policies in the region was cautious about not irritating Russia.

The August 2008 War was another litmus test for Turkey's security relations with the US concerning Georgia. While the security perspectives of both the US and Turkey generally overlapped in the region and concerning Georgia, there were some differences in their attitudes concerning their policies towards the war. In the Report on Georgia-Russia Crisis by International Strategic Research Institution, it is argued that:

Since the emergence of the war, though Turkey was closer to Georgia and the US in discourse, time to time, Turkey had confusing acts even for the US. For example, Turkey acted closer to France and Germany than the US, in the issue of US weapon employment in Georgia. Not annoying Russia became among the most sensitive matters Ankara emphasized. Turkey, with the concern that Georgia wanted to draw Turkey into the war, acted carefully. Moscow which in the first days had doubts about Turkey's attitude concerning the Georgian crisis, in the following days became satisfied from Turkey's attitude.⁵¹¹

⁵¹⁰ Turkish sensitivity about strictly abiding by provisions of the Montreux Convention was underscored in August 2008 in the immediate aftermath of the Russian invasion of Georgia. The United States sought to send two U.S. Navy hospital ships, the USNS *Comfort* and the USNS *Mercy*, through the Dardanelles with humanitarian aid for Georgia. Their tonnage, however, exceeded the limits allowed for foreign warships under the Montreux Convention. Turkey let it be known that the ships would not be allowed to pass through the Bosphorus because they violated the Montreux Convention. The United States eventually sent the aid aboard the destroyer USS *McFaul*, the USCGC *Dallas*, and the USS *Mount Whitney*, all of which were well below the tonnage limits allowed under the Montreux Convention. See Ümit Enginsoy and Burak Ege Bekdil, "Turkey Jealously Defends Its Rights on the Black Sea," *Defense News*, September 29, 2008b. On the United States' denial that it wanted a change in the Montreux Convention, see Ümit Enginsoy, "No Change Wanted on Turk Straits Convention," *Turkish Daily News* (Istanbul), August 28, 2008., cited in Stephen Laranbee, *Op.cit*, p. 85.

⁵¹¹ *Gürcistan-Rusya Krizi Değerlendirme Raporu: Krizin Türkiye'ye, Bölgeye ve Küreye Etkileri*, Hasan Selim ÖZERTEM (Ed.) USAK Reports: 08-03, USAK Yayınları, September 2008, p. 49.

Turkey did not want the armed intervention of a third country into the war and was afraid that the US would turn over the Caucasus to Afghanistan and Iraq by using Georgia as an excuse.⁵¹² Within this conjecture, Turkey's initiative of Caucasus Cooperation and Stability Platform, became a big surprise for the US as well as a big challenge to the US-Turkey strategic cooperation in the region. The US Foreign Ministry stated that they were unaware of the initiative and this was a surprise for them. More specifically, Matt Bryza stated that:

I should say I am surprised. I was not informed that such an initiative would be made. We had partnership with Turkey in Caucasus and I supposed that we could work close with Turkey and our other partners. Because, we have shared interests with Turkey in Caucasus and beyond.⁵¹³

Considering Turkey's Initiative, while it seemed that Turkey excluded the US and included Russia more based on the argument that the initiative was a geography based initiative, this situation caused new potential tensions to emerge in the US-Turkey strategic relations in the region. In the light of all, the fact that the war also coincided with the presidential elections in the US, implications and reflections to the US-Turkey relations became important. Since the US policy and attitude towards Georgia during the war was different during the Bush and Obama presidencies, it seemed as if the potential problems between the US and Turkey would be overcome during the Obama Presidency.

Considering Obama's reset policy towards Russia, it was further argued that, the US policy towards the region and Georgia, would be mainly shaped in the light of its relations towards Russia. Regarding the existing Russian presence in South Caucasus, the US under Obama Presidency also refrained from any direct confrontation with Russia and start to conduct a carrot-cake approach towards

⁵¹² Ibid., pp. 50-51.

⁵¹³ Umit Enginsoy, "US assures Turkey over straits convention", Turkish Daily News, 21 August 2008; <http://www.turkishdailynews.com.tr/article.php?enewsid=113138>, cited in *Gürcistan-Rusya Krizi Değerlendirme Raporu: Krizin Türkiye'ye, Bölgeye ve Küreye Etkileri*, Hasan Selim ÖZERTEM (Ed.) USAK Reports: 08-03, USAK Yayınları, September 2008, p. 50.

Russia.⁵¹⁴ Nevertheless, this did not mean that Georgia lost its strategic importance for the US. The security and military support to Georgia continued. During his visit to Russia in July 2009, Obama in his meeting with Medvedev stated that Georgia had the right of choosing its independence and partners and that Russia was violating Georgia's territorial integrity.⁵¹⁵ Further, in July 2009, the US warship the USS Stout anchored in Batumi Port for a common naval practice.⁵¹⁶

Considering all, compared with the Bush era, during Obama presidency, the US seemed to approach more to Turkey's policy towards Georgia, Russia and the region by giving up the personal characteristics of relations during Bush presidency and keeping up interaction with Russia. Nevertheless, as it was experienced during the August 2008 War, Turkey keeps her reservation of any direct US and NATO presence in the region that may cause tension with Russia.

4.2.3 Turkey's Economic Relations with the US

Since the intensification of the relations between the US and Turkey with the Truman Doctrine in 1947, political and military relations between the US and Turkey got a strategic characteristics.⁵¹⁷ During the Cold War, economic and trade relations between the two countries always remained secondary compared with the political and military aspect of the relations. The main breaking point in economic relations

⁵¹⁴ Ariel Cohen, "How the Obama Administration Should Engage Russia", *Testimony before Senate Foreign Relations Committee Hearing on "Prospects for Engagement with Russia*, Washington DC, 19 Mart 2009; (<http://www.heritage.org/Research/Testimony/How-the-Obama-Administration-Should-Engage-Russia>), cited in Ahmet Öztürk, "Obama Administration's Foreign Policy towards Georgia: 2008-2010", *OAKA*, Vol.5, No.9, 2010, p.7.

⁵¹⁵ Interfax, 6 Temmuz 2009., cited Ahmet Öztürk, *Op.cit*, p.10.

⁵¹⁶ Vladimir Socor, "US Policy Toward Georgia at a Crossroads", *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, Cilt: 6, Sayı: 134, 14 Temmuz 2009; [http://www.jamestown.org/single/?no_cache=1&tx_ttnews\[tt_news\]=352](http://www.jamestown.org/single/?no_cache=1&tx_ttnews[tt_news]=352), cited in., Ahmet Öztürk, *Op.cit*, p.10.

⁵¹⁷ "Türk-Amerikan Ekonomik ve Ticari İlişkilerinin Analizi ve Geleceğe Yönelik Öneriler", *TÜSİAD*, Publication No: TÜSİAD-T/2002-12/347, Aralık 2002, p.80.

happened with the Defense and Economic Cooperation Agreement in 29 March 1980.⁵¹⁸ Especially the military purchases made from the US constituted an important aspect of the economic and trade relations. Furthermore, the general trend in relations was that the trade deficit was on behalf of the US.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the nature and substance of the economic relations between the US and Turkey changed. During 1990's, the economic aid of the US to Turkey lost its importance.⁵¹⁹

Table 7. The US Economic Support between 1991-97 (million dollar)

1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
250	75	125	120	50	33	22

Source: The US Economic Aid Amounts (1991-1997)⁵²⁰

While the economic aid to the US was depended to other political factors such as the role of the Congress, the internal political developments in Turkey and the changing international conjonkture, as it may be seen from the table, since the mid 1990's, it definitely lost its importance. Nevertheless, considering Turkey's economic relations with the US during 1990's, the weapon purchase of Turkey from the US increased in a considerably high level.

⁵¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p.85.

⁵¹⁹ İlhan Uzgel, *Op.cit.*, p.285.

⁵²⁰ *Ibid.*, p.285.

Table 8. Weapon Purchase from the US (1990-99) (million dollar)

1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
943	697	741	878	951	536	547	1270	642	803

Source: Weapon Purchase from the US between 1990 and 1999⁵²¹

As it may be seen from the table above, while the lowest amount is in 1995 with 547 million dollar, the highest amount is in 1997 with 1.270 million dollar. This increase in the amount of weapon purchase from the US depended to many factors. The instability in the surrounding environment of Turkey, the struggle against PKK, the proliferation race against Greece all effected Turkey's concern for weapon purchase.⁵²² Furthermore, the US, considering its cooperation with Turkey in the Balkan region, the Middle East, the Caucasus and Central Asia, showed importance to the military modernisation of Turkey and supported the emergence of Turkey as a regional power.⁵²³

During 1990's, as well as the economic aid from the US and weapon purchase of Turkey from the US, the economic and trade relations between the US and Turkey gained more importance. In 1995, based on the enhanced partnership between Turkey and the US, Turkey was declared to be among the 10th emerging markets for the US.⁵²⁴ Nevertheless, the increasing trade volume between the US and Turkey was not still on behalf of Turkey.

⁵²¹ *Ibid.*, 287.

⁵²² *Ibid.*, p.287.

⁵²³ *Ibid.*, pp.287-288.

⁵²⁴ "ABD Ekonomisi ve Türk –Amerikan Ekonomik İlişkileri", *Turkish-US Business Council, DEIK*, November, 2004, p. 4.

Table 9.Turkey-the US Foreign Trade Ammounts (1989-2004) (Million Dolar)

YEARS	EXPORT	IMPORT	VOLUME	X/M	BALANCE
1989	971	2094	3065	0.46	-1123
1990	968	2282	3249	0.42	-1314
1991	913	2255	3168	0.40	-1342
1992	865	2601	3466	0.33	-1736
1993	986	3351	4337	0.29	-2365
1994	1520	2429	3949	0.63	-909
1995	1514	3724	5238	0.41	-2210
1996	1639	3516	5155	0.47	-1877
1997	2032	4330	6362	0.47	-2298
1998	2233	4054	6287	0.55	-1821
1999	2437	3080	5517	0.79	-643
2000	3135	3911	7046	0.80	-776
2001	3126	3261	6387	0.96	-135
2002	3356	3099	6455	1.08	257
2003	3736	3420	7157	1.09	316
2004*	3171	3193	6364	0.99	-22

Source: DIE (January- August 2004)⁵²⁵

As it is seen from the table above, though the export rates of Turkey to the US increased, the trade balance during the 1990's were always on behalf of the US. In 1997, it is seen that the trade deficit reached to 2.298 million dollar on behalf of the US. In 2002, for the first time the trade deficit was on behaf of Turkey.

Considering economic relations during 1990's, there were also problems between the US and Turkey. Since the textile products constituted an important ammount of Turkey's export, any positive solution of that problem was important for Turkey. In

⁵²⁵ Turkish Statistical Institute., cited in., *Ibid.*, p.6.

1999, then Prime Minister of Turkey Bulent Ecevit in his visit to the US, indicated that the level of economic relations was not satisfactory and stated that Turkey wished the US to diminish the limitations in the export of textile products.⁵²⁶ Several agreements were also signed between the US and Turkey in order to overcome problems and improve economic relations.⁵²⁷ Nevertheless, while the US had the right of entering to the Turkish market with low custom taxes, the US had many limitations for Turkish products such as limitation in amounts, custom tarriffs, textile kota, additional taxes, and anti-damping procedures.

Considering all, regarding also the difference in the size and dimension of the two economies, it should be underlined that, for example, in 2001, while the share of export to the US within Turkey's total export was %10, share within the US total import was % 0,27.⁵²⁸ Regarding the same year, while the share of import from the US within Turkey's total import was %8, share within the US total export was only %0.5.⁵²⁹ These statistics refer to the fact that economic and trade relations between the US and Turkey have not performed its full potential and existing problems in economic relations are needed to be deal more effectively. While in the beginning of 2000's, economic and trade relations between the US and Turkey improved on behalf of Turkey, since the mid 2000's, the trade deficit between the US and Turkey again turned on behalf of the US.

⁵²⁶ Ilhan Uzgel, *Op.cit*, p.290.

⁵²⁷ For Further information See: Türk-Amerikan Ekonomik ve Ticari İlişkilerinin Analizi ve Geleceği Yönelik Öneriler”, TÜSİAD, Publishment No: TÜSİAD-T/2002-12/347, Aralık 2002., p.91.

⁵²⁸ *Ibid.*, p.127.

⁵²⁹ *Ibid.*, p.127.

Table 10. Turkey-the US Export and Import Amounts Between 2000-2010

Years	Export (million dollar)	Import (million dollar)
2000	3.135.163	3.911.022
2001	3.125.771	3.261.298
2002	3.356.126	3.099.099
2003	3.751.552	3.495.770
2004	4.860.041	4.745.195
2005	4.910.715	5.375.548
2006	5.060.864	6.260.873
2007	4.170.688	8.166.068
2008	4.299.941	11.975.929
2009	3.240.597	8.575.737
2010	3.762.919	12.318.745
2011	4.584.029	16.034.121
2012	5.069.695	13.242.588

Source. DIE⁵³⁰

As it may be seen from the table above, except 2002, 2003 and 2004, since 2005, the trade deficit against Turkey have continued. Furthermore, regarding the increasing trend in US' export to Turkey, it is seen that the bilateral trade volume between the US and Turkey increased. Considering the foreign trade volume, according to the statistics of the Ministry of Economic Affairs, by 2012, the US was the fifth country Turkey had the more trade volume with.⁵³¹ Nevertheless, this did not change the fact that there was a considerable amount of trade deficit against Turkey.

⁵³⁰Ülkelere Göre Dış Ticaret, *Türkiye İstatistik Kurumu*,
http://www.tuik.gov.tr/VeriBilgi.do?alt_id=12

⁵³¹ Ministry of Economy, Ülkelere Göre Dış Ticaret Hacmi ve Dengesi,
<http://www.ekonomi.gov.tr/upload/1BD6EE84-98A9-105B-265A8DFD3265ACFB/eko07a.xls>

As well as the trade deficit, the low level of US investments in Turkey also constituted an important deficit in economic relations between the US and Turkey. While in 2007 the direct foreign investment from the US was 4.212 million dollar , in 2008 it decreased to 868 million dollar, in 2009, it decreased more to 269 million dollar.⁵³² In 2010, the ammout increased to 363 million dollar and in 2011, it became 1.402 million dollar. Nevertheless, by in 2012, the ammount of direct US investment in Turkey decreased again to 404 million dollar.⁵³³

Considering the nature of energy cooperation between Turkey and the US, it can be well argued that Turkey's and the US' interests overlapped and diverged.⁵³⁴ The Baku-Tiblisi-Ceyhan pipeline and Baku-Tiblisi-Erzurum pipeline projects were projects which interests of the US and Turkey converged.⁵³⁵ On the other hand, problems with Azerbaijan about the re-pricing of the Şah Deniz natural gas, additional gas amount demanded by Turkey and revision on the transit fees, Turkey's restricted relations with Iran because of US' sanctions, Turkey's limited investment opportunities in Iraq and the unproper functioning of the Kerkuk-Yumurtalik oil pipeline after the US' Iraq operation all constituted issues where US interests and policies did not overlap with Turkey's interests.⁵³⁶ Furthermore, in the light of the fact that Azerbaijan, Iran and Iraq have been important countries for the provision of Turkey's energy supply security and energy diversification, as argued by Necdet Pamir, it should be notified that Turkey's interests have not overlapped the US interests on energy, everytime.⁵³⁷

⁵³² Ministry of Economy, “Uluslararası Doğrudan Yatırım Sermaye Girişlerinin Ülkelere Göre Dağılımı”, Tablo Ek-3,
[http://www.ekonomi.gov.tr/upload/AF3CE3DB-047B-39A5-04547A6C59747F9F/\\$ubat%202013.xls](http://www.ekonomi.gov.tr/upload/AF3CE3DB-047B-39A5-04547A6C59747F9F/$ubat%202013.xls)

⁵³³ *Ibid.*

⁵³⁴ Necdet Pamir, “Türk-ABD İlişkilerinin Ekonomik Boyutu”, 26 December 2009,
http://www.enerjienergy.com/artikel.php?artikel_id=8

⁵³⁵ *Ibid.*

⁵³⁶ *Ibid.*

⁵³⁷ *Ibid.*

Concluding all, it can be well argued that economic relations between the US and Turkey have not reached the level in political and military relations. Though there seemed to be attempts by the US and Turkey to improve economic and trade relations as well, there was the absence of a strong will and intention on both sides to achieve improvement in real sense. Beyond all, cooperation in some energy projects seemed to be the major concrete success in economic relations. The fact that economic relation including energy relations were shaped based on mostly political and security motivations, it may be further argued that the US did not prefer to be in equal trade relations with Turkey but rather saw Turkey as a political and military partner.⁵³⁸

4.3 Georgia's Relations with Russia and US

Georgia's relations with Russia and the US will be examined and main characteristics and limitations in Georgia's relations with Russia and the US will be explained.

4.3.1 A General Evaluation of Georgia's Relations with Russia

After Georgia's declaration of independence, Georgia's relations with Russia was based on mistrust and fear.⁵³⁹ Georgia, after declaring its independence from the Soviet Union, experienced challenges to its territorial integrity with the Abkhaz and South Ossetia conflicts. These conflicts when combined with the state collapse in Georgia, caused a big security vacuum in Georgia and Russia through the manipulation of these conflicts, tried to keep Georgia under its sphere of influence. Nevertheless, Russia conducted its policy towards Georgia through different but mostly traditional means of coercion. As well as the manipulation of the conflicts in

⁵³⁸ Ilhan Uzgel, *Op.cit*, p.70.

⁵³⁹ Jaba Devdariani, "Georgia and Russia: The Troubled Road to Accommodation", Bruno Coppieers and Robert Legvold, (Eds.), *Statehood and Security, Georgia After the Rose Revolution*, The MIT Press, Cambridge, 2005, p. 154.

Georgia, Russia's military presence in Georgia, Russia's economic pressure, Russia's excluding energy policy in the transportation of energy resources, pressure over the Pankisi George were all Russia's tool of coercion against Georgia.⁵⁴⁰

Considering the tools of coercion, it can be well argued that rather than presenting carrots in its policy towards Georgia, Russia always preferred to present sticks.⁵⁴¹ This policy of coercion, pressure and manipulation, on the other hand, caused Georgia to turn its back to Russia and look for ways of rapproachment with the West. Georgia's intention of being entegrated with Euro-Atlantic institutions, on the other hand, caused Russia to implement more strict and hard policies and this vicious circle in relations made peak with the emergence of the August 2008 War which decreased relations between Georgia and Russia to its lowest level with diplomatic relations being suspended.

a. Main Problematic Issues in Georgia's Relations with Russia

Georgia's relations with Russia during the 1990's were mainly based on "the countries' simultaneous identity crises of the early 1990's" and on "the search of security in the mid-1990's".⁵⁴² While Georgia's national identity has been shaped around the idea of independence from Russia, for Russia, the collapse of the Soviet power was viewed as the imperiling core components of the state's identity.⁵⁴³ Thus, while "the master myths of the new Georgia and the new Russia were obviously in conflict"⁵⁴⁴, by Gamsakhurdia, the conflicts in Abkhazia and South Ossetia were

⁵⁴⁰ Tracey German, "David and Goliath: Georgia and Russia's Coercive Diplomacy", *Defense Studies*, Vol.9, No.2, Taylor&Francis, 2009, p. 227.

⁵⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p.227.

⁵⁴² Jaba Devdariani, *Op.cit*, p. 154.

⁵⁴³ Jaba Devdariani, *Op.cit*, pp.156- 160.

⁵⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p.160.

perceived as tools for Russian pressure against Georgian independence.⁵⁴⁵ Nevertheless, while Gamsakhurdia used Georgia's fear of Russia in order to establish a common national identity, this proved to be failed.⁵⁴⁶ During Shevardnadze era, also, the Russian factor was used in order to cover the regime's inefficiencies and wrongdoing.⁵⁴⁷ In the light of all, beyond Russia's factor, it was argued that Georgia's internal deficiencies including the weakness of the state and inability to establish inclusive institutions led to a severe economic collapse and two secessionist conflict.⁵⁴⁸

Considering Russia's policy, on the other hand, in order to keep Georgia under influence and dependent to itself, it was a two faceted policy based on compelling Georgia for the deployment of Russian military forces in Georgia and accepting to become member of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) in return of aiding Georgia to gain its control over secessionist regions.⁵⁴⁹ While "the military became the representative of Russian interests in the Caucasus"⁵⁵⁰, after Georgia's defeat in Abkhazia, for Georgia, there remained no choice but to accept Russian troops as peacekeepers in both South Ossetia and Abkhazia.⁵⁵¹

Throughout 1990's, through its policy, Russia guaranteed its military presence in Georgia. Under an agreement in 1994, Georgia allowed Russia to maintain four

⁵⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p.161.

⁵⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

⁵⁴⁷ Tharkan -Mouravi, "The Georgian-Abkhazian Conflict in a Regional Context", pp.90-112., cited in Jaba Devdariani, *Op.cit*, p. 162.

⁵⁴⁸ Jaba Devdariani, *Op.cit*, p. 162.

⁵⁴⁹ Rick Fawn, "Russia's Reluctant retreat from the Caucasus: Abkhazia, Georgia and the US after 11 September 2001", *European Security*, Vol.11, No.4, p. 136.

⁵⁵⁰ Jaba Devdariani, *Op.cit*, p. 164.

⁵⁵¹ Jaba Devdariani, *Op.cit*, p. 167.

military bases near Tbilisi (Vaziani), in Akhalkalaki, Batumi, and in Abkhazia.⁵⁵² Nevertheless, since the end of 1990's, the removal of Russian military personnel became one of the critical problems in Georgia's relations with Russia. Ömer Kocaman in his article “Russia-Georgia within the context of Russia's National Interests towards the South Caucasus Relations in the Post-Soviet Era: 1992-2005” indicated that:

At the OSCE Istanbul Summit in November 1999, Russia agreed to close its military bases in Vaziani, near Tbilisi and Guduata, Abkhazia by July 2000. The Russian side also agreed to start negotiations with Georgian authorities in 2000 on withdrawing its remaining two military bases in Batumi and Akhalkalaki. During negotiations with Georgian leadership, Russian insistence on the need for a lengthy of time to find new accommodations for departing Russian troops from Georgia became a source tension in 2000s.⁵⁵³

The presence and removal of Russian military bases and personnel was also strongly related with both Georgia's and Russia's search of security. Beyond the establishment of Russian military bases and personnel in Georgian territories, Georgia in order to prevent a complete state collapse, become a member of CIS.⁵⁵⁴ The major ambition of Russia, on the other hand, was to keep Georgia under its sphere of influence and control. Since the South Caucasus region was strongly related with Russia's internal and external security concerns, the independence of the South Caucasus states was perceived as a security challenge to Russia.⁵⁵⁵ In the light of that, Russia also supported the existence of autocratic leaders in Georgia which would not disregard Russia and turn the country to the West.⁵⁵⁶ Thus, independence, sovereignty, democratisation, were not things Russia wanted to see in Georgia. Furthermore, there were also times when Russia involved to the domestic politics in

⁵⁵² Ömer Kocaman, “Russia's Relations with Georgia Within the Context of the Russian National Interests towards the South Caucasus in the Post-Soviet Era: 1993-2005, Vol.2, No.3,*OAKA*, 2007, p.6.

⁵⁵³ *Ibid.*,p. 7.

⁵⁵⁴ Jaba Devdariani, *Op.cit*, p. 167.

⁵⁵⁵ Jaba Devdariani, *Op.cit*, p. 168.

⁵⁵⁶ Mark Kramer, “Russian Policy Toward the Commonwealth of Independent States Recent Trends and Future Prospects”, *Problems of Post-Communism*, Vol.56, No.6, November/December, 2008, p. 5.

Georgia. It was argued that, “Georgian officials also believed that Russia was responsible for the two assassinations attempts on Shevardnadze in August 1995 and February 1998”⁵⁵⁷.

Regarding this general framework in Georgia’s relations with Russia, in the following periods, Georgia’s western oriented foreign policy based on the objective of becoming a NATO member was perceived by Russia as a threat to its policy and interests in the region. Russia regarded NATO expansion as an encroachment on Russian power.⁵⁵⁸ Georgia joined the North Atlantic Cooperation Council in 1992, and participated to the Partnership for Peace program of NATO in 1994.⁵⁵⁹ Since the mid-1990’s, the US also became a strong supporter of Georgia’s membership to NATO. This was followed by the intensification of military and security relations between the US and Georgia under the NATO framework. Thus, Georgia’s membership objective to NATO became a major dispute between NATO and the Russian Federation and this had concrete implications on Russian foreign policy towards Georgia. A critical time in Georgia’s relations with Russia concerning Georgia’s NATO membership, was the 2008 Bucharest Summit where Georgia was not offered a membership action plan but was declared to be a member of NATO in the future.⁵⁶⁰ Georgia’s objective of NATO membership and Russia’s reaction, was also one the main reasons of the August 2008 War which will be examined in detail in following parts of the thesis.

The 11th September 2001 terrorist attacks to the US and the US struggle against terrorism also had been a critical turning point in Georgia’s relations with Russia. The US struggle against terrorism resulted with an increasing US presence and

⁵⁵⁷ Ömer Kocaman, *Op.cit*, p. 14.

⁵⁵⁸ Jaba Devdariani, *Op.cit*, p. 170.

⁵⁵⁹ NATO’s Relations with Georgia,
http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics_38988.htm

⁵⁶⁰ Jim Nichol, “ Georgia(Republic) and NATO Enlargement: Issues and Implications, *CRS Report for Congress*, , March 6, 2009, p. 3.

influence in the South Caucasus and specifically in Georgia. Nevertheless, Russia, though in rhetoric indicated its support to the US struggle against terrorism, felt anxious of the increasing US influence in Georgia. Regarding that, it was argued that:

The vast Russian energy resources became an important tool in exerting Russian influence in the region. The South Caucasus has emerged as the proving ground for a new Kremlin strategy that seeks to utilize Russia's energy abundance to increase its leverage over countries in the Southern Caucasus and Central Asia.⁵⁶¹

During 2002 and 2003 before the Rose Revolution, Georgia's relations with Russia continued its tense characteristics. In 2002, Russia's decision to grant membership to the peoples of Abkhazia caused tension in Georgia-Russia relations.⁵⁶² Furthermore, during that period, Russia continued to accuse Georgia of supporting terrorists in Russia's war with Chechnya and Georgia claimed that Russia violated its sovereignty under the guise of antiterrorist operations in Pankisi valley.⁵⁶³

Russia in order to keep Georgia under its sphere of influence, as well as implementing political and military measures, used economics as well. Georgia's economic relations with Russia was strategically important. Since many key Georgian enterprises have been in the hand of Russians including telecommunication and energy and Russia was the principal export market for Georgian products, especially wine and mineral water, economic intimidation turned to become an important tool for exerting pressure on Georgia.⁵⁶⁴ In 2006, for example, Russia banned the export of Georgian wine, mineral water and other foodstuffs with the

⁵⁶¹ Igor Torbakov, "Russia Seeks to Use Energy Abundance To Increase Political Leverage", Eurasianet, 19 November 2003; (www.eurasianet.org/departments/insights/articles/eav0111903.shtml), cited in., Ömer Kocaman, *Op.cit.*, p. 16.

⁵⁶² Ömer Kocaman, *Op.cit.*,p. 15.

⁵⁶³ *Ibid.*, p.17.

⁵⁶⁴ Tracey German, *Op.cit*, p. 229.

claim that there were not meeting the health standards.⁵⁶⁵ As this was denied by Georgia, this act of Russia carried political and strategic motivations as well. In the same way, considering the export of Russian gas to Georgia it was argued that Gazprom the Russian gas monoploy had doubled prices for Georgia to 110\$ for one thousand cubic meters and proposed a further increase to 230\$ in 2007 as the highest price among the former Soviet Republics.⁵⁶⁶ Furthermore, in the winter of 2005-2006, gas pipelines in Russia were sabotaged and gas supply to Georgia was cut off temporarily.⁵⁶⁷ In November 2006, “Gazprom announced that it would cut off gas supplies to Georgia by the end of the year unless Georgia agrees to a 100% price hike or sell its main gas pipeline to Gazprom”⁵⁶⁸

Considering all, the main problematic in Georgia’s relations with Russia derived from the clashing national identities and foreign and security policy orientations. Georgia’s objectives and attempts to become part of the Western world through membership to NATO and as response, Russia’s political, military and economic measures to stop and prevent this, by time, constituted a vicious circle and relations got more strained by time.

b. Georgia’s Relations with Russia after 2003 Rose Revolution

Saakashvili coming to power in Georgia after the Rose Revolution in 2003 changed the nature of Georgia’s relations with Russia. During the first years after the Rose Revolution, there were signs of rapprochement between Georgia and Russia. Saakashvili underscored his willingness to repair relations with Russia.⁵⁶⁹ Russia’s

⁵⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p.229.

⁵⁶⁶ Ivars Indans, “Relations of Russia and Georgia: Developments and Future Prospects”, *Baltic Security&Defense Review*, Vol.9, 2007, p.133.

⁵⁶⁷ Steven Woehrel, “Russian Energy Policy Toward Neighboring Countries”, *CRS Report for Congress*, March 22, 2010, p.11.

⁵⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p.11.

⁵⁶⁹ Jaba Devdariani, *Op.cit*, p. 188.

standing and attitude during the Ajara crisis in 2004 was one of the important developments referring to the rapprochement between Georgia and Russia.⁵⁷⁰ Regarding the issue on the existence of Chechens in Georgian territory (Kodori George), for example, unlike Shevardnadze, Saakashvili accepted the existence of Chechens and stated that Georgia would help Russia to fight them.⁵⁷¹ There was also good developments in economic cooperation as well. As well as the gathering of the Georgia-Russia Economic Forum in May 2004, developments such as the reconstruction of Georgia's debt, providing electricity supply and energy subsidies to Georgia, easening of the visa regimes and increasing investments in Georgia took place.⁵⁷² Whereas, major problems between Georgia and Russia also during that period continued. Existence and removal of Russia military bases in Georgia, Georgia's westward orientation aiming membership to NATO, Abkhazia and South Ossetia problems and the Baku-Tiblisi-Ceyhan pipeline existed as main problems between Georgia and Russia.⁵⁷³

Concerning the Russian military bases in Batum and Akhalkalaki, Saakashvili made it clear that his government would remain firm in demanding their closure.⁵⁷⁴ Saakashvili indicated that:“ We acknowledge Russia’s security interests in the region, but these can be served better by means other than the bases”⁵⁷⁵.

Beyond Russian military bases, Russia’s attitude towards the Abkhazia and South Ossetia conflicts constituted red lines for Georgia. In 2004, the increased tension

⁵⁷⁰ Andrei P. Tsygankov and Matthew Tarver-Wahlquist, “ Duelling Honors: Power, Identity and the Russia-Georgia Divide”, *Foreign Policy Analysis*, 5, 2009, p.310.

⁵⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p.310.

⁵⁷² *Ibid.*,p.310.

⁵⁷³ *Ibid.*,p.310.

⁵⁷⁴ Jaba Devdariani, *Op.cit*, p. 188.

⁵⁷⁵ Mikheil Saakashvili, President Mikheil Saakashvili’s Inauguration Speech, January 25, 2004.,cited in., Jaba Devdariani, *Op.cit*, p. 188.

between Georgia and South Ossetia caused relations between Russia and Georgia to deteriorate by Russia stopping to issue visa to Georgians excluding Abkhazia as well.⁵⁷⁶ Georgia was accusing Russia of showing support to secessionist regions.⁵⁷⁷ Concerning Abkhazia during this period, Abkhazia's appeal to Russia for associate status within Russia was a problem since Georgia was insisting on reunification "by any means".⁵⁷⁸ Furthermore, the issue of granting Russian citizenship to Abkhazian residents caused anger in Georgia.⁵⁷⁹

In winter 2006, on the other hand, due to a bombing in the pipeline, gas supply to Georgia was cut off.⁵⁸⁰ Russia was accused of being responsible from the bombing and further from violating Georgian airspace.⁵⁸¹ Furthermore, through a resolution by the Georgian parliament, Russian peacekeepers in Georgia's breakaway republics were declared to be not welcome anymore.⁵⁸² Russia, on the other hand, as a reply to the resolution, imposed almost a total embargo on Georgia's export of wine, mineral water and etc and closed its borderland with Georgia temporarily.⁵⁸³ This increased tension in relations, rised more with the spy scandal between Georgia and Russia in

⁵⁷⁶ Andrei P. Tsygankov and Matthew Tarver-Wahlquist *Op.cit*, p.310.

⁵⁷⁷ *Ibid.*,pp.310-311.

⁵⁷⁸ The Vice President of Abkhazia, Valery Arshba, "We want to be Russia's protectorate as in 1810 so that it could help to preserve the (ethnic rights) of the Abkhaz people and prevent war." See *Interfax*, June 15, 2004, <http://www.interfax.com>, cited in., Oksana Antonenko, "Frozen Uncertainty: Russia and the Conflict over Abkhazia", Brune Coppeters and Robert Legvort, (Eds.), *Statehood And Security, Georgia After the Rose Revolution*, The MIT Press, Cambridge, 2005, p.253.

⁵⁷⁹ Oksana Antonenko, "Frozen Uncertainty: Russia and the Conflict over Abkhazia", Brune Coppeters and Robert Legvort, (Eds.), *Statehood And Security, Georgia After the Rose Revolution*, The MIT Press, Cambridge, 2005, p. 255.

⁵⁸⁰ Giragosian, Richard. (2006) Georgia: Gas Cutoff Highlights National Security Flaws. *RFE/RL*, February 2, 2006; Saakashvili, Mikheil. (2006a) Ya ne schitayu, chto kogo-to ubivat' – eto metod. *Kommersant*, February 27., cited in Andrei P. Tsygankov and Matthew Tarver-Wahlquist, *Op.cit*, p.311.

⁵⁸¹ *Ibid.*,p.311.

⁵⁸² *Kommersant*. (2006) Gruzinskiy parlament prishel k vyvodu rossiyskikh mirovortsev. *Kommersant*, July 91., cited in Andrei P. Tsygankov and Matthew Tarver-Wahlquist, *Op.cit*, p. 311.

⁵⁸³ Andrei P. Tsygankov and Matthew Tarver-Wahlquist, *Op.cit*, p.311.

2006.⁵⁸⁴ However, while problems were being experienced in relations, Russia completed its removal from two remaining military bases in Georgia.⁵⁸⁵

The spy scandal in September 2006 caused tension to increase more in Georgia-Russia relations. Russia responded by taking severe measures against Georgia such as stopping all transport and postal links between Georgia and Russia, deporting many Georgians in Russia and harrassing Georgian-run businesses in Russia.⁵⁸⁶ Furthermore, during that priod of crisis, Gazprom also discussed to double the price of gas to Georgia.⁵⁸⁷

As a reaction to Russia's attitude, Georgia prefered to turn to the international community and appealed to the European Court of Human rights by accusing Russia to be xenophobic in April 2007.⁵⁸⁸ Further, in October 2007, Georgia declared its intention to formally end Russia's peacekeeping mandate in Abkhazia.⁵⁸⁹ Considering all, Georgia continued its Western orientation. Georgia's NATO membership process operated smoothly.

In January 2008, presidential elections in Georgia was perceived and presented as a new opportunity to improve Georgia-Russia relations as if it was the case in the period just after the Rose Revolution. Nevertheless, though Saaashvili referred to opening a new page in relations, by Russia, it was indicated that the improvement in

⁵⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, p.311.

⁵⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, p.311.

⁵⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, p.311.

⁵⁸⁷ *Ibid.*,p.311.

⁵⁸⁸ Saakashvili, Mikheil. (2006b) Unprovoked Onslaught. *Wall Street Journal*, October 12, 2006; Tchourikova, Natalia, and Kathleen Moore. (2006) Georgia: Burdjanadze Seeks Support In Row With Moscow. *RFE/RL*, October 10, 2006., cited in., Andrei P. Tsygankov and Matthew Tarver-Wahlquist, *Op.cit*, p. 311.

⁵⁸⁹ Andrei P. Tsygankov and Matthew Tarver-Wahlquist, *Op.cit*, p. 311.

relations with Georgia was dependent to specific acts from Georgia.⁵⁹⁰ Furthermore, the recognition of Kosovo's independence by the Western world in February 2008 including the US was met with great reaction by Russia.⁵⁹¹

After this critical turning point, Georgian-Russian relations turned to an open confrontation. Russia after several days from the recognition of Kosovo as an independent state, lifted sanctions on Abkhazia.⁵⁹² This was followed with Russia increasing the number of Russia peacekeepers in Abkhazia and reconstruction of a railroad ending the blockade of Abkhazia by Georgia.⁵⁹³ Russia's increased rapprochement with the breakaway republics led also tension between the breakaway republic and Georgia. Further, in April Putin issued a decree establishing direct relationship with both Abkhazia and South Ossetia.⁵⁹⁴

The increased tension between the sides in the following months, led to the emergence of the August 2008 War which was followed with the recognition of Abkhazia and South Ossetia as independent states by Russia. After the August war, relation between Georgia and Russia was in its lowest level and diplomatic relations was suspended.

c.Georgia Relations with Russia After the 2008 August War

After the August 2008 War, Georgia's relations with Russia remained strained. Diplomatic relations between Georgia and Russia, except the issue of Russia's

⁵⁹⁰ BBC Russian. (2008) Tblisi-Moskva: Lyubov' S Chistovo Litsa. BBC Russian, January 11., cited in Andrei P. Tsygankov and Matthew Tarver-Wahlquist, *Op.cit*, p. 312.

⁵⁹¹ Andrei P. Tsygankov and Matthew Tarver-Wahlquist, *Op.cit*, p. 312.

⁵⁹² *Ibid.*,p.312.

⁵⁹³ *Ibid.*,p.312.

⁵⁹⁴ *Ibid.*,p.312

membership to the World Trade Organisation, have not been renewed.⁵⁹⁵ Russia continued its policies in Abkhazia and South Ossetia. Furthermore, establishment of military bases in Abkhazia and South Ossetia for a period of 49 years was agreed with the breakaway republics.⁵⁹⁶ Considering all, Georgia continued to declare its intention for integration to Western organisations. During the period after the August war, both Russia and Georgia blamed each other for several developments leading relations to get more strained.

Georgia's change of the visa regime, more specifically lifting the visa requirements for Russians living in North Caucasus was perceived by Russia as an attempt destabilising the North Caucasus and Russia, also accused Georgia of giving support to the Islamic insurgents living in the North Caucasus region.⁵⁹⁷

Another issue constituting problem between Georgia and Russia was Georgia's changed attitude concerning the Circassian question. After the war, Georgia organized two international conference in Tbilisi concerning the Circassian issue. Following the conferences, on 20 May 2011, Georgian parliament adopted a resolution recognising the nineteenth century Circassian deportations by Czarist

⁵⁹⁵ "Georgia-Russia: Learn to Live like Neighbours" *Crisis Group Europe Briefing*, N°65, 8 August 2011, p.1.

⁵⁹⁶ David Darshiashvili, "A war with no winners: a re-examination of the Russian-Georgian Conflict After four years on", 3 August 2012, http://www.thecommentator.com/article/1485/a_war_with_no_winners_a_re_examination_of_the_russian_georgian_conflict_four_years_on

⁵⁹⁷ "Georgia-Russia: Learn to Live like Neighbours" *Crisis Group Europe Briefing*, N°65, 8 August 2011, p.8; In February 2010, Russian security forces killed the Egyptian fighter Makhmoud Mohammed Shaaban, a supposed founder of the North Caucasus al-Qaeda network who had been fighting in that region for many years. When reporting his death, the FSB alleged he had carried out "acts of sabotage to blow up railway tracks, electricity lines, and energy pipelines at the instructions of Georgian secret services". Officials also regularly make statements concerning the Pankisi Gorge, populated by a few thousand ethnic "Kists" (Georgians of ethnic Chechen background); "Russia says killed top local al-Qaeda militant", RFE/RL, 4 February 2011; "В Дагестане уничтожен один из организаторов кавказской сети Аль-Каиды" ["One of the organisers of the Caucasian al-Qaeda network was killed in Dagestan"], Channel 1, 3 February 2010., cited in "Georgia-Russia: Learn to Live like Neighbours" *Crisis Group Europe Briefing*, N°65, 8 August 2011, p.7.

Russia as genocide.⁵⁹⁸ This act was perceived by Russia as if “Georgia was playing a political card against the Circassian subjects and playing it under the Olympic Games”⁵⁹⁹. Considering the fact that the 2014 Winter Olympics will be held in Russian port city of Sochi which carried also great meaning considering the Circassian deportations, Russia perceived this act as if Georgia was sabotaging the 2014 Winter Olympics.

Russia’s membership aim to the World Trade Organisation and Georgia blocking its membership constituted another problem in relations. Due to the fact that, diplomatic relations between Georgia and Russia were not renewed, negotiations concerning Russia’s membership to the WTO was undertaken through the mediation of Switzerland since 2010.⁶⁰⁰ The disagreement over Russia’s membership was overcomed in 2011 and after the approval of Russian Parliament Duma in July 2012, on 21 August 2012, Russia’s membership to WTO officially started.⁶⁰¹

Concerning economic relations between Georgia and Russia, considering the fact that there is a clearly imbalanced situation in economic relations, in 2009, while Russia was the 5th largest trade partner of Georgia, Georgia was the 46th trade partner of Russia.⁶⁰² Furthermore, in economic relations, Russia’s investments in Georgia

⁵⁹⁸ Amie Ferris-Rotman, “Russian Olympics clouded by 19th century deaths”, Reuters, 21 March 2010., cited in., Georgia-Russia: Learn to Live like Neighbours” *Crisis Group Europe Briefing*, N°65, 8 August 2011, p.9.

⁵⁹⁹ “Хлопонин: Грузия разыгрывает «черкесскую карту» к Олимпийским играм” [“Khloponin: Georgia is playing the ‘Circassian card’ in the Olympics Games”], Vzlyad, 14 July 2011.,cited in, Georgia-Russia: Learn to Live like Neighbours” *Crisis Group Europe Briefing*, N°65, 8 August 2011, p.9.

⁶⁰⁰ Georgia-Russia: Learn to Live like Neighbours” *Crisis Group Europe Briefing*, N°65, 8 August 2011, p.10.

⁶⁰¹ “Rusya`nin DTÖ Üyeliği”, 23 August 2012,
<http://www.1news.com.tr/yazarlar/20120823053430667.html>

⁶⁰² Georgia-Russia: Learn to Live like Neighbours” *Crisis Group Europe Briefing*, N°65, 8 August 2011, p.11; “EU Bilateral Trade and Trade with the World: Georgia”, Eurostat, 8 June 2011., cited in Georgia-Russia: Learn to Live like Neighbours” *Crisis Group Europe Briefing*, N°65, 8 August 2011, p.11.

have been important. Though after the war, foreign direct investments decreased in Georgia by 16 percent in 2010 compared to 2009, it is argued that Russian investments increased in specific sectors such as energy, telecommunication, financial sector and etc and constituted 9 percent of the total.⁶⁰³ Though increase of Russian investments were something that Sakkashvili wanted to see in Georgia, there were also some criticisms that since Russian businesses were state owned companies, this increase of Russian investment would cause Russia to expand its influence in Georgia.⁶⁰⁴ Furthermore, after the war, in 2009, both Georgia and Russia made energy deals including the joint operation of the Inguri hydroelectric power station. This was followed in March 2011, first by the signing of a memorandum of understanding concerning the parallel operation of the Inter RAO-UES⁶⁰⁵ (Russian state controlled utility firm) and the Georgian energy systems.⁶⁰⁶ One month later in April 2011, another memorandum of understanding was signed concerning

⁶⁰³ “FDI in Georgia by Country”, at www.geostat.ge/. Dutch investment was almost 26 per cent, that of the U.S. just under 20 per cent. “Объем прямых иностранных инвестиций в Грузии в 2010 году составил 553 миллиона долларов” [“Total foreign direct investment in Georgia accounted for 553 million dollars in 2010”], PIK Television, 11 March 2011., cited in Georgia-Russia: Learn to Live like Neighbours” *Crisis Group Europe Briefing*, N°65, 8 August 2011, p.11.

⁶⁰⁴ Among other Russian companies doing business in Georgia are Itera, VTB Bank, mobile operator Beeline, the gas station chain “Lukoil Georgia”, the copper mining company “Madneuli”, the silver and gold mining company “Kvartziti” and the electricity distribution company Energo Pro Georgia. Nino Tamazashvili, “ბანკები და ფინანსები : რუსული კაპიტალის ექსპანსია საქართველოში წარმატებით გრძელდება” [“Expansion of Russian capital in Georgia continues successfully”], Banks and Finance (Tbilisi, 13 February 2011), <http://banksandfinance.ge/banks/print?page=1,2148-rusuli-kapitali.html>. See also “სად ვეძებოთ რუსული ფული” [“Where to Look for Russian Money”], Kvirispalitra, 14 August 2009; Vladimir Papava, “Post-Soviet Economic Relations between Georgia and Russia: Reality and Development Potential”, in George Khutishvili and Tina Gogueliani (eds.), Russia and Georgia: The Ways Out of Crisis (Tbilisi, 2010), pp. 24-47., cited in Georgia-Russia: Learn to Live like Neighbours” *Crisis Group Europe Briefing*, N°65, 8 August 2011, p.11.

⁶⁰⁵ Inter RAO owns two hydropower plants in Georgia (Khramhesi-1 and Khramhesi-2) and plans to build three more for \$193 million by 2016. in Manana Vardiashvili, “ანტირუსული რიტორიკა და რუსული ინვესტიციები” [“Anti-Russian rhetoric and Russian investments”], Liberali, 5 May 2011., cited in Georgia-Russia: Learn to Live like Neighbours” *Crisis Group Europe Briefing*, N°65, 8 August 2011, p.12.

⁶⁰⁶ Georgia-Russia: Learn to Live like Neighbours” *Crisis Group Europe Briefing*, N°65, 8 August 2011, p.12.

cooperation in the electric power industry.⁶⁰⁷ Considering all, though existence of tense relations in diplomatic, political and military fields, economic side of the relations seemed to be shaped and continued based more on practical and pragmatic considerations and realities.

Considering the overall characteristics of relations, in the light of the argument that Russia's main objective was "not the occupation of South Ossetia and Abkhazia but to destroy the current government and regime and further to change the regime in Georgia"⁶⁰⁸, the question of whether Russia will be able to change the government and regime in Georgia looking to the current domestic political life remains unanswered. Regarding Georgia's accusation of Russia for the bombings that took place in Georgia in several dates and for giving support to a spy network in the country⁶⁰⁹, it seems as if Russia aims to destabilise Georgia. After the Parliamentary election held on 1 October 2012, on the other hand, Saakashvili's United National Movement was defeated by Bidzila Ivanishvili's Georgian Dream. In the light of the current situation in Georgia where there has been increased tension between Saakashvili's United National Movement and Prime Minister Bidzila Ivanishvili's Georgian Dream, whether a new process moving Georgia closer to Russia has started or not should be questioned. Sure, any such rapprochement has the potential to change the balance of power dynamics in the region and have concrete implications on Turkey's relations with Georgia.

⁶⁰⁷ JSC "INTER RAO UES" occupies a leading position in Russia's electricity exports and imports. Partly owned by the government, Deputy Prime Minister Igor Sechin was its chair- man when the memorandum with Georgia was signed. , cited in Georgia-Russia: Learn to Live like Neighbours" *Crisis Group Europe Briefing*, N°65, 8 August 2011, p.12.

⁶⁰⁸ James Brooke, "Russia-Georgia Relations Remain Frozen Three Years After Shooting War", 3 August 2011.

<http://www.voanews.com/content/russia-georgia-relations-remain-frozen-three-years-after-shooting-war-126783678/143354.html>.

⁶⁰⁹ Georgia-Russia: Learn to Live like Neighbours" *Crisis Group Europe Briefing*, N°65, 8 August 2011, p.6.

4.3.2 A General Evaluation of Georgia's Relations with the US

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, while defining US foreign policy in the South Caucasus, Svante Cornell argued that “American influence in the South Caucasus gradually but continuously been on the rise since the independence of the South Caucasian states in 1991”⁶¹⁰. Furthermore, it was further argued by Svante Cornell that:

Support for the independence of these states and for their democratisation and integration in Euro-Atlantic structures were initially enunciated as principles of US policy, while Washington identified few crucial national security interests in the region. In the mid-1990s, energy politics grew to become the main driving force of US attention to the region. While the strategic importance of the South Caucasus had been noted, strategic issues did not become a major consideration in the formulation of US policy until September 11, 2001, the events of which made the South Caucasus an important building block of the prosecution of the global war on terrorism. The developments in Eastern Europe, the Middle East and Central Asia in the past three years indicate that American interests in the South Caucasus will continue to grow in the foreseeable future. The ensuing increased American presence in the South Caucasus is nevertheless likely to confront substantial challenges.⁶¹¹

Within this general framework, US policy towards Georgia also after the collapse of the Soviet Union, went through an evolution and transformation. During first years the US foreign policy was based on the principles of supporting the independence and sovereignty of Georgia, promoting democracy and market economy and supporting Georgia's integration to the Euro-Atlantic institutions.⁶¹² Nevertheless, till the mid-1990s, though the absence of definite security interests in Georgia and there was not any significant and concrete US policy in Georgia.⁶¹³ As it is stated in the previous parts of this thesis, US policy towards Georgia was limited by giving humanitarian aid during the ethnic conflicts in Georgia. The US rather than active engagement against Russia, preferred to use international organisations such OSCE

⁶¹⁰ Svante Cornell, “US Engagement in the Caucasus: Changing Years”, *Helsinki Monitor*, No.2, 2005, p.111.

⁶¹¹ *Ibid.*, p.111

⁶¹² *Ibid.*, p.111.

⁶¹³ *Ibid.*, p.111.

and United Nations Friends of Georgia, bilateral assistance programs and fund allocations to international non-governmental organisations.⁶¹⁴ Though there was a call by Shevardnadze to then President of the US Bill Clinton for a possible NATO intervention to the ethnic conflicts in Georgia, the US rejected to use NATO and refrained from getting confronted with Russia.⁶¹⁵ For that period, it can be well argued “the US policy was particularly unclear because of institutional confusion and a lack of coherence in the decision making process.”⁶¹⁶.

Since the mid-1990’s, the US policy towards Georgia started to evolve and adapted itself to the changing regional conjuncture. The growing importance of the Caspian Base energy resources and the strategic importance of their secure transfer to Western markets made Georgia strategically important for the US. The US in order to reduce Moscow’s influence over its southern neighbours, favored the Baku-Tblisi-Ceyhan pipeline.⁶¹⁷ Regarding the existence of frozen conflicts in Georgia and the instability and chaotic situation in Georgia, the provision of stability, sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of Georgia became important more than anything for the secure transfer of energy from East to the West. Furthermore, the pipeline project was also supposed to help stabilizing the region by reducing rather than stimulating conflict.⁶¹⁸

⁶¹⁴ Halil Siddik Ayhan, “Dynamics of Alliance Between Turkey and the US: The Case of South Caucasus”, Unpublished M.S Thesis, Bilkent University, Ankara, July, 2003, p.132.; Robert M. Cutler, “Georgia/Abkhazia”, *Foreign Policy Focus*, p.3., http://carleton-ca.academia.edu/RobertMCutler/Papers/219049/Georgia_Abkhazia

⁶¹⁵ See *Jamestown Monitor*, January 5, 1998, cited in Glen E. Howard, “NATO and the Caucasus: the Caspian Axis,” in (ed) Stephen J. Blank, *NATO After Enlargement: New Challenges, New Missions, New Forces*, September, 1998, p. 203., <http://www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/pdffiles/pub140.pdf>

⁶¹⁶ Damien Helly Giorgi Gogia, “Georgian Security and the Role of the West”, Bruno Coppieters and Robert Legvold (Eds.), *Statehood and Security, Georgia after the Rose Revolution*, the MIT Press, p. 276.

⁶¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p.277.

⁶¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p.277.

In the light of that, security and political relations between the US and Georgia became important since the mid-1990's. Georgia's participation to the Partnership for Peace program in 1994 and the intensification of military relations between US and Georgia constituted challenges for Russia in the region.

Considering the intensification of relations between the US and Georgia, the 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks against the US, constituted a turning point in the characteristics of the US-Georgia relations. It was argued that the terrorist attacks of 11 September, 2001 significantly modified the US policy in the region.⁶¹⁹ James Nixey referring to the 11th September 2001 attacks argued that:

After the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001, the American-led 'Global War on Terror' ensured that the South Caucasus became of military-strategic importance as a potential launch pad for US military forces en route to the Middle East or Afghanistan. It was also seen as a threat in terms of being a possible source of radicalized Islam (especially in parts of northern Georgia).⁶²⁰

This increased strategic importance of Georgia for the US had concrete implications in US-Georgia military relations particularly on issues of bilateral and multilateral partnerships in the fields of security, fighting terrorism, conducting peacekeeping operations in Afghanistan and Iraq, and sharing intelligence.⁶²¹ First, the nature of military relations changed with "a new \$64 million 'Train-and-Equip' programme in 2002–03 which was designed to provide better capability for Georgia's border management (as a result of US concern about Islamic fundamentalist elements in the Pankisi Gorge)"⁶²². The programme included the supply of military helicopters and

⁶¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p.276.

⁶²⁰ James Nixey, "The South Caucasus Drama in three stages", *Amerika and a Changed World A question of Leadership*, Robin Niblett, (Ed.) Chatham House, Royal Institute of International Affairs, p.126.

http://www.chathamhouse.org/sites/default/files/public/Research/Americas/us0510_nixey.pdf

⁶²¹ Fariz Ismailzade, "Us Policy towards the south Caucasus: How To move Forward", *Caucasus Analytical Digest*, No.13, 15 February 2010, p. 6.

⁶²² 'Train' involved approximately 200 US military trainers teaching four Georgian battalions in infantry tactics for facing down small-scale security threats. 'Equip' included the provision of uniforms, small arms and light weaponry and communications equipment., cited in James Nixey, "The South Caucasus Drama in three stages", *Amerika and a Changed World A question of Leadership*, Robin Niblett, (Ed.) Chatham House, Royal Institute of International Affairs, p.127.

subsequent training for Georgian pilots and ground support personnel.⁶²³ This was followed by the creation and training of a Georgian rapid-deployment force specializing in anti-terrorist operations.⁶²⁴ The training would include the training of 1.500 Georgian soldiers and officers at several military bases throughout the country by about 200 US military expert.⁶²⁵ Furthermore, through the defense cooperation agreement between the US and Georgia, the US personnel also get some privileges in Georgia such as the right of entry without any visa requirement and exemption of Georgian jurisdiction.⁶²⁶ Georgia gave unlimited access right to its airspace for the US operations in Afghanistan. Considering the US' increasing influence and existence in the South Caucasus after 11 September, this rapprochement between the US and Georgia was perceived as a threat by the Russian Federation and it was stated that this rapprochement between the US and Georgia would give harm to Russian-Georgian relations.⁶²⁷ Furthermore, on January 2004, by the US Ambassador in Georgia, it was declared that US military existence would continue training the Georgian army in a full-time programme which meant that US military would continue to stay in Georgia.⁶²⁸

In 2003, an important political development in Georgia which had regional implications as well was the Rose Revolution which affected the nature and characteristic of US-Georgia relations as a whole.

http://www.chathamhouse.org/sites/default/files/public/Research/Americas/us0510_nixey.pdf

⁶²³ Jaba Devdariani, "US and Georgian officials move to next phase of military deployment", 4 March 2002,
<http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/46a484c81e.html>

⁶²⁴ *Ibid.*

⁶²⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶²⁶ Kamer Kasım, *Soğuk Savaş Sonrası Kafkasya*, USAK Yayınları, Ankara, 2011, p. 188.

⁶²⁷ *Ibid.*, p.188.

⁶²⁸ Natalia Antaleva, "US military will stay in Georgia", 18 Ocak 2004,
<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/3406941.stm>

First, the Rose Revolution was perceived as an attempt of democratisation by the US. It was further argued that:

The timing of the Rose Revolution was fortunate for the young English-speaking leaders because their dramatic rise to power and bold commitments to join the West fit in precisely with President George W. Bush's publicly stated goal of promoting democracy around the world.⁶²⁹

Nevertheless, the presentation of the Rose Revolution to the world public was also criticized. It was argued that: "The Rose Revolution was presented as having made Georgia democratic in a matter of weeks, rather than a high-profile incident in Georgia's complex political development, which would have been more accurate."⁶³⁰

In the process after the Rose Revolution, the US support for the development of democratic institutions in Georgia unfortunately turned to a support for the Georgian Government itself.⁶³¹ This, by time, caused bilateral relationship between two states to turn to bilateral relationship between two regimes.⁶³² Thus, all these referred to a personalized type of relationship between Bush and Sakaashvili.⁶³³ Furthermore, there was a special partnership between the US and Georgia during US' Iraq operation. Referring this partnership, it was also argued that: "While the Bush administration was losing international legitimacy and respect, Saakashvili publicly proclaimed that Georgia and the United States shared "common values."⁶³⁴

⁶²⁹ Alexander Cooley and Lincoln A. Mitchell, "No Way to Treat Our Friends: Recasting Recent US-Georgia Relations", *The Washington Quarterly*, January 2009, p. 29.

⁶³⁰ *Ibid.*, p.29.

⁶³¹ Alexander Cooley and Lincoln A. Mitchell, "No Way to Treat Our Friends: Recasting Recent US-Georgia Relations", *The Washington Quarterly*, January 2009, p. 29.

⁶³² *Ibid.*

⁶³³ *Ibid.*

⁶³⁴ Saakashvili used this phrase as recently as in a speech during Vice President Cheney's trip to Tbilisi in September of 2008. See, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2008/09/20080904.html>., cited in Alexander Cooley and Lincoln A. Mitchell, "No Way to Treat Our Friends: Recasting Recent US-Georgia Relations", *The Washington Quarterly*, January 2009, p. 29.

As well as the increased US financial and military support to Georgia, one of the important event was US President Bush's visit to Georgia in 2005. During his two day visit to Georgia on 9-10 May 2005, Bush, during his speech called Georgia as "the beacon of liberty"⁶³⁵ and considering the ethnic conflicts in Georgia, indicated that "the country's chief political issue settling the conflicts in Abkhazia and South Ossetia should be resolved through peaceful means".⁶³⁶ Furthermore, Bush while "denied that his government would militarily assist Tbilisi in its conflict with breakaway regions Abkhazia and South Ossetia"⁶³⁷, warned "Kremlin to drop their support for the breakaway republics, insisting that "the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Georgia must be respected by all nations."⁶³⁸

The US also had initiatives for any possible solution of the Abkhaz and South Ossetian conflicts on behalf of Georgia. Before the Rose Revolution, there were talks that the US might financially help for the withdrawal of the Russian military bases from Georgia in return of ensuring change in Russia's attitude towards Abkhazia.⁶³⁹ Nevertheless, then the US ambassador in Tbilisi, Richard Miles, indicated that Washington did not seek a larger role in the search for an Abkhaz political settlement.⁶⁴⁰ In the process after the Rose Revolution, the US indicated that the existence of Russian peacekeepers was an obstacle for any possible settlement of the

⁶³⁵ Simon Whelan, "Bush visit to Georgia increases tensions with Putin government", 18 May 2005, <http://www.wsws.org/en/articles/2005/05/geor-m18.html>

⁶³⁶ "Bush Visit to Georgia is a Political Victory", 10 May 2005, <http://www.eurasianet.org/departments/insight/articles/eav051105.shtml>

⁶³⁷ Simon Whelan, "Bush visit to Georgia increases tensions with Putin government", 18 May 2005, <http://www.wsws.org/en/articles/2005/05/geor-m18.html>

⁶³⁸ *Ibid.*

⁶³⁹ Jaba Devdariani, "United States Drawn in as Russia, Georgia Debate Abkhazia", *Eurasia Insight*, 5 March 2003, <http://www.eurasianet.org/departments/insight/articles/eav030603a.shtml>

⁶⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

conflicts.⁶⁴¹ Furthermore, by John Tefft, US Ambassador to Georgia in 2005, dissatisfaction with the existing mediation framework was expressed and it was added that Washington was interested in providing Russia with assistance in dealing with many challenges it faces throughout the Caucasus region.⁶⁴² This statement of John Tefft was important and reflecting a shift in US policy towards a more active role for the settlement of the conflicts. While till 2008, the US suggested Georgia to work within existing peace settlement frameworks for Abkhazia and South Ossetia which allowed for Russian peacekeeping, this changed with the US support to Georgia's call for the formation of alternative mechanisms.⁶⁴³ On the other hand, Washington's support for Georgia's efforts to restore the country's territorial integrity was expressed.⁶⁴⁴ This standing and attitude of the US, on the other hand, was evaluated and criticized as if the US was not interested with a peace settlement but more with the provision of territorial integrity in Georgia.⁶⁴⁵ The latest attempt of the US concerning the conflicts, before the start of the August War, was in July 2008 when then US Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Matthew Bryza went to Sukhum to push for talks between Abkhaz and Georgian leaders, nevertheless, due to the different and reverse preconditions of the sides, US attempts were useless.⁶⁴⁶

⁶⁴¹ Mark David Simakovsky, "US Diplomacy Strives to Keep South Ossetia Conflict in Check", *Eurasia Insight*, 29 September 2005, <http://www.eurasianet.org/departments/insight/articles/eav093005a.shtml>.

⁶⁴² Mark David Simakovsky, "US Diplomacy Strives to Keep South Ossetia Conflict in Check", *Eurasia Insight*, 29 September 2005, <http://www.eurasianet.org/departments/insight/articles/eav093005a.shtml>.

⁶⁴³ Jim Nichol, "Russia-Georgia Conflict in South Ossetia: Context and Implications for U.S. Interests", *CRS Report for Congress*, 24 October 2008, pp.24-25.

⁶⁴⁴ Mark David Simakovsky, "US Diplomacy Strives to Keep South Ossetia Conflict in Check", *Eurasia Insight*, 29 September 2005, <http://www.eurasianet.org/departments/insight/articles/eav093005a.shtml>.

⁶⁴⁵ Alexander Cooley and Lincoln A. Mitchell, "No Way to Treat Our Friends: Recasting Recent US-Georgia Relations", *The Washington Quarterly*, January 2009, p. 32.

⁶⁴⁶ Elizabeth Owen, "US Pushes For Talks Between Leaders of Georgia and Abkhazia", *Eurasia Insight*, 27 July 2008. <http://dev.eurasianet.org/departments/insight/articles/eav072808bf.shtml>

As if as a response to this shifting US policy that caused the tension between Georgia and Russia to increase more, Russia took some measures. Concerning Russian actions, it was argued that:

The Russian government in March 2008 formally withdrew from economic sanctions on Abkhazia imposed by the Commonwealth of Independent States, permitting open Russian trade and investment. Of greater concern, President Putin issued a directive in April 2008 to step up government-to-government ties with Abkhazia and South Ossetia. He also ordered stepped up consular services for the many “Russian citizens” in the two regions.⁶⁴⁷

After this decision of Russia, though there was not a public decision of the UN Security Council, the US with Great Britain, France and Germany called on Russia to not implement its decision and stated that they were highly concerned about Russia’s action.⁶⁴⁸

Considering the fact that, US policy could not have prevented the beginning of the August War and further Russia’s recognition of the breakaway republics- Abkhazia and South Ossetia, US policy during the war and its aftermath had implications over US-Georgia relations, as well. Though there were several statements of the US concerning the developments, then Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Matthew Bryza presented the most detailed Administration position on the events in Georgia.⁶⁴⁹ He indicated that the outbreak of fighting in Georgia’s breakaway South Ossetia region on the night of August 7-8 was preplanned and provoked by Russia.⁶⁵⁰ Furthermore, he added that “whoever shot whom first is now no longer the issue at all. It is that Russia has escalated so dramatically and brutally...”⁶⁵¹. On the other

⁶⁴⁷ Jim Nichol, “Russia-Georgia Conflict in South Ossetia: Context and Implications for U.S. Interests”, *CRS Report for Congress*, 24 October 2008,p.25.

⁶⁴⁸ “Germany, Great Britain, France, U.S.A. and Germany Passed Communique,” *Black Sea Press*, April 24, 2008., cited in Jim Nichol, “Russia-Georgia Conflict in South Ossetia: Context and Implications for U.S. Interests”, *CRS Report for Congress*, 24 October 2008 p.25.

⁶⁴⁹ Jim Nichol, “Russia-Georgia Conflict in South Ossetia: Context and Implications for U.S. Interests”, *CRS Report for Congress*, 24 October 2008,p.27.

⁶⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

⁶⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p.28.

hand, Bryza indicated that “the Administration in early August had “strongly recommended” to Georgia “not to engage in a direct military conflict with Russia.”⁶⁵²

In the light of all, the main question and unclear point was why Georgia engaged in a war with Russia though the US strongly recommended not to engage? Or to ask another way, why the US could not be able to prevent Georgia to engage in a war against Russia? Considering the nature and characteristic of US-Georgia relations at that time, it was a more likely result that Georgia would not have engaged a war with Russia. This situation, though is hard to explain properly, was evaluated by some scholars. It was argued that there were mixed signals from the US just on the eve of the war which referred to the point that there could have been encouraging signals from unofficial channels to Georgia.⁶⁵³ Furthermore, it was argued that:

Beyond unofficial signals, the nature of the official relationship between the two countries since the 2003 Rose Revolution made it difficult for Washington to restrain its close ally. After more than four years of never publicly criticizing Georgia, even after the crackdown of November 2007, it was unlikely that private official U.S. warnings would dissuade the Georgian government from an action that was viewed as essential to its regime’s survival. While these warnings may have been crystal clear, it was probably equally clear to the Georgian leadership that there would be no consequences for ignoring them, as there had been no consequences for ignoring private U.S. warnings before.⁶⁵⁴

Concerning US policy towards Georgia during this period, it was argued that:

U.S. policy toward Georgia was confined by its inability to clearly see the deteriorating state of Georgian democracy and domestic politics, which was moving the country toward a devastating military confrontation with an aggressive and hostile Russia in a futile attempt to restore Georgian territorial integrity. The tilted U.S. view made it difficult for Washington to act in a manner consistent with its own regional interests. As it continued to see the frozen conflicts through Georgian eyes, the United States never fully understood the extent to which Abkhazia and South Ossetia were unlikely to be brought back into Georgia on Tbilisi’s terms.⁶⁵⁵

⁶⁵² *Ibid.*

⁶⁵³ Alexander Cooley and Lincoln A. Mitchell, “No Way to Treat Our Friends: Recasting Recent US-Georgia Relations”, *The Washington Quarterly*, January 2009, p.35.

⁶⁵⁴ *Ibid.*,pp.35-36.

⁶⁵⁵ *Ibid.*,p36.

While above quotations may somehow give an answer to the question above, it is experienced that US-Georgia relations in the aftermath of the August 2008 War, started to change its nature. To say the least, the much personalized type of relations between Bush and Saakashvili no more existed. Furthermore, the Presidential elections in the US and Obama being elected as new president of the US had concrete and immediate implications on US-Georgia relations. The August 2008 War, Georgia's so called NATO membership, Georgia's role in the East-West Energy Corridor and internal developments in Georgia have been the major foreign policy issues of the US in Georgia.

Concerning the August 2008 War, the first reaction of the US was to condemn Russia's intervention and consider Russian act as overriding the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Georgia.⁶⁵⁶ Furthermore, on 19 August 2008, the US warned that in case Russia did not obey principles of the ceasefire agreement, the Civil Nuclear Cooperation Agreement between the US and Russia, Russia's position in international community, the future of NATO-Russia Council and processes of Russia's membership to World Trade Organisation and Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development would be damaged.⁶⁵⁷ While Russia's act was evaluated as a hostile act that threatened the international system, Obama emphasized the US's aim to re-evaluate relations with Russia through a constructive strategy.⁶⁵⁸ The US President Obama in his Moscow visit in July 2009 openly supported Georgia's independence and the right of Georgia to choose its own partners and stated that Russia violated the territorial integrity of Georgia.⁶⁵⁹

⁶⁵⁶ Barack Obama, "US Policy toward Russia", *Council on Foreign Relations*, 7 Kasım 2008; (http://www.cfr.org/bios/11603/barack_obama.html#20), cited in Ahmet Öztürk, *Op.cit*, pp.9-10.

⁶⁵⁷ Barack Obama, "Obama's Remarks to the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW)", VFW National Convention, Orlando, Florida, 19 Ağustos 2008., cited in Ahmet Öztürk, *Op.cit*, p.10.

⁶⁵⁸ Ariel Cohen, "The Russian-Georgian War: A Challenge for the U.S. and the World", Heritage Foundation, *WebMemo Sayı: 2017*, 11 Ağustos 2008; (<http://www.heritage.org/research/RussiaandEurasia/wm2017.cfm>), cited in Ahmet Öztürk, *Op.cit*, p. 10.

⁶⁵⁹ Interfax, 6 Temmuz 2009., cited in Ahmet Öztürk, *Op.cit*, p. 10.

Following Obama's Moscow visit, on 14 July 2009, "the USS Stout" a war ship of the US Navy, anchored in Batumi Port for a joint naval excercise.⁶⁶⁰

Considering the Russian military presence in Abkhazia and South Ossetia and the fact that both Abkhazia and South Ossetia are no more de facto parts of Georgia, expressions of the US supporting independence and territorial integrity of Georgia did not seem satisfactory considering the necessity of a more concrete policy. Furthermore, Obama's decision to re-start the evaluation of the Civil Nuclear Cooperation Agreement in the Congress by claiming that the situation in Georgia was not an obstacle for the re-evaluation of the agreement, was a sign of the fact that the US would not prefer its relations with Georgia vice versa its relations with Russia.⁶⁶¹

During that period, US-Georgia relations also intensified under NATO framework considering Georgia's intention to become a member of NATO. It was argued that: "Georgia's main alignment is actually with the US, but Tbilisi prefers it to be conducted under the NATO umbrella in order to deter Russia from attacking Georgia."⁶⁶²

As part of the US containment policy against Russia, the US supported the enlargement of NATO towards the East and membership of Georgia. In the NATO summit in Bucharest, through the opposition of France and Germany, Georgia and Ukraine were not offered Membership Action Plan.⁶⁶³ These decisions taken in

⁶⁶⁰ Vladimir Socor, "US Policy Toward Georgia at a Crossroads", *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, Vol: 6, No: 134, 14 July 2009
[http://www.jamestown.org/single/?no_cache=1&tx_ttnews\[tt_news\]=35260](http://www.jamestown.org/single/?no_cache=1&tx_ttnews[tt_news]=35260)

⁶⁶¹ Ahmet Öztürk, *Op.cit*, p. 11.

⁶⁶² Alberto Priego, "NATO Cooperation Towards the South Caucasus", *Caucasian Review of International Affairs* Vol. 2, No.1,Winter 2008,pp.4-5.

⁶⁶³ Roger McDermott, "New Russian Military Doctrine Opposes NATO Enlargement", *Eurasia Daily Monitor*,
9 Subat 2010;
http://www.jamestown.org/single/?no_cache=1&tx_ttnews%5Btt_news%5D=36023

NATO summits were also claimed to be provoking reasons for the beginning of the August 2008 War for Russia. In the light of that, it was argued that the lack of consensus within NATO concerning Georgia's NATO membership, encouraged Russia for its interference to Georgia since Russia believed that it would not meet with a unified and strong opposition.⁶⁶⁴

In the following period, for the Obama Presidency in the US, the US policy towards the membership of Georgia and Ukraine could not go further than the NATO Summit where the decision that Georgia and Ukraine were not ready for NATO membership was taken.⁶⁶⁵ Further, it is argued that the Obama administration concerning Georgia's NATO membership, also started to conduct a reset policy and put its "B Plan"⁶⁶⁶ into operation.⁶⁶⁷ In his article " Will Georgia's Afghan 'Surge' Pay Off?", Brian Whitmore argues that:

Mikheil Saakashvili has made his country's Western integration a cornerstone of his presidency since coming to office in 2004, and received strong support from the previous U.S. administration of George W.Bush. But the Obama administration, distracted by priorities elsewhere and wary of antagonizing Russia, has not given Saakashvili the level of attention he enjoyed from the Bush White House. Georgia has also seen its prospects dwindle under mounting critique of its democratic record and the country's disastrous war with Moscow in August 2008.⁶⁶⁸

During the Bush Presidency, on January 2009, Charter on Security Partnership was also signed between the US and Georgia.⁶⁶⁹ In the aftermath of the Russian-Georgian

⁶⁶⁴ Kamer Kasım, *Soğuk Savaş Sonrası Kafkasya*, USAK Yayınları, Ankara, 2011, p. 190.

⁶⁶⁵ Alexander Jackson, "The Obama Administration's Emerging Caucasus Policy", *Caucasian Review of International Affairs*, Sayı: 31, 27 Nisan 2009., cited in Ahmet Öztürk, *Op.cit*, p. 13.

⁶⁶⁶ Steven Pifer, "Ukraine, Georgia and MAP – Time for Plan B", The Brookings Institution, 29 Ekim 2008; (http://www.brookings.edu/opinions/2008/1029_nato_pifer.aspx), cited in., Ahmet Öztürk, *Op.cit*, p. 13.

⁶⁶⁷ Ahmet Öztürk, *Op.cit*, p. 13.

⁶⁶⁸ Brian Whitmore, " Will Georgia's Afghan 'Surge' Pay Off?", RFE/RL, 10 December 2009, http://www.rferl.org/content/Will_Georgia_Afghan_Surge_Pay_Off/1900458.html

⁶⁶⁹ Jim Nichol, "Russia-Georgia Conflict in August 2008: Context and Implications for U.S Interests", *CRS Report for Congress*, March, 2009, p. 28.

War, this development was evaluated by Georgian Foreign Minister Grigol Vashadze as a stepping stone which would bring Georgia to membership within NATO.⁶⁷⁰ Nevertheless, By David Smith, it was argued that:

The Charter is partial recovery from NATO's failure to grant Georgia a Membership Action Plan at its Bucharest Summit last April and from Washington's paralysis as Russian tank treads crushed American geopolitical interests in the South Caucasus last August. It is a broad, unequivocal statement to Georgia, to Europe and to Russia that America supports Georgia as a matter of principle and of interest and that it will not be bullied into abandoning its strategic partner.⁶⁷¹

Furthermore, he added that "It is now up to the Obama administration to fill this Charter with content"⁶⁷². Thus, this refers to the fact that relations under Obama Presidency were expected to be more different than it was under the Bush Presidency and how Obama would fill in the content constituted a problematic.

Beyond Georgia's NATO membership, Georgia's contribution to NATO forces in Iraq and Afghanistan also became important issues in the US-Georgian relations. Georgia with 2000 forces was a major contributor to the US-led mission in Iraq. Nevertheless, during the August 2008 War, Georgian forces in Iraq were withdrawn from Iraq and it is argued that this was done as a secret reaction to the US and European countries which Georgia could not get the required support from.⁶⁷³ Nevertheless, in the mid 2009, Georgia decided to send almost 1000 troops to Afghanistan.⁶⁷⁴ With this contribution, Georgia became the largest contributer to NATO forces in Afghanistan regarding the per capita of contributors.

⁶⁷⁰ David J. Smith, "The Prospects for the US-Georgia Charter on Strategic Partnership", 25.02.2009, <http://www.cacianalyst.org/?q=node/5049>

⁶⁷¹ David J. Smith, "The Prospects for the US-Georgia Charter on Strategic Partnership", 25.02.2009, <http://www.cacianalyst.org/?q=node/5049>

⁶⁷² *Ibid.*

⁶⁷³ Ahmet Öztürk, *Op.cit.*, p.14.

⁶⁷⁴ Brian Whitmore, *Op.cit.*, http://www.rferl.org/content/Will_Georgias_Afghan_Surge_Pay_Off/1900458.html

Concerning Georgia's contribution, Head of Georgia's National Security Council Eka Tkeshelashvili said that:

Our main message is that Georgia, which is a country under threat, is not just a consumer of security but a frequent contributor as well. I believe our partners understand this. "The contingent we're sending to Afghanistan might shame Western European countries in its size and content. But we're not doing this to shame others, only to demonstrate that we're ready to stand with our partners.⁶⁷⁵

Edward Lucas, correspondent of "Economist" and author of the book "The New Cold War" explained Georgia's contribution in spite of the diminished US interest as:

The Georgians know they are in a difficult neighborhood and that American interest creates a kind of tacit security guarantee against further Russian aggression. And anything that keeps America feeling engaged and grateful is good.⁶⁷⁶

Considering all, while U.S Secretary of State Hillary Clinton said that the US was very grateful for Georgia's contribution to this important mission, it was argued that the Obama administration, while acknowledging Georgia's right someday to join NATO, is unlikely to take their support further.⁶⁷⁷

Another important issue concerning the US -Georgia relations has been Georgia's role in the US energy policy in the South Caucasus. Considering the US policy to provide and promote the energy supply security, to guarantee the secure transfer of energy from the Caspian Base region to the West and to promote the independence, stability and prosperity of the states in the region, to exclude Russia in the transfer of the energy from the East-West Energy Corridor became one of the major objective of the US.

Considering Georgia's role in the US energy policy, the Baku-Tiblisi- Ceyhan Pipeline was the first major project where the US supported Georgia against Russia. Through the support given to Georgia as a gateway for the project, Russian pressure

⁶⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

⁶⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

over Georgia was aimed to be diminished and Georgia was expected to be more integrated to the West by gaining its economic prosperity. While developments in the region showed that the Baku-Tiblisi-Ceyhan pipeline could not be enough to prevent Russia's pressure over Georgia, after the August 2008 War, how the US would conduct its energy policy towards Georgia became important. Due to the low level of stability and security in Georgia, big investments in energy projects became more risky than it was before. Within this framework, the US policy towards new energy projects such as Nabucco and Georgia's so called role became important. Since the increased Russian existence in the region became an important security threat for the already functioning energy projects, how the US would conduct its energy policy and how much it would be successful were main problematics.

The Obama's administration began to shape its energy policy with the appointment of Richard J. Morningstar as a special envoy to Secretary Clinton on Eurasian energy issues.⁶⁷⁸ Considering the signing of the Nabucco support agreements, Richard Morningstar indicated that:

It's certainly helpful. I think that it shows that the governments involved are still very strongly in favour of a Nabucco pipeline. There are commercial issues that we can talk about but I think it's very helpful that the agreement is being signed.⁶⁷⁹

Though the US is a strong supporter of the project and it is suggested that the Obama Administration is hoping for the Nabucco project to be a repeat of the successful BTC pipeline, at an energy conference, Richard Morningstar indicated that Nabucco would not be a panacea for Europe's energy problems.⁶⁸⁰ Though project support agreements were signed, there remained major problems about the gas supply of the

⁶⁷⁸ Alexander Jackson, "The Obama's Administration's Emerging Caucasus Policy", CU Issue 31, April 27, 2009.

http://cria-online.org/CU_-_file_-_article_-_sid_-_37.html

⁶⁷⁹ "Nabucco Support Agreements Signed by Transit Countries", 8 June 2011,
<http://news.az/articles/economy/38040>

⁶⁸⁰ "The Obama's Administration's Emerging Caucasus Policy", *Op.cit*,
http://cria-online.org/CU_-_file_-_article_-_sid_-_37.html

project.⁶⁸¹ On the other hand, considering the US policy towards Nabucco, Georgia does not pay a special role and importance but rather the US objective is to balance Russia's dominance and monopoly in energy projects in the region. Furthermore, the fact that Nabucco is recently declared to be null, it seems as if Russia has been more beneficial in energy policy.

Regarding internal developments in Georgia, during the Obama administration, it seemed as if Saakashvili started to lose its credibility for the US. After the August 2008, though Saakashvili and his party gained the local elections in Georgia in May 2010, his credibility was questioned by the US. Even during Joe Biden's visit to Georgia, he paid attention to get in contact with the opposition leaders in Georgia.⁶⁸² In such an environment, it was expected from the new US administration to show the previous support to Georgia. The new standing of the Obama administration was explained in different ways. First, it was argued that a key change in US-Georgia relations was that they no longer have a personal nature.⁶⁸³ Concerning W. Bush presidency, it was argued that personal factor was as important as political issues in forming Washington's relations towards Georgia and this made Georgia a partisan issue in US politics which was never good for any country.⁶⁸⁴ This new style of the Obama administration was evaluated in different ways. According to Georgian scholar George Khelashvili, since the change of the administration, US support has not gone further than just making statements.⁶⁸⁵

⁶⁸¹ For Further Information see, "Nabucco, Turkey, EU and Obama Geopolitics", 19 July 2009, <http://www.321energy.com/editorials/engdahl/engdahl071909.html>

⁶⁸² See "Biden in Tbilisi", *Weekly Standard Online*, 15 Ağustos 2008; (http://www.weeklystandard.com/weblogs/TWSFP/2008/08/biden_to_tbilisi.asp), cited in Ahmet Özürk, *Op.cit.*, p18.

⁶⁸³ Maia Edilashvili, " Washington's Changed Tone and Georgia's NATO Hopes", p.55. http://www.lfpr.lt/uploads/File/2010-23/Edilashvili_2010_23.pdf

⁶⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

⁶⁸⁵ Khelashvili G., "Obama and Georgia: A Year-Long Awkward Silence," *Caucasus Analytical Digest*, no.13, 15 Feb 2010, p. 9., cited in Edilashvili, *Op.cit*, p. 54.

He argued that:

With the absence of a comprehensible American grand strategy towards the post-Soviet space, Georgia has been left out in cold.... From the perceived potential provider of security in the turbulent region of the Caucasus, Central Asia and the Middle East, Georgia quickly turned into a strategic liability after the war with Russia in August 2008.⁶⁸⁶

Nevertheless, by some scholars, this new style in the US policy was evaluated positively. According to the report prepared by the Center for American Progress it was argued that:

The new atmosphere of diminished antagonism played an important role in preventing several potentially damaging outcomes from occurring, including a repeat of the conflict in Georgia on the anniversary of the August 2008 war.⁶⁸⁷

Alexander Rondeli also describes the nature of the US-Georgia relations as more studious, more concentrated, less personified, less irritating for Russia and most importantly, productive.⁶⁸⁸

After 3 years in office by the Obama administration, one of the major political developments was Saakashvili's visit to Obama in the Oval Office on 30 January 2012. The meeting, though was evaluated in different perspectives, gave important clues about the changing nature of US-Georgia relations. During the meeting, Georgia's contribution to the military operations in Afghanistan, possibility of a free trade agreement with Georgia, commitment on the defense cooperation with Georgia, Georgia's NATO membership and domestic politics in Georgia were the main issues talked between Obama and Saakashvili. Though it was argued that Sakashvili left the

⁶⁸⁶ Maia Edilashvili, *Op.cit*, p.54.

⁶⁸⁷ Charap S., "Assessing the "Reset" and the Next Steps for U.S. Russia Policy", Center for American Progress, 14 April 2010, http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/2010/04/assessing_reset.html, 25/4/2010., cited in Edilashvili, *Op.cit*, pp.54-55.

⁶⁸⁸ Personal interview with Rondeli A., Tbilisi, 20/4/2010., cited in Edilashvili, *Op.cit*, p. 55.

meeting by saying “I am leaving this office very happy.”⁶⁸⁹, on the other hand, it was argued that Saakashvili received colder treatment behind closed doors.⁶⁹⁰

While during the meeting Obama stated that “We will continue to strengthen our defense cooperation,”⁶⁹¹ and “the United States will continue to support Georgia’s aspirations to ultimately become a member of NATO”⁶⁹², how to fill the content of the defense cooperation and how to ensure concrete steps in Georgia’s NATO membership was question marks. Russia could be enraged and that this could only destabilize the delicate standoff with Moscow over Abkhazia and South Ossetia.⁶⁹³ Defense cooperation, on the other hand, was problematic due to the fact that weapons sale to Georgia could not be realized till the Congress demanded for the normalization of US-Georgia military relations.⁶⁹⁴

Furthermore, US policy towards Georgia in order to ensure Russia’s membership to the World Trade Organisation which would be also to the benefit of the US, was important in the sense that Obama was personally engaged in the WTO dispute between Russia and Georgia.⁶⁹⁵ It was further argued that Russia’s accession to WTO was a major success of Obama administration’s reset policy with Russia.⁶⁹⁶

⁶⁸⁹ Thomas de Wall, “Obama-Saakashvili Debriefing with Thomas De Waal”, *Democracy&Freedom Watch*, 1 February 2012, <http://carnegieendowment.org/2012/02/01/obama-saakashvili-debriefing-with-tom-de-waal>

⁶⁹⁰ Yael Levine, “Saakashvili’s Dilemma: Can Georgia’s Leader Keep Power and US Support?”, 18 April 2012, <http://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2012/04/saakashvilis-dilemma-can-georgias-leader-keep-power-and-us-support/256034/>

⁶⁹¹ Thomas de Wall, “More than Georgia on Obama’s Mind”, *National Interest*, 23 February 2012, <http://carnegieendowment.org/2012/02/23/more-than-georgia-on-obama-s-mind/9vn5>

⁶⁹² *Ibid.*

⁶⁹³ *Ibid.*

⁶⁹⁴ For further information, See; Jochua Kucera, “US Congress Demands Renewal of Arms Sales to Georgia”, 17 December 2011, <http://www.eurasianet.org/node/64728>

⁶⁹⁵ For futher information, see., Josh Rogin, “Obama personally engaged in Russia-Georgia WTO dispute”, 26 May 2011,

Signing a free trade agreement with Georgia, on the other hand, was another issue discussed during the meeting. Considering the fact that, in 2011, “U.S. exports to Georgia were worth \$538 million and imports amounted to \$176 million”⁶⁹⁷, sure any such agreement would be to the benefit of Georgia. Nevertheless, there was also some advantages for the US. Concerning that, Thomas De Wall aslo argued that:

For the United States to take advantage of Russia’s WTO accession and for US businesses to trade with Russia under the new rules, Congress must repeal the Jackson-Vanik amendment on trade with Russia. But there is a strong anti-Russia Republican contingent in Congress which will oppose repealing the amendment. Proposing a free trade agreement with Georgia is a good tactic to persuade these people in Congress to drop their objections.⁶⁹⁸

As it may be well argued that the US carried a sensitivity of not annoying Russia, the phrase “formal transfer of power”⁶⁹⁹ referring to Georgia, used by Obama during the meeting had a symbolic meaning at all. Obama’s usage of this phrase was evaluated in different aspects. It was argued that “it did contain a warning to President Saakashvili that he should not try to cling on to power by other means, such as becoming prime minister”⁷⁰⁰. Thus, “It sounded as though Saakashvili was told that Washington expects him not to move to the prime minister’s job”⁷⁰¹.

Considering all, US-Georgia relations during the Obama administration seems to be purified from the personalized type of relations between Bush and Saakashvili. Though the US support to Georgia continues in terms of supporting the territorial

http://thecable.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2011/05/26/obama_personally_engaged_in_russia_georgia_wto_dispute

⁶⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

⁶⁹⁷ Thomas de Wall, “More than Georgia on Obama’s Mind”, *National Interest*, 23 February 2012, <http://carnegieendowment.org/2012/02/23/more-than-georgia-on-obama-s-mind/9vn5>

⁶⁹⁸ Thomas de Wall, “Obama-Saakashvili Debriefing with Thomas De Waal”, *Democracy&Freedom Watch*, 1 February 2012, <http://carnegieendowment.org/2012/02/01/obama-saakashvili-debriefing-with-tom-de-waal>

⁶⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

⁷⁰⁰ *Ibid.*

⁷⁰¹ Thomas de Wall, “More than Georgia on Obama’s Mind”, *National Interest*, 23 February 2012, <http://carnegieendowment.org/2012/02/23/more-than-georgia-on-obama-s-mind/9vn5>

integrity and sovereignty of Georgia and Georgia's integration to the Euro-Atlantic institutions, Obama administration seems as if trying to keep a balance with its relations with Russia and prevents Russia's aggressive attitude in the international system. Sure, this shift in the US policy seems to positively affect Turkey's relations with the US, as well.

CHAPTER V

5. DYNAMICS OF TURKEY'S RELATIONS WITH GEORGIA

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, Turkey faced with a radically changed regional conjuncture in the region. The changing regional context in the South Caucasus with Georgia emerging as an independent but weak, unstable state dealing with territorial and ethnic conflicts, constituted a great challenge both for regional security and security of Turkey. Dynamics of Turkey's relations with Georgia were in a great extent shaped considering this changing regional context in South Caucasus.

Since the beginning of diplomatic relations, discourse on Georgia in Turkey's foreign policy also started to evolve. How much the discourse on Georgia reflected to the practice in foreign policy has been an important point in order to question the so called strategic partnership of Turkey and Georgia. Since the practical aspect of Turkey's relations with Georgia will be examined in the rest parts of the thesis, in order to provide a framework for comparing the rhetoric and practice, evolution of the discourse on Georgia will be explained.

In this context, the aim of this chapter is first to examine the evolution of the discourse on Georgia, then explain the main principles, objectives and instruments of Turkey's relations with Georgia.

5.1 Evolution of Discourse on Georgia in Turkey's Foreign Policy

After the end of the Cold War, the emergence of a new region- The South Caucasus- on the north of Turkey, was source of both opportunities and challenges. Turgut Özal-President of Turkey at the time- in his opening speech in the Turkish Grand National Assembly on 1 September 1991, indicated that after the breaking up of the

Soviet Union and end of the Cold War, Turks gained a historical opportunity to become a regional power and that they should not lose that opportunity.⁷⁰²

In such a changing regional conjonkture with great opportunities as well as challenges, Georgia was not neglected by Turkish policy makers. With the establishment of diplomatic relation in May 1992, in July 1992, Süleyman Demirel- Prime Minister of Turkey at the time- visited Georgia. In Tiblisi Airport, Süleyman Demirel indicated that a new and warm relationship between Turkey and Georgia which got its independence and efforts to be a member of the free world, was about to be built up.⁷⁰³

On 12-13 January 1994, then President of Georgia Shevardnadze visited Turkey and met Süleyman Demirel- then President of Turkey. Süleyman Demirel in his speech regarding the visit stated that: “The level which our relations with Georgia has reached, makes possible to cooperate to find solution of several problems in the region.”⁷⁰⁴

One of the most critical visit from Turkey to Georgia took place on 31 August 1995 by Tansu Ciller-then Prime Minister of Turkey-, after two days from the assasination attempt to Shevardnadze. Tansu Çiller met by Shevardnadze said that: “I am pleased to visit here specially after the accident Mr. Shevardnadze had. I would like to hug my brother Shevardnadze myself and say my recovery wishes.”⁷⁰⁵

⁷⁰² Okan Mert, *Türkiye'nin Kafkasya Politikası ve Gürcistan*, IQ Kültür Sanat Yayıncılık, Eylül, 2004, p. 136.

⁷⁰³ T.C Başbakanlık Basın Yayın ve Enformasyon Genel Müdürlüğü, 30 Temmuz 1992., <http://www.byegegm.gov.tr/ayin-tarihi.aspx>

⁷⁰⁴ <http://www.byegegm.gov.tr/YAYINLARIMIZ/AyinTarihi/1994/ocak1994.htm>, 06.12.2005, T.C. Basbakanlık Basın -Yayın ve Enformasyon Genel Müdürlüğü remi internet sitesidir., cited in, Kamil Uşun, “Geçmişten Günümüzde Türk Gürcü İlişkileri”, Unpublished M.S Thesis, Fırat Üniversitesi, 2006, p.72.

⁷⁰⁵ “Çiller ‘Demirel Koleji’nde””, 01/09/1995, <http://www.zaman.com.tr/yazdir.do?haberno=340117>

Though the visit of then Prime Minister Tansu Çiller was planned before the assassination attempt happened, through the visit, Turkey showed its support to Shevardnadze and Georgia. During this one day visit Tansu Çiller visited also the “Demirel College” in Georgia and indicated that: “The best bridge between Georgia and Turkey is such kind of educational institutions. I congratulate directors of the school for their work and success”.⁷⁰⁶

Regarding the 1992-93 Abkhaz-Georgian War, the evolution of the discourse on Georgia in Turkey had an interesting outlook. Süleyman Demirel regarding the 1992-93 Abkhaz-Georgian war indicated that: “We are saying that territorial integrity should be protected because if there is any objection to territorial integrity it would be impossible to protect peace in the Balkans, the Middle East and the Caucasus.”⁷⁰⁷

Turkey’s official policy towards the Abkhaz-Georgian war has always been in line with promoting the territorial integrity of Georgia under the main principle of finding solutions to the problems through mutual understanding and respect for basic human rights.⁷⁰⁸ While the official policy constituted one side of the coin, Turkey, during the war, did not restrict the activities of the groups and associations of Abkhaz or Caucasus origin.⁷⁰⁹ Furthermore, then President of Abkhazia Vladislav Ardzinba visited Turkey before the war erupted.⁷¹⁰ At the same days, then Prime Minister Süleyman Demirel and Foreign Minister Hikmet Çetin visited Georgia.⁷¹¹ Nevertheless, through the lobbying activities of the diaspora groups and activities,

⁷⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷⁰⁷ ‘Georgia and Turkey agree to strengthen cooperation’, Turkish Daily News, 16 July. 1997., cited in Mitat Çelikpala, “From Immigrants to Diaspora: Influence of the North Caucasian Diaspora in Turkey”, *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol.42, No.3, May, 2006, p. 432.

⁷⁰⁸ Mitat Çelikpala, “From Immigrants to Diaspora: Influence of the North Caucasian Diaspora in Turkey”, *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol.42, No.3, May, 2006, p. 432.

⁷⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, p.431.

⁷¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 431.

⁷¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 431.

Ardzinba visited officials of Turkish Foreign Ministry and Turkish media.⁷¹² The Caucasus-Abkhazia Solidarity Committee founded on 23 August 1992 organized demonstrations in big cities and tried to publicize the Abkhazian issue also by establishing relations with all level of state officials.⁷¹³ A protest was organized outside the Turkish Foreign Ministry demanding the resign of Foreign Minister Hikmet Çetin.⁷¹⁴ As a result of the pressure from the diaspora groups Demirel felt it politic to receive a delegation.⁷¹⁵

As a result of the activities of the Solidarity Committee, a parliamentary debate in the Turkish Grand National Assembly took place. During this parliamentary debate, parliamentarians indicated their thoughts about the government's policy towards Georgia during the Abkhaz-Georgian War. Şadi Pehlivanoğlu- ANAP Parliamentarian- criticized the policies of the government:

A certain time ago, President of Abkhazia came to Turkey with a private invitation..... and requested to meet the Prime Minister and Foreign Minister... They did not accept. Only, General Chairman of ANAP Mesut Yılmaz received President of Abkhazia and met him.⁷¹⁶

Şadi Pehlivanoğlu also added that it was surprising and thought provoking that they were not accepted by the Prime Minister and Foreign Minister.⁷¹⁷ He also criticized Suleyman Demirel's so called statement of "We support every policy of Georgia"⁷¹⁸.

⁷¹² *Ibid.*, p. 431.

⁷¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 432.

⁷¹⁴ P. Robins, *Suits and Uniforms: Turkish Foreign Policy since the Cold War* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2003), p.182., cited in Celikpala, "From Immigrants to Diaspora: Influence of the North Caucasian Diaspora in Turkey", *Op.cit*, p. 432.

⁷¹⁵ 'Cerkesler Basbakanla Gorustu', Marje, No.5 (Oct. 1992), pp.8–14., cited in Celikpala, "From Immigrants to Diaspora: Influence of the North Caucasian Diaspora in Turkey", *Op.cit*, p. 432.

⁷¹⁶ *TBMM Tutanak Dergisi*, Cilt.19, Dönem.19, Yasama Yılı.2, 14. Bileşim, 13.10.1992, p.19.

⁷¹⁷ *Ibid.*

⁷¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p.20.

He said that:

I do not say anything, he may support: nevertheless through this statement, he became engaged in advance. Nevertheless, Georgia, on 14 August, occupied cities of Sohum and Gagra and plundered and behaved cruelly; plundered and exterminated museums and historical documents. Sure, this move is against OSCE terms signed by Georgia. Sure, I do not blame Mr.Demirel. The fault belongs to the Foreign Ministry that gave him this note.⁷¹⁹

Considering all, while during the war, the official discourse on Georgia was formed in a way supporting Georgia's territorial integrity and its policies, within the Turkish Grand National Assembly (TGNA) and diaspora organisations critical discourses were expressed out.

In mid 1990s, discourse on Georgia was shaped in relation with energy cooperation with Georgia. The most concrete example in energy cooperation was the Baku-Tiblisi-Ceyhan pipeline project. Mesut Yilmaz, in his visit to Georgia for signing the agreement on energy cooperation stated that the agreement would promote the development of bilateral relations between Turkey and Georgia.⁷²⁰ Mesut Yilmaz, also, indicated that "Turkey would be ready to reinforce the independence of Georgia and protect Georgia's territorial integrity in each phase"⁷²¹ and added that: "Turkey sees Shevardnadze as the future of Georgia and guarantee for stability in Caucasus and for relations with Turkey."⁷²²

⁷¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p.20.

⁷²⁰ "Shevardnadze'den Bakü Ceyhan Desteği", 14.03.1998.
<http://hurarsiv.hurriyet.com.tr/goster>ShowNew.aspx?id=-9767>

⁷²¹ *Ibid.*

⁷²² *Ibid.*

Süleyman Demirel in his opening speech in the Turkish Grand National Assembly on 1 October 1998, considering the energy cooperation with Georgia said that:

Our close friendship and neighbourhood relations with Georgia which continues its development attempts at a great rate under the leadership of President Shevardnadze and strengthens its democracy, improves in all spheres with a great rate. The peace and stability of Georgia, is an issue of vital priority. We are determined to move further our cooperation with Georgia through good neighbourhood responsibility and partnership solidarity.⁷²³

Beyond energy cooperation, discourse on Turkey's policy towards the return of Ahiska Turks is worth to mention. On 12 July 1995, then Prime Minister Tansu Çiller received a delegation from Ahiska Turks and indicated that Turkey received the problem of Ahiska Turks as her own problem⁷²⁴. She added that: "Ahiska Turks are also our brothers. Feel yourselves comfortable. We are together with all of our brothers."⁷²⁵

Concerning Georgia's policy, then Prime Minister Tansu Çiller indicated that Turkey was happy from the policy of Georgia towards the return of the Ahiska Turks.⁷²⁶ Furthermore, she added that:

We should take it further. We should provide you to live in territories which is your own country. We will do it together. Your sister will be mobilized to explain your just case to the world. Do not wonder, we will make all initiatives and explain your case in world platforms.⁷²⁷

A recent discourse about the return of Ahiska Turks, has been made by Prof. Dr. Orhan Atalay- Parliamentarian from AK Party-. He declared that through the

⁷²³ "Demirel'in TBMM'nin Yasama Yılında Açılış Konuşması", 1 Ekim 1998., http://www.belgenet.com/arsiv/demirel_tbmm1998-2.html

⁷²⁴ "Çiller: "Ahıskalı Türklerle Beraberiz""", 12.07.1995, <http://www.zaman.com.tr/haber.do?haberno=331484&title=ciller-ahiska-turkleriyle-beraberiz>

⁷²⁵ *Ibid.*

⁷²⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷²⁷ *Ibid.*

initiative of Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, Ahiska Turks would be settled to Ahiska by the Georgian State.⁷²⁸ He said that:

Georgian State has changed that law for the return of Ahiska Turks to their motherland. Five thousand families among Ahiska Turks will return to their villages in Ahiska and settle there. The accomodation need of the Ahiska citizens that return and settle to Ahiska will be provided by our government. I can give this good news. Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan is closely interested with this issue. He gave directions for the building of accomodations. Two days ago, with 20 parliamentarians, we went to Georgia and made a series of examinations.....Our aim is to provide these families to return to their motherland and settle there.⁷²⁹

Furthermore, Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan indicated that: "Ahiska Turks constitute the humanitarian bridge between the two countries. Turkey continues cooperation with Georgia for the return of Ahiska Turks to Georgia."⁷³⁰

President of Turkey Abdullah Gül concerning the return of Ahiska Turks to their homeland, indicated that Turkey has always supported Ahiska Turks in their just case.⁷³¹ President Gül added that:

Things that need to be done about ones that want to return to their homeland is being done. This will continue also after that. Nevertheless, the ones who are happy where they are and economically strong and successful may be able to stay there. There should not be such a thought of bringing together all Ahiska Turks in one place.⁷³²

Considering the discourse on Ahiska Turks, it is seen that there has always been a supporting and promoting discourse for their return to their homeland unlike it is the case in practice.

⁷²⁸Mikail İbrahimoğlu, "5 Bin Ahıskalı Türkiye'nin Desteği ile Ahıska'ya yerleştirilecek", 29.12.2011,
<http://www.ahiska.net/haber/319/5-bin-ahiskali-turkiye-nin-deste>

⁷²⁹ *Ibid.*

⁷³⁰ "Erdoğan Sınırda Konuştu", 31.05.2011,
<http://www.sabah.com.tr/Gundem/2011/05/31/erdogan-sinirda-konustu>

⁷³¹ "Cumhurbaşkanı Gül Ahıskalı Türkleriyle Buluştu", 24.05.2010,
<http://www.tccb.gov.tr/haberler/170/49337/cumhurbaskani-gul-ahiska-turkleri-ile-bulustu.html>

⁷³² *Ibid.*

Another critical issue that contribute to shape the discourse on Georgia, has been Turkey's foreign policy towards the Acara Autonomous Republic. In 2004, during the crisis, Ankara followed up the developments closely and called the sides for common sense. On the other hand, Turkey acted with precaution for the future of the Baku-Tiblisi-Ceyhan pipeline. Then Foreign Minister Abdullah Gül indicated that: "A triple mechanism consisting of Turkey, the US, and Russia is working and consultation is being done. Everybody is aware of the importance of BTC pipeline. We hope the problem in Acara is solved as soon as possible."⁷³³ Furthermore, then Foreign Minister Abdullah Gül added that:

Our suggestion to them is to not separating, not challenging the center authority, so not breaking the integrity of Georgia. We help in that issue. We prefer stability in the Caucasus. This stability is for the benefit of both Turkey and the region. As you may know, Georgia has problems not only with Acaria autonomous region but also with other regions, Georgia has internal problems. Turkey's contribution to them is that; (Do not break your internal peace, you made a good choice, center authority should dominate the whole country and territorial integrity of Georgia should not go under risk.) Nevertheless, in each country there may be such internal problems.⁷³⁴

Considering all these developments, during the Rose Revolution and Saakashvili coming to power, Turkey remained silent to the developments in Georgia. There were just a few press statements by the Turkish Foreign Ministry indicating that Turkey was following up the developments with anxiety and wished first of all the establishment of peace and unity in Georgia.⁷³⁵ By Turkish Foreign Ministry, concerning the chaotic situation in Georgia, it was stated that: "Turkey is determined to keep its cooperation based on sincerity and mutual trust with Georgia and support she gave to this friend country."⁷³⁶

⁷³³ "Acaristan'a Ankara Uyarısı", 26.11.2003,
<http://www.radikal.com.tr/haber.php?haberno=96847>

⁷³⁴ "Gül: Acaristan Gürcistan'ın Parçası", 15.03.2004,
<http://hurarsiv.hurriyet.com.tr/goster>ShowNew.aspx?id=209746>

⁷³⁵ During this period, many journalist emphasized that Turkey must develop a more active policy towards Georgia. See., Tuncay Ozkan, *Akşam*, 1 Aralık 2004; Sami Kohen, *Milliyet*, 1 Aralı 2004., cited in Yelda Demirag, "Bağımsızlıktan Kadife Devrime Türkiye Gürcistan İlişkileri", *Uluslararası İlişkiler Dergisi*, Vol.2, No.7, 2005, p.140.

⁷³⁶ No:202 -;24 Kasım 2003, Gürcistan'da 2 Kasım 2003 tarihinde düzenlenen Parlamento seçimleri sonrasında ortaya çıkan karışıklık ortamı hk.

Beyond these brief declarations of the Turkish Foreign Ministry, Ahmet Necdet Sezer received Mihail Saakashvili in his first visit to Turkey in May 2004. Then President of Turkey Ahmet Necdet Sezer indicated that it was among the foreign policy priorities of Turkey to protect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Georgia and find solutions to all problems in Georgia within the framework of these principles.⁷³⁷ Furthermore, Ahmet Necdet Sezer added that they had the same thoughts with Saakashvili for the development of relations between Turkey and Georgia.⁷³⁸

The August 2008 War, was a turning point in the evolution of the discourse on Georgia. Recep Tayyip Erdoğan when visited Georgia indicated that:

Developments happening in friend and neighbour Georgia are being followed with a great sensibility by our nation. We are, as Turkey, supporting the preservation of the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Georgia which is recognized by international law and resolutions of UN Security Council.⁷³⁹

Furthermore, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, concerning the Stability and Cooperation Initiative said that:

We predict that, such kind of a formation which we want in Georgia, may be a stability and cooperation platform based on geography and that pays attention to regional peace and common security, includes economic cooperation and energy security and is in cooperation with ECSP fundamentals and principles that includes common solution to crisis and management mechanism.⁷⁴⁰

Considering Russia's recognition of Abkhazia and South Ossetia, Turkish Foreign Ministry indicated that: "Turkey pays attention to the independence, sovereignty and

http://www.mfa.gov.tr/no_202--_24-kasim-2003_-gurcistan_da-2-kasim-2003-tarihinde-duzenlenen-parlamento-secimleri-sonrasinda-ortaya-cikan-karistiklik-ortami-hk_.tr.mfa

⁷³⁷ "Destek İstedi", 21 Mayıs 2004,
<http://www.turkiyegazetesi.com/HaberDetay.aspx?haberid=205684>

⁷³⁸ *Ibid.*

⁷³⁹ Prof. Dr. Mehmet Can, "Türkiye Dış Politikası'nın Gürcistan-Rusya Savaşı ile İlgili Sınavı", *International University of Sarajevo*, p. 8.

⁷⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p.9.

territorial integrity of Georgia and is apprehensive of the recent developments. Turkey supports the solution of the problems through peaceful ways.”⁷⁴¹

Ahmet Davutoğlu during his visit to Georgia on 4 September 2009 said that Turkey paid attention to bilateral and regional relations with Georgia and that bilateral relations with Georgia was in a good level.⁷⁴² Ahmet Davutoğlu added that:

Turkey and Georgia are strategic partners associated to each other with historical and cultural ties. With this cultural ties, Turkey after Georgia got its independence stood next Georgia and Turkey will continue to be next to Georgia. As our friend and neighbour country, Georgia’s political and economic prosperity and territorial integrity are among the issues we may attention. As it is the case with our all neighbours, we want to establish deep social and economic relations with Georgia. We pay attention to cooperation in our common regions Caucasus and the Black Sea. Because; we know that unless the establishment of peace and stability in Georgia, it is hard to bring peace and stability to the Caucasus.⁷⁴³

On 11-12 February 2011, Ahmet Davutoğlu visited Georgia and met President Sakaashvili and Georgian Foreign Minister Grigol Vashadze. Ahmet Davutoğlu, started his visit in Batum. During the visit, emphasis on Acara Autonomous Region and discourse on regional integration drew attention. Ahmet Davutoğlu said that with the implementation of one window application in Sarp Border Gate, there would be not only cooperation between economies of Turkey and Georgia but economies of two countries would be integrated.⁷⁴⁴

Considering the evolution of the discourse on Georgia, it is obviously seen that there has always been an emphasis on the preservation of territorial integrity and independence of Georgia through peaceful means. Even at issues that may be

⁷⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

⁷⁴² “Ahmet Davutoğlu Gürcistan’da”, 07.09.2009,
<http://www.gdd.org.tr/haberdetay.asp?id=318>

⁷⁴³ *Ibid.*

⁷⁴⁴ Araz Aslanlı, “Davutoğlu`nun Gürcistan ziyareti: Büyük (Birleşik) Kafkasya için küçük bir adım mı?”, 24.02.2011,
<http://www.1news.com.tr/yazarlar/20110224095641284.html>

potential problems between Turkey and Georgia such as Turkey's policy towards the Acara Autonomous Republic and return of Ahiska Turks, discourse in Turkey's foreign policy reflected consent of Turkey-Georgia relations. Whereas, in the rest of the thesis, it will be better seen that the practice was not always the reflection of the discourse. Furthermore, the security emphasis in discourses is worth paying attention in order to better perceive how the provision of stability in Georgia is important for the security provision in the South Caucasus as a whole.

5.2 Main Principles in Turkey's Relations with Georgia

Traditionally, Turkish foreign policy in the post-1923 era was characterized by two core principles.⁷⁴⁵ The first principle concerned Turkey's orientation toward the West, with the objective for full membership in the European Union.⁷⁴⁶ The second principle was the conservative or defensive approach in foreign policy which avoid extra-territorial interests or activities beyond the country's borders.⁷⁴⁷

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, The South Caucasus region emerged as an area of opportunity as well as threat and challenge. Turkish foreign policy was affected by internal developments that were taking place in Turkey such as the Kurdish problem, the rise of Islam and Özal presidency as well as from changing regional dynamics and developments.⁷⁴⁸ Referring to significant changes in Turkish

⁷⁴⁵ Ziya Onis, "Turkey and Post-Soviet States: Potential and Limits of Regional Power Influence", *Middle East Review of International Affairs*, Volume 5, No. 2 - June 2001, p.66.

⁷⁴⁶ Ziya Onis, "Turkey and Post-Soviet States: Potential and Limits of Regional Power Influence", *Middle East Review of International Affairs*, Volume 5, No. 2 - June 2001, p.66.

⁷⁴⁷ On the characterization of Turkish foreign policy during the post-Cold War context and the new foreign policy activism, see Yasemin Celik, *Contemporary Turkish Foreign Policy* (Westport, Conn: Praeger, 1999); Heinz Kramer, *A Changing Turkey: The Challenge to Europe and the United States* (Washington D.C: The Brookings Institution Press, 2000); and Alan Makovsky and Sabri Sayari, eds., *Turkey's New World. Changing Dynamics in Turkish Foreign Policy* (Washington D.C: The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, 2000). On Turkey as a "middle" or "regional" power, see Meltem Muftuler and Muberra Yuksel, "Turkey: A Middle Power in the New Order" in Andrew F. Cooper, ed., *Niche Diplomacy. Middle Powers after the Cold War* (NY, St. Martin's Press, 1997), pp. 184-196., cited in Onis, *Op.cit.*, p.66.

⁷⁴⁸ For further information See. Ziya Onis, *Op.cit.*, pp.66-67-68.

domestic politics that contributed to radical shift in Turkish foreign policy, Ziya Onis said that: "The recent resurgence of Islam and nationalism in Turkish politics broadened the circles of those concerned with foreign policy and trying to influence it."⁷⁴⁹

Furthermore he added that, the influence of non-governmental organizations trying to establish close relations with the nations of the Caucasus increased and further ethnic lobbies from Caucasus descend in Turkey tried to develop close relations, as well..⁷⁵⁰

Thus, this process signified the important linkage between Turkish Foreign Policy and domestic politics. Ziya Onis explained this dramatic change in Turkish foreign policy with the end of the Cold War that presented Turkey both new opportunities and new constraints.⁷⁵¹ The ambiguity in Turkey's geostrategic value to the West combined with the rejection of Turkey's bid to become full member was evaluated as exclusion on cultural grounds by the European Union.⁷⁵²

⁷⁴⁹ On the ideology of "Pan-Turkism", see Jacob M. Landau, *Pan-Turkism from Irredentism to Cooperation* (London: Hurst and Company, 1995). For an analysis of the resurgence of "neo-Ottomanism" in Turkey and the influence on foreign policy behavior, notably in the early and mid-1990s, see M. Hakan Yavuz, "Turkish Identity and Foreign Policy in Flux: The Rise of Neo-Ottomanism," *Critique. Journal for Critical Studies of the Middle East*, No. 12 (Spring 1998): 19-41. Whilst the Balkans constitute a key point of intersection between the two ideologies, the central difference lies in the fact that the former is oriented primarily toward Caucasus and Central Asia, with the latter displaying a more explicit orientation towards the Arab Middle East.cited in, Onis, *Op.cit*, p. 67.

⁷⁵⁰ On the impact of the globalization on Turkish democracy during the course of the 1990s and the rise of identity politics as a key factor in the electoral contest, see Ziya Onis, "Neoliberal Globalization and the Democracy Paradox: The Turkish General Elections of 1999," *Journal of International Affairs* 54, 1 (Fall, 2000): 283-306. It is important to emphasize in this context that the primary focus of the Islamist parties in Turkey such as the Welfare Party or its successor, the Virtue Party, was the Arab Middle East. Their influence over the more secular regimes of the Muslim states in the post-Soviet space remained quite marginal., cited in, Onis,*Op.cit*,.p.67.

⁷⁵¹ For an elaboration of this point see Ziya Onis, "Turkey, Europe and Paradoxes of Identity: Perspectives on the International Context of Democratization," *Mediterranean Quarterly*, 10, 3 (Summer 1999): 109-136 and Meltem Mustuler-Bac, "Through the Looking Glass: Turkey in Europe," *Turkish Studies*, 1,1 (Spring 2000): 21-35, cited in, Onis, *Op.cit*, pp.66-67.

⁷⁵² *Ibid.*

Furthermore, Onis added that:

A deep sense of isolation and insecurity on the part of the Turkish state was a natural corollary of all these influences and--combined with changing regional conditions--encouraged a more activist role. U.S. support for Turkey's involvement in the Middle East, the Balkans, and the Caucasus also played an important part in this change.⁷⁵³

Yasemin Çelik argued that the beginning of the post-cold war era was characterized by a feeling of elation.⁷⁵⁴ A number of politicians as well as scholars suggested that Turkey would have a regional leadership position in the changing international system.⁷⁵⁵ Furthermore, in 1992, Prime Minister Suleyman Demirel, said that with the dissolution of the Soviet Union, a "gigantic Turkish world" was being shaped, stretching from the Adriatic Sea to China.⁷⁵⁶ Turkey had very ambitious goals in the region at the beginning of the post-Cold era but soon due to domestic and regional dynamics, a more realist policy was adapted. On the other hand, Alan Makovski referred the new era in the post-Soviet period as a new activism of Turkish foreign policy.⁷⁵⁷ However, though including signs of "daring and caution"⁷⁵⁸, this new activism did not refer to the abandonment of moderation and caution.⁷⁵⁹

⁷⁵³ On the nature of Turkish-American relations during the post-Cold War era and the conflicts which arose between the two allies by Turkey's attempts to play a regional role, see Kemal Kirisci, "U.S.-Turkish Relations: From Uncertainty to Closer Ties," *Insight Turkey* 2, 4 (October-December 2000): 37-64 and "Turkey and the United States: Ambivalent Allies," *Middle East Review of International Affairs*, 2,4 (December 1998), Ian O. Lesser, "Beyond 'Bridge or Barrier': Turkey's Evolving Relations with the West" in Alan Makovsky and Sabri Sayari, eds., *Turkey's New World. Changing Dynamics in Turkish Foreign Policy*, 203-221 and Kemal Kirisci and Barry Rubin, eds., *Turkey and Its World: Emergence of a Multi-Regional Power* (Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2001). So far, conflicts between the two allies have manifested themselves in the context of the Balkans and the Middle East in relation to the handling of the Bosnian crisis and the position of Northern Iraq. Conflicts can also arise, in the future, however, in the context of the Caucasus and Central Asia especially if the oil pipeline scheme proposed by Turkey is not realized. , cited in Onis, *Op.cit*, p. 67.

⁷⁵⁴ Yasemin Çelik, *Contemporary Turkish Foreign Policy*, Westport: Connecticut, London, 1999, p. 120.

⁷⁵⁵ Çelik, *Op.cit*, p. 121.

⁷⁵⁶ Çelik, *Op.cit*, p.121.

⁷⁵⁷ Alan Makovski, "The New Activism in Turkish Foreign Policy", *Turkey's Role in the 21th Century, SAIS Review*, Vol.19, No.1.

https://muse.jhu.edu/journals/sais_review/v019/19.1makovsky.html

One of the main principles of Turkish foreign policy in the region was to support the sovereignty and independence of the newly independent Caucasus states which included reinforcing their political institutions, building up their economic welfare, outside autonomy and internal social accord.⁷⁶⁰ This was strongly related with the geostrategic importance of the states for Turkey since the region was vulnerable to the rivalry of outside powers and that any instability in the region had the potential to influence.⁷⁶¹

Second, Mustafa Aydin indicated that strengthening national unity and territorial integrity was emphasized.⁷⁶² This was strongly related with Turkey's perception of itself as a statusquo power which referred that Turkey approached any change in its surrounding regions as challenges.⁷⁶³ In this respect, the principle of non-interference to the internal affairs of the states constituted another important principle of Turkish Foreign policy in the South Caucasus.⁷⁶⁴

Furthermore, Russian intervention and policies in South Caucasus played important role in shaping Turkey's relations with Georgia. To prevent Russian influence in the region became important for Turkey's relations with Georgia. Mustafa Aydin indicated that, "Turkey opposed moves from the Russian Federation to stage a

⁷⁵⁸ Malik Mufti, "Daring and Caution in Turkish Foreign Policy", *Middle East Journal*, Winter 1998, .pp.32-50., cited in, Sabri Sayar, "Turkish Foreign Policy in the Post-Cold Era: The Challenges of Multi-Regionalism", *Journal of International Affairs*, Vol.54, No.1, Fall 2000, p. 170.

⁷⁵⁹ Sabri Sayar, "Turkish Foreign Policy in the Post-Cold Era: The Challenges of Multi-Regionalism", *Journal of International Affairs*, Vol.54, No.1, Fall 2000, p. 170.

⁷⁶⁰ Mustafa Aydin, " Turkey's Caucasus Policies", *UNISCI Discussion Papers*, No.23, May 2010, p.178.

⁷⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p.178.

⁷⁶² *Ibid.*,p.178.

⁷⁶³ *Ibid.*,p.178.

⁷⁶⁴ Gareth Winrow, "Turkey and the newly independent states of Central Asia and the Transcaucasus", *Turkey in World Politics an Emerging Multiregional Power*, Bogazici University Press, Barry Bubin, Kemal Kirişçi,(Eds). İstanbul, 2002, p. 229.

political come back to the region, either through socio-economic inroads it had been able to develop or in the form of Russian soldiers on Turkish borders”⁷⁶⁵. The nature of relations between Turkey and Russia created some critical restrictions over Turkey. Any aggressive policy on Turkish side could alienate Russia but, on the other hand, Russia’s strategic interests in the region, Russian military existence and policies created a security challenge for Turkey. In this respect, the role affiliated to international organisations became important.

Gareth Winrow concerning this, indicated that:”Turkish officials have endeavoured to ensure that disputes and problems in these regions are handled by various security institutions and fora such as the UN, NATO and the OSCE.”⁷⁶⁶ Gareth Winrow, further argued that since it was not possible for Turkey to balance Russian influence on its own, these institutions were important tools for Turkish officials.⁷⁶⁷

The role affiliated to international organisations became important for regional security and military cooperation, as well. While it has become one of the basic principles of Turkish foreign policy to promote the stability of the countries against internal and external threats, Turkey paid crucial importance to operate within the parameters of NATO concerns.⁷⁶⁸ Turkey tried to increase its influence in the region and involved in military and security relations with Georgia under the framework of NATO.⁷⁶⁹ Nevertheless, it is argued that “Russia is still suspicious of the role of the

⁷⁶⁵ Mustafa Aydin, *Op.cit*, p.179.

⁷⁶⁶ For one argument along these lines see Kemal Kirişçi, “New Patterns of Turkish Foreign Policy Behaviour”, in Çiğdem Balın et al (eds.), *Turkey: Political, Social, Economic Challenges in the 1990's*, Leiden, NewYork and Köln: E.J.Brill,1995,pp1.21., cited in., Gareth Winrow, “Turkey’s Relations with the Transcaucasus and Central Asian Republics”, *Perception*, March-May 1996, p.129.

⁷⁶⁷ Gareth Winrow, “ Turkey’s Relations with the Transcaucasus and Central Asian Republics”, *Perception*, March-May 1996, p.129.

⁷⁶⁸ Nasuh Uslu, “The Russian, Caucasian and Central Asian Aspects of Turkish Foreign Policy in the Post Cold War Period”, *Alternatives*, Vol.2, No.3-4, 2003, p.173.

⁷⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p.174.

United States and NATO in the Caucasus and this had a negative impact on Turkey's relations with Russia".⁷⁷⁰

Forming international organisations and initiatives was an important sign of the new activism in Turkish Foreign policy. Nevertheless, this was not the case for all existing international organisations or structure. For GUUAM which was formed practically against the leadership of Russia for the practical aim of defending the oil pipelines passing through the South Caucasus, Turkey acted unwillingly to be part of.⁷⁷¹ To sum up, Turkey acted in accordance with NATO principle and concerns and believed that polarizing the Caucasus into opposing armed camps would not serve to the interests of Turkey and its NATO allies.⁷⁷² Nasuh Uslu argued that:

In spite of the fear of Russian influence or hegemony, Turkish authorities seem not willing to choose confrontation with Russia. They want to prevent the increase of Russian influence by working together with international organisations and by including Russia in initiatives of regional co-operation, which they have sponsored.⁷⁷³

This change in the Turkish foreign policy was more an adaptation to the changing international environment. Thus, rather than a change and revision of the basic principles, objectives and priorities in the foreign policy, it was more a change in the political geography and relationships outside Turkey.⁷⁷⁴

After the AK Party Government came power in Turkey, new principles were in a way defined regarding Turkey's foreign policy. By Ahmet Davutoğlu, this was

⁷⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p.174.

⁷⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p.174

⁷⁷² Gareth M. Winrow, "Turkey and the Caucasus: Domestic Interests and Security Concerns", London: the Royal Institute of International Affairs, 2000, Nasuh Uslu, *Op.cit*, p.174.

⁷⁷³ Uslu, *Op.cit.*, p.174..

⁷⁷⁴ Sule Kut, "The contours of Turkish Foreign Policy in the 1990's", *Turkey In World Politics An Emerging Multiregional Power*, Barry Bubin, Kemal Kirişçi, (Eds.) Bogazici University Press, Istanbul, 2002, p.13.

explained through the statement: “Three methodological and five operational principles drive Turkey's foreign policy today.”⁷⁷⁵

First methodological principle was argued to be the visionary approach of Turkey's foreign policy rather than a crisis oriented approach.⁷⁷⁶ Second, it was to adopt a consistent and systematic approach.⁷⁷⁷ This principle referred to the point that any foreign policy vision in a certain region would not contradict with another foreign policy vision in another region. Third principle was the adoption of a new diplomatic discourse based on the spread of soft power of Turkey in the region.⁷⁷⁸

Additional to these methodological principles, the first operational principle was the promotion of a certain balance between security and democracy.⁷⁷⁹ This referred to the point that security should not be ensured at the expense of freedom in the country. Unless a country ensures this balance, it may not have the chance to establish an area of influence in its environment.⁷⁸⁰ The second operational principle was the zero-problem policy with neighbours.⁷⁸¹ Third principle is pro-active and pre-emptive peace diplomacy which refers to take measures before any crisis emerge or reach a critical level.⁷⁸² Fourth principle is the multi-dimensional foreign policy approach which refers to the point that Turkey's relations with global or regional actors are not in competition with each other but rather complementary.⁷⁸³ Last

⁷⁷⁵ Ahmet Davutoğlu, “Turkey's Zero Problem Foreign Policy”, *Foreign Policy*, 20 May 2010, http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2010/05/20/turkeys_zero_problems_foreign_policy

⁷⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

⁷⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

⁷⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

⁷⁸⁰ Ahmet Davutoğlu, “Turkey's Foreign Policy Vision: An Assessment of 2007”, *Insight Turkey*, Vol.10, No.1, 2008, p.79.

⁷⁸¹ Ahmet Davutoğlu, “Turkey's Zero Problem Foreign Policy”, *Foreign Policy*, 20 May 2010, http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2010/05/20/turkeys_zero_problems_foreign_policy

⁷⁸² *Ibid.*

⁷⁸³ *Ibid.*

principle is the rhythmic diplomacy approach which refers Turkey to have an active involvement in all international issues and organisations which carried importance.⁷⁸⁴

In the light of all, how and in what way these current principles of Turkey's foreign policy were applied to Turkey's relations with Georgia constituted a question mark. Though how much the practical foreign policy implementation fit the principles in rhetoric will be better understood in the rest of the thesis, it can be well argued that there were important litmus tests for Turkey in this regard which caused several criticisms to emerge.

5.3 Main Objectives in Turkey's Relations with Georgia

During first years after the collapse of the Soviet Union, Georgia emerged as a country which Turkey did not pay that much attention.⁷⁸⁵ Nevertheless, this did not mean that there was a complete neglection of Georgia in Turkish Foreign policy.⁷⁸⁶

To promote the territorial integrity and stability of Georgia, to provide the integration of Georgia with Euro-Atlantic organisations, to balance the dominance of Russia in the region, to promote peace, stability and security in the region constituted the main objectives of Turkish foreign policy towards Georgia. Thus, for geo-strategic, political, economical and security concerns, Georgia carried importance for Turkey. For the first years after the recognition of Georgian independence, Turkey's foreign policy could be defined as superficially positive.⁷⁸⁷ Turkey remained officially silent to the ethnic and territorial conflicts and domestic instabilities that Georgia

⁷⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

⁷⁸⁵ Mitat Çelikpala, "From a Failed State to a Weak One: Georgia and Turkish-Georgia Relations", *The Turkish Yearbook*, Vol:XXXVI,p.177.

⁷⁸⁶ *Ibid.*,pp.177-178.

⁷⁸⁷ *Ibid.*,p178.

experienced just after the collapse of the Soviet Union.⁷⁸⁸ On the other hand, Turkey recognized the independence of Georgia and showed respect to the territorial integrity of Georgia. It was further argued that because of the “benign neglect” attitude of Turkey, Turkish-Georgian relations started on a rocky road initially.⁷⁸⁹

This attitude of Turkey started to change during the mid 1990s. The most important reason behind this change was the increasing geo-strategic importance Georgia had on energy transportation. The transportation of the Caspian and Central Asian energy resources via alternative routes became a primary concern.⁷⁹⁰ The strategic partnership in the field of energy transportation was strengthened with cooperation in defense, military and security.⁷⁹¹

Cooperation in defense, military and security was strictly related with security concerns Turkey had. To promote the independence of Georgia and to prevent Georgia to go under Russian influence is vitally important for the security of Turkey. The intention of Russia to continue its military presence in Georgia, the manipulation of the conflicts and its resistant not to abolish its military bases in Georgia all constitutes security threats for Turkey. Thus, in order to prevent the Russian expansion in the South Caucasus, Georgia was important for Turkey as a buffer state.⁷⁹² While during the Cold War, Turkey had a direct border with the Russian Federation, currently against the aggressive policies of the Russian Federation, Georgia stands as a forward defense for Turkey. The Russian military bases and presence in Georgia were important security concerns for Turkey. Furthermore, Georgia had a geostrategic location for Turkey providing its link with Central Asia and direct access to the markets of the West for the Caspian oil and gas. Considering

⁷⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, p.178.

⁷⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 178.

⁷⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 179.

⁷⁹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 178.

⁷⁹² Mustafa Aydin.” Turkey’s Caucasus Policies”, *Op.cit*, p. 178.

all, stability and security of Georgia is regarded as indispensable for the security and stability of Turkey

5.4 Main Instruments in Turkey's Relations with Georgia

Instruments of Turkish Foreign Policy towards Georgia may be mainly separated as hard and soft policy instruments. Energy, security and defense are the main hard policy instruments of Turkish Foreign Policy while international or regional organisations and initiatives, promotion of economic prosperity and democracy are soft foreign policy instruments.

One of the main instruments of Turkey's foreign policy towards Georgia is energy. To ensure the energy supply security and secure the transportation of Caspian energy resources became strategically important for Turkey. This geo-strategic and economic interest of Turkey paved way for the intensification of relations since 1996 and stability and security of Georgia took a primary importance for Turkey.

Security and defense became other important foreign policy instruments of Turkey towards Georgia. The financial military aid transferred to Georgia since the mid 1990's, the military training given to Georgian army for the formation of specialized units and professionalization of the army, reconstruction of military facilities including military bases, logistic support all constituted important instruments of security policy. As well as the bilateral security policy of Turkey towards Georgia, regional and international security organisations became important foreign policy instruments for Turkey. The Black Sea Naval Cooperation Task Force, Partnership for Peace within NATO were some of the important organisations in which Turkey contributed Georgia for the reconstruction of its military and for bringing Georgian military to NATO standards.

International and regional organisations such as the Black Sea Economic Cooperation organisation (BSEC), the Caucasian Alliance Initiative of Turkey in the mid 1990's, the Platform of Cooperation and Stability in the Caucasus initiated by

Turkey just after the 2008 August War were all soft policy instruments of cooperation in Turkey's foreign policy for the promotion of regional cooperation and formation of a regional security framework.

Concluding all, while both hard and soft policy instruments have been used towards Georgia, soft policy instruments rather than an adoption of a neoliberal perspective in Turkey-Georgia relations, reflected more the characteristics of a neorealist perspective based on the usage of soft policy instruments as tools of statecraft for the provision of national interests.

CHAPTER VI

6. TURKEY'S DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH GEORGIA

On 16 December 1991, Turkey became one of the first countries that recognized the independence of Georgia. Furthermore, it was in May 1992 that diplomatic relations between Turkey and Georgia was established.⁷⁹³ This period between December 1991 and May 1992 was a period of precaution in Turkish foreign policy. Although Georgia had declared its independence before the other countries during Gamsakhurdia era on 9 April 1991, the Soviet Union had not collapsed yet and Turkey as well as other countries behaved with precaution and abstained from recognizing Georgia's independence.⁷⁹⁴ The process of recognizing the independences of other countries started after 19 August 1991 nevertheless in that period, Georgia was experiencing a civil war between Gamsahurdia and the opposition forces. While formally Gamsahurida had the power, in practice the country lacked any authority and stability. In such a chaotic political environment, Turkey recognized the independence of Georgia on 16 December 1991 but diplomatic relations started in a further date in May 1992 and this was further followed with the first agreement signed between Turkey and Georgia "Agreement of Friendship, Cooperation and Good Neighbourhood" in July 1992 during the visit of Prime Minister Süleyman Demirel to Georgia.⁷⁹⁵

In this chapter, Turkey's diplomatic relations with Georgia referring to certain definite periods will be examined. As well as the cooperation and overlapping interests between Turkey and Georgia, potential areas of problem and conflicting

⁷⁹³ Kamil Agacan, "Soğuk Savaş Sonrası Türkiye-Gürcistan İlişkileri", *21. Yüzyılda Türk Dış Politikası*, Idris Bal, (Ed.) Nobel Yayın Dağıtım, Ankara, 2004, p. 427.

⁷⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

⁷⁹⁵ Mustafa Aydin, "Kafkasya ve Orta Asya ile İlişkiler", Baskın Oran (Ed.), *Türk Dış Politikası, Kurtuluş Savaşı'ndan Bugüne Olgular, Belgeler Yorumlar*, cilt. II, 6. Baskı, İletişim Yayıncılı, İstanbul, 2002, p. 416.

interests will also be expressed and reasons behind the existence of conflicting interests will be examined.

6.1 Turkey's Diplomatic Relations with Georgia between 1991-1996

The period between 1991 and 1996 was a period of ambiguity in Turkish foreign policy due to the fact that Turkey could not have immediately adapt the changing regional conjonkture after the collapse of the Soviet Union. Turkey's diplomatic relations with Georgia were conducted in a limited and passive manner. Though relations between Turkey and Georgia in general were positive and good, it remained superficial. Nevertheless, there were also potential problems between Turkey and Georgia as it was experienced during the Abkhaz-Georgian conflict with the role of the Abkhaz diaspora in Turkey which will be examined in detail in the following chapter.

Turkey's diplomatic relations with Georgia started in May 1992. Georgia in that period experienced an authority change in the country. Gamsahurdia was taken from power by the Military Conseil and Shevardnadze became the head of the Military Conseil.⁷⁹⁶

The first concrete initiative in diplomatic relations was the official visit of Süleyman Demirel- Prime Minister of Turkey at the time- to Georgia which resulted with the "Agreement of Friendship, Cooperation and Good Neigboorhood" signed in July 1992.⁷⁹⁷ Through this agreement, Georgia agreed on the eastern border of Turkey defined in the Kars Agreement of 1921.⁷⁹⁸ In the introduction part of that agreement, both countries expressed their intention and good faith on the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of each other with respect to the internal affairs

⁷⁹⁶ Ağacan, *Op.cit*, p. 428.

⁷⁹⁷ Ağacan, *Op.cit*, p. 427.

⁷⁹⁸ Mustafa Aydin, *Op.cit*, p. 416.

and external borders.⁷⁹⁹ Furthermore, both states confirmed their loyalty to the Kars Agreement and other agreements signed between the sides which meant that border between Turkey and Georgia was defined permanently.

During this period, there were some opposite views in Georgia towards Turkey. As well as the influence of the Soviet legacy defining the Turks as enemy, the Muslim populated Acara region was the basic reason of the fear felt towards Turkey.⁸⁰⁰ The Acara region was within the “Misak-i Milli”⁸⁰¹ borders of Turkey but with the declaration of the Turkish Republic, the Ajara region remained out of the border of Turkey. The autonomous status of this Muslim populated region was taken under guarantee by Turkey with the Kars Agreement signed in 1921 and in 1989 before the collapse of the Soviet Union, the Sarp border was opened and relations with Batum was established. All those, caused the fear and anxiety against Turkey to stay alive.⁸⁰²

In such an environment, attempts and initiatives on Turkish side contributed to diminish this fear and anxiety in Georgia. The “Friendship, Cooperation and Good Neigboorhood” Agreement signed between Demirel and Sheverdnadze was followed with 6 more agreements related to several areas of cooperation. Furthermore, the medicine and food aid and 50 million dolar credit provided to Georgia which was experiencing hard political problems at that time contributed partially to normalization of the perception in Georgia.⁸⁰³

⁷⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

⁸⁰⁰ Ağacan, *Op.cit*, p. 428.

⁸⁰¹ “Misak-i Milli” is the National Pact consisting of six important decisions by made by the last term of the Ottoman Parliament on 20 January 1820 and published on 12 February 1820. It was later recognized by the Grand National Assembly. It defines the borders of the Turksih Republic and constituted the basis of the Turkish Republic., cited in Prof. Dr. Ahmet Mumcu, “The National Pact and the Turkish Constitution”, Atatürk Araştırma Merkezi Dergisi, No.3, <http://atam.gov.tr/misak-i-milli-ve-anayasamiz/>

⁸⁰² Ağacan, *Op.cit*, pp.428-429.

⁸⁰³ *Ibid.*, p.429.

On the other hand, the “Friendship, Cooperation and Good Neigboorhood” Agreement included some other provisions that carried potential problems between Turkey and Georgia. Both countries confirmed that they would not let to the operation of any group and people and any type of organisation that would work to change the territorial integrity and constitutional order of the other state. In a more specific way, this refered to prevent the operation of PKK in Georgia and the so called Abkhaz seperatists in Turkey.⁸⁰⁴

During 1993, Turkey’s diplomatic policy towards Georgia was not further developed. Georgia was dealing with the Abkhaz and Oset conflicts that prevented it to focus on foreign policy issues. Turkey, on the other hand, during these conflicts, declared its respect to Georgian territorial integrity and due to Russian presence and domination in the region and the large number of Abkhaz people in Turkey, refrained to conduct an active official policy towards Georgia. Nevertheless, Turkey, due to the large number of Circassian people in Turkey, informally let to the operation and support of the organisations to Abkhazia which later became a source of problem in bilateral relations .

On 13 January 1994, as a result of Shevardnadze’s visit to Turkey, Agreement on Security and Cooperation between Turkey and Georgia was signed.⁸⁰⁵ Through this agreement, relations between Turkey and Georgia reached a higher level. This was further followed on 31 July 1995 in a ceremony where President Süleyman Demirel, Prime Minister Tansu Çiller and Deputy Prime Minister Hikmet Çetin and Shevardnadze came together in order to open the Posof-Türkozü border gate.⁸⁰⁶ Later on, on 31 August 1995, after two days from the assasination attempt to

⁸⁰⁴ Aydin, *Op.cit*, p. 417.

⁸⁰⁵ *Milliyet*, 14 Ocak 1994., cited in Mete Taşkin, “Bağımsızlığından Sonra Gürcistan- Türkiye İlişkileri”, Unpublished M.A Thesis, Dokuz Eylül Üniversitesi, 2006, p. 91.

⁸⁰⁶ Mete Taşkin, “Bağımsızlığından Sonra Gürcistan- Türkiye ilişkileri”, Unpublished M.A Thesis, Dokuz Eylül Üniversitesi, 2006, p. 91.

Shevardnadze, Prime Minister Tansu Çiller visited Georgia and Turkey showed its support to Georgia.

To sum up that period, till 1996 where cooperation in the energy sector was included to the bilateral relations between Turkey-Georgia, the nature of the relations were superficially positive. There were common grounds for cooperation between Turkey and Georgia, but internal instabilities in Georgia, Russia's role in the region and ethnic and territorial conflicts in Georgia, role of the Abkhaz diaspora in Turkey all caused Turkey to keep its precaution and to conduct an ambiguous policy.

6.2 Turkey Diplomatic Relations with Georgia between 1996- 2003

Turkey's diplomatic relations with Georgia during this period will be examined including bilateral relations, Turkey's policy towards the Ajara problem and the return of Meskhetians. During this period, including also Turkey's changing attitude towards the Abkhaz problem, it will be stated that Turkey's relations with Georgia are mostly based on cooperation and further on strategic partnership due to the fact that Turkey's national and security interests in Georgia during this period required cooperation with Georgia.

6.2.1. Turkey's Bilateral Relations with Georgia

Diplomatic relations between Turkey and Georgia during 1996 -2003 developed in several aspects. The main visible and primary outcome of increasing cooperation was the cooperation started on the energy sector, more specifically in the Baku-Tiblisi-Ceyhan Oil Pipeline project. Cooperation in the energy sector was reinforced with cooperation in security sector.⁸⁰⁷ In other words, cooperation in military field became somehow the result of cooperation in energy field. During 1996–2003, Georgia has

⁸⁰⁷ Emmanuel Karagiannis, “Turkish-Georgian Partnership and the pipeline Factor”, *Journal of Southern Europe and the Balkans*, Vol.6., No.1, 2004, p.22.

become the most important country for Turkish security whose independence should be protected for all costs.⁸⁰⁸

On 4 April 1996, then President of Georgia- Shevardnadze visited Turkey and agreements on visa implications and opening of a third border gate between two countries were signed.⁸⁰⁹ Shevardnadze declared that during four years following the independence of Georgia, many works that could be fulfilled even during 30 years were undertaken.⁸¹⁰ President of Turkey at the time- Süleyman Demirel- said that:

The Eurasian corridor refers to passing to Central Asia through Georgia. The oil pipelines refer to the construction of Baku-Ceyhan and Baku-Supsa pipelines. Furthermore, it refers to the usage of natural gas pipelines of Georgia by Turkey. It refers to the ports of two countries, the connection of the air and seaways. Here, we signed also that.⁸¹¹

During this visit of Shevardnadze, including also military cooperation, about 10 separate agreements were signed between Turkey and Georgia.⁸¹² This was followed on 14 July 1997 by the visit of then President Süleyman Demirel to Georgia where 7 agreements, protocols and accords were signed with Georgia.⁸¹³ During this official visit, Demirel indicated that Turkey and Georgia were ready for every kind of cooperation for the peace and stability in the Caucasus.⁸¹⁴

⁸⁰⁸ Personel discussions with officials from Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Turkish Armed Forces., cited in., Mustafa Aydin, " Foucault's Pendulum:Turkey in central Asia and The Caucasus", *Turkish Studies*, Vol.5, No.2, 2004, p. 12.

⁸⁰⁹ T.C Başbakanlık ve Basın Yayın Enformasyon Müdürlüğü.
<http://www.byegec.gov.tr/ayin-tarihi.aspx>, 4 Nisan 1996.

⁸¹⁰ T.C Başbakanlık ve Basın Yayın Enformasyon Müdürlüğü.
<http://www.byegec.gov.tr/ayin-tarihi.aspx>, 4 Nisan 1996.

⁸¹¹ T.C Başbakanlık ve Basın Yayın Enformasyon Müdürlüğü.
<http://www.byegec.gov.tr/ayin-tarihi.aspx>, 4 Nisan 1996.

⁸¹² T.C Başbakanlık ve Basın Yayın Enformasyon Müdürlüğü.
<http://www.byegec.gov.tr/ayin-tarihi.aspx>, 4 Nisan 1996.

⁸¹³ T.C Başbakanlık ve Basın Yayın Enformasyon Müdürlüğü.
<http://www.byegec.gov.tr/ayin-tarihi.aspx>, 14 Temmuz 1997.

⁸¹⁴ T.C Başbakanlık ve Basın Yayın Enformasyon Müdürlüğü.
<http://www.byegec.gov.tr/ayin-tarihi.aspx>, 14 Temmuz 1997.

On 29 October 1998, the Ankara declaration was signed between Azerbaijan, Georgia, Turkey, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan.⁸¹⁵ The US also signed the Declaration with the participation of Energy Minister Bill Richardson as a supervisor.⁸¹⁶ Through this declaration political support was expressed out to the Baku-Tiblisi-Ceyhan Pipeline project.⁸¹⁷ On March 1998, then Prime Minister of Turkey Mesut Yılmaz visited Georgia and during this visit, he declared that, Georgia was a strategic and vitally important partner for Turkey for the peace and stability in the Caucasus.⁸¹⁸ Mesut Yılmaz further stated that the Caucasus region should not be a region of penetration for any country and Turkey was perceiving the region as an area of cooperation.⁸¹⁹

Furthermore, during this visit, Mesut Yılmaz also indicated that Turkey since the beginning of events was emphasizing the resolution of the Abkhaz problem with respect to the territorial integrity of Georgia.⁸²⁰ This declaration of Mesut Yılmaz is important to show also the practically changing policy of Turkey against the Abkhaz problem. After 1996, within the context of the improved relations with Georgia, Turkey also adopted the embargo decision of CIS (Commonwealth of Independent States) against Abkhazia and immediately stopped the direct maritime connection between Sukhum and Trabzon.⁸²¹ As well as a continuous flow of passengers, a ferry

⁸¹⁵ T.C Başbakanlık ve Basın Yayın Enformasyon Müdürlüğü.
<http://www.ayin-tarihi.aspx>, 29 October 1998.

⁸¹⁶ T.C Başbakanlık ve Basın Yayın Enformasyon Müdürlüğü.
<http://www.ayin-tarihi.aspx>, 29 October 1998.

⁸¹⁷ Okan Mert, *Türkiye'nin Kafkasya Politikası ve Gürcistan*, IQ Kültür ve Sanat Yayıncılık, 2004, p.343.

⁸¹⁸ T.C Başbakanlık ve Basın Yayın Enformasyon Müdürlüğü.
<http://www.ayin-tarihi.aspx>, 14 March 1998.

⁸¹⁹ T.C Başbakanlık ve Basın Yayın Enformasyon Müdürlüğü.
<http://www.ayin-tarihi.aspx>, 14 March 1998.

⁸²⁰ Cumhuriyet, 15 Mart 1998.cited in Mete Taşkin, “Bağımsızlıktan Sonra Türkiye-Gürcistan İlişkileri”, Dokuz Eylül Üniversitesi, Unpublished M.A Thesis, 2006, p.92.

⁸²¹ Burcu Gültekin Punsmann, Argun Başkan, Kemal Tarba, “Abkhazia for the Integration of the Black Sea”, TEPAV, Report No.8, December, 2009, p. 10.

called Ritsa was operating twice a week between Sukhum and Trabzon till 1996 when the embargo decision was taken against Abkhazia and Turkey started to implement it.⁸²² Since the sea ports were closed, the Abkhaz boats could not also leave to bring goods from Turkey.⁸²³ Thus, the unrecognized republic Abkhazia was fully cut off from the world as a result of the implication of the embargo decision. At that period, Turkish authorities started to conduct a more cautious policy against the Abkhaz organizations and started to restrict and control their activities. In September 1996, Turkish Foreign Ministry informed representatives of Abkhazia in Turkey that, residents of Georgia's breakaway region will no longer be allowed to Turkey with the Soviet type passports issued by the Sukhum authorities.⁸²⁴ This attitude of Turkey referred to the fact that all Abkhaz wishing to enter Turkey need to take valid passports from Georgia. These developments were important in order to show how the deepening of relations between Turkey and Georgia reflected to Turkey's attitude towards the Abkhaz problem.

As well as this pro-Georgian stance in Turkish foreign policy, Turkey's attempt of playing a mediator and peace broker role in the Abkhaz-Georgian conflict by hosting a meeting in Istanbul in 1999 is important to show the regional role Turkey tried to play in the region. Under the supervision of Turkey and the participation of OSCE and the UN, both sides met in Istanbul on 7- 9 June 1999 and a declaration of mutual understanding indicating that the sides would continue their efforts for a peaceful solution of the conflict was signed.⁸²⁵

⁸²² *Ibid.*

⁸²³ *Ibid.*, p.16.

⁸²⁴ Mitat Çelikpala, "From a Failed State to a Weak One? Georgia and Turkish-Georgian Relations", *The Turkish Yearbook*, Vol. 36, 2005, p. 181.

⁸²⁵ *Ibid*, p. 182.

Development in political relations continued with the visit of Shevardnadze on 26-27 February 1999 to Istanbul.⁸²⁶ During this visit, Suleyman Demirel in his address said that Georgia was a close and trustworthy neighbour of Turkey and was a close friend and partner of Turkey in the establishment of peace and stability in the region.⁸²⁷ Shevardnadze, on the other hand, replied to this address by saying that in a very short time lots of works were undertaken and without Turkey, it was impossible for Georgia to develop.⁸²⁸

During 2000's, there were official visits between Turkey and Georgia mainly about regional cooperation initiatives, energy cooperation, economic and military cooperation. On 29 January 2001, Shevardnadze made a two days visit to Turkey and met with then President of Turkey Ahmet Necdet Sezer.⁸²⁹ During this visit, Ahmet Necdet Sezer declared that Turkey would support every efforts made for the independence and political stability of Georgia.⁸³⁰ Furthermore, then Prime Minister of Turkey Bülent Ecevit also met Shevardnadze and stated that there was special and strategic relations with Georgia and added that Georgia's problems were Turkey's problems, also.⁸³¹

Considering these period, it can be well argued that there was an increasing cooperation between Turkey and Georgia named as a strategic partnership. While

⁸²⁶ T.C Başbakanlık ve Basın Yayın Enformasyon Müdürlüğü.
<http://www.byezm.gov.tr/ayin-tarihi.aspx>, 26 February 1999.

⁸²⁷ T.C Başbakanlık ve Basın Yayın Enformasyon Müdürlüğü.
<http://www.byezm.gov.tr/ayin-tarihi.aspx>, 26 February 1999.

⁸²⁸ T.C Başbakanlık ve Basın Yayın Enformasyon Müdürlüğü.
<http://www.byezm.gov.tr/ayin-tarihi.aspx>, 26 February 1999.

⁸²⁹ T.C Başbakanlık ve Basın Yayın Enformasyon Müdürlüğü.
<http://www.byezm.gov.tr/ayin-tarihi.aspx>, 29 January 2001.

⁸³⁰ T.C Başbakanlık ve Basın Yayın Enformasyon Müdürlüğü.
<http://www.byezm.gov.tr/ayin-tarihi.aspx>, 29 January 2001.

⁸³¹ T.C Başbakanlık ve Basın Yayın Enformasyon Müdürlüğü.
<http://www.byezm.gov.tr/ayin-tarihi.aspx>, 30 January 2001.

Shevardnadze in his visit to Turkey in February 1999 named the military cooperation between Turkey-Georgia as strategic partnership,⁸³² Mitat Çelikpala states that, Shevardnadze in a visit to Turkey in February 2001 stated that the relations between the two countries were upgraded to the level of 'strategic partnership'.⁸³³

Considering all, in 2003, during the Rose Revolution, Turkey declared its political support to Georgia one more time when Saakashvili came to power in a very chaotic political environment. Turkish Foreign Ministry in his declaration expressed that:

Turkey sincerely appreciates the establishment of peace and unity in friend Georgia in the shortest time possible and expects that all these developments will no negatively effect the welfare of our neighbour which we conduct friendly relations. Turkey believes that all problems may be overcomed through political understanding and Georgia would continue its succesfull way towards democratization.⁸³⁴

As it may be well seen from the expression above, though including political support, Turkey felt also some anxiety from the devolopments in Georgia during the Rose Revolution and expressed its sensibility against the developments through an emphasis on the words of peace, unity and democratization.

6.2.2 Turkey's Foreign Policy towards the Ajaria Problem

Ajaria is an autonomous region mostly populated by Muslim Georgians. Currently, among an estimated population of around 400.000, %90 are Ajar people- ethnic Georgians who profess Islam.⁸³⁵ According to the Kars Agreement signed in 1921, the sovereignty of Ajaria was taken from Turkey to the Soviet Union and when the Soviet Union collapsed, Ajaria became part of Georgia.⁸³⁶ Furthermore, Turkey had

⁸³² Mustafa Aydin, "Kafkasya ve Orta Asya ile İlişkiler", Baskın Oran (ed.), *Türk Dış Politikası, Kurtuluş Savaşından bugüne Olgular, belgeler, Yorumlar*, Vol.2, 6th Edition, İstanbul, İletişim Yayınları, 2002, pp. 420-421.

⁸³³ Mitat Çelikpala, *Op.cit*, p. 189.

⁸³⁴ Cumhuriyet, 14 Kasım 2003 cited in Mete Taşkın, *Op.cit*, p.96.

⁸³⁵ Resul Yalçın, "Turkey's Primary Concerns in Georgia: An Analysis of Three Cases", *Insight Turkey*, Vol.6, No.2, April-June 2004, p.105.

some rights and obligations derived from the Kars Agreement over the Ajaria Autonomous Republic established in 1921.⁸³⁷

This region constituted a potential area of problem between Turkey and Georgia. Since the first years after independence, Tbilisi carried an anxiety about the close relations between the people in the region and Turkey. Furthermore, the proximity and loyalty of the people in Ajaria was always questioned by the central government and they were perceived closer to Turkey.⁸³⁸ Turkey, on the other hand, abstained to form any relationship with Ajaria that would disturb Georgia.

After the end of the Shevardnadze government, during the 2000's, Ajaria started to act independently from Tbilisi. The presence of the Russian military base in Batum and proximity to Turkey eased the way Ajaria acted.⁸³⁹ During that period, Ajaria demanded more autonomy and they looked for help from Turkey through the Ajarian people living in Turkey.⁸⁴⁰

Just after the Rose Revolution, the problem between Saakashvili and President of Ajaria Aslan Abashidze turned out to a crisis. Archil Gegeshidze argued that “the Sakaashvli-Abashidze quarrel began with Abashidze’s inability to reconcile himself

⁸³⁶ *Ibid.*, p.105..

⁸³⁷ İsmail Soysal, *Türkiye'nin Siyasal Andlaşmaları*, I. Cilt (1920-1945), T.T.K, 1983, s. 41-47., cited in, “Türkiye ile Ermenistan, Azerbaycan ve Gürcistan Arasında Dostluk Andlaşması”, 13 Ekim 1921. http://tr.wikisource.org/wiki/Kars_Antla%C5%9Fmas%C4%B1.

⁸³⁸ The Georgian Minister of National Security, Shota Kviray, claimed in August 1996 that ‘the intelligence services of a neighbouring state’ (a formulation that implies Turkey) attempted to ‘play the religious card in Ajaria’ by engaging in ‘subverting religious activities’. (See Pipeline News, No. 25, 18 August 1996.), cited in Emmanuel Karagiannis, “The Turkish-Georgian Partnership and Pipeline Factor”, *Journal of Southern Europe and the Balkans*, Vol.6, No.1, April 2004, p.17.

⁸³⁹ Karagiannis, “The Turkish-Georgian Partnership and Pipeline Factor”, *Journal of Southern Europe and the Balkans*, Vol.6, No.1, April 2004, p. 17.

⁸⁴⁰ Emmanuel Karagiannis, “The Turkish-Georgian Partnership and Pipeline Factor”, *Journal of Southern Europe and the Balkans*, Vol.6, No.1, April 2004, p.17.

with the outcome of the Rose Revolution.”⁸⁴¹ The crisis emerged when Abashidze closed the border of Ajaria to the rest of Georgia and threatened to boycott the January 4 presidential elections and closed the polls.⁸⁴² Later, though due to the international and domestic pressure, he opened the polls, Abashidze continued his challenging policies through banning campaigning in Ajaria and arresting activists of the Kmara (Enough) group.⁸⁴³ Against these challenging policies of Abashidze, Gegeshidze argued that “Sakaashvili responded with a powerful expression of his claim to authority over the autonomous republic by holding his inauguration in Batumi.”⁸⁴⁴ The crisis escalated further when Saakashvili wanted to make a visit to Ajaria during the campaign for the March 28 Parliamentary elections and Abashidze tried to prevent Sakaashvili’s access to Ajaria.⁸⁴⁵ The reply of Saakashvili was to imply economic sanctions on Ajaria.⁸⁴⁶ As a result of the increased tension, the US and Russia tried to mediate to the crisis. Then the US Foreign Minister Colin Powell requested President Saakashvili to not increase the tension more and indicated that the US soldiers in Georgia would not in any way be involved to the crisis.⁸⁴⁷ Russia, on the other hand, played the biggest and most influential role in the solution of the crisis. After Igor Ivanov- then the head of the Russian Security Council, went to Ajaria and met Abashidze, he could persuade Abashidze to leave the country after a three hours meeting with him.⁸⁴⁸ During the crisis, Turkey’s policy was mostly based

⁸⁴¹ Archil Gegeshidze, “Georgia’s Regional Vulnerabilities and the Ajaria Crisis”, *Insight Turkey*, Vol.6, No.2, April-June 2004, p. 69.

⁸⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 69.

⁸⁴³ *Ibid.*, p.69.

⁸⁴⁴ *Ibid.*,p.69.

⁸⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p.70.

⁸⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p.70.

⁸⁴⁷ “Acaristan için ABD Devrede”, 16 March 2004,
<http://arsiv.ntvmsnbc.com/news/261656.asp>

⁸⁴⁸ “Acarya Krizi Tatlı Bitti”, *Radikal*, 7 May 2004.,
<http://www.radikal.com.tr/haber.php?haberno=115643>

on the principle of seeing the crisis as an internal affair of Georgia.⁸⁴⁹ Furthermore, while the Turkish Foreign Ministry gave the message on behalf of the protection of Georgian territorial integrity, then the Baku Ambassador of Turkey Ünal Çeviköz said that based on Kars Agreement, Turkey have the right of sending soldiers to the region.⁸⁵⁰ After this declaration of Ünal Çeviköz, Foreign Minister Abdullah Gül said that Turkey did not relate this problem with the Kars Agreement.⁸⁵¹ Abashidze, on the other hand, demanded Turkey to play the role of “guarantor state”.⁸⁵² Nevertheless, Turkey did not conduct the policy of playing an active mediator role as Russia did.

Abashidze started to lose his public support and in May 2004 as a result of the public demonstrations in Ajaria supported by Tbilisi, he had to leave the authority and go to Russia.⁸⁵³ Just after the end of the crisis, Foreign Minister of Turkey Ahmet Davutoğlu declared his satisfaction from the peaceful solution of the problem.⁸⁵⁴ By the Turkish Foreign Ministry, it was stated that: “ It has been appreciated that the crisis was solved through peaceful ways thanks to the common sense of the Georgian government.”⁸⁵⁵ Furthermore, the fact that Turkey refrained from getting involved to the problem and perceived the problem as the internal problem of Georgia caused Sakaashvili to evaluate all these attitudes of Turkey constructive for the regional territorial integrity of Georgia. To sum up, Turkey regarding the strategic level of

⁸⁴⁹ Atilla SANDIKLI, “ Gürcistan-Rusya Gerilimi ve Türkiye”, 5 May 2008, http://www.bilgesam.org/tr/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1604:guercistan-rusya-gerilimi-ve-tuerkiye&catid=171:analizler-kafkaslar

⁸⁵⁰ *Milliyet*, 19 March 2004, p. 12. cited in Tuğba Çelebioğlu, “1990 Sonrası Türkiye-Gürcistan İlişkileri”, *Yüksek Lisans Tezi*, Marmara Üniversitesi, İstanbul, 2005, p.67.

⁸⁵¹ *Milliyet*, 6 May 2004, p. 17. cited in Tuğba Çelebioğlu, *Op.cit*, p.66.

⁸⁵² Sami Kohen, “Kafkasya Altüst!”, *Milliyet*, 12 May 2004, p. 26., cited in Tuğba Çelebioğlu, *Op.cit*, p.66.

⁸⁵³ Lincoln Mitchell, “Georgia’s Rose Revolution”, *Current History*, 103, October 2004, p.347.

⁸⁵⁴ “Acarya Krizi Tatlı Bitti”, *Radikal*, 7 May 2004., <http://www.radikal.com.tr/haber.php?haberno=115643>

⁸⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

relationship with Georgia, did not take the risk of having tension with Georgia for the Ajaria issue.

Considering all, Turkey's attitude and policy may be evaluated from different perspectives. Though it may be evaluated as a passive policy challenging Turkey's role in the South Caucasus, on the other hand, thinking the critical geographic location of Ajaria regarding the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline, it may be well argued that Turkey refrained from any escalation of the crisis on its border that would both cause instability that would challenge its interests. Furthermore, most important than all, is that Turkey with an active role in the crisis did not want any confrontation with Russia in the region. Russia would not be happy from any direct involvement of Turkey including sending soldiers to Ajaria. Thus, though all may be evaluated as a loss of prestige by Turkey, at the end of the day, Turkey both achieved to preserve its relations with Georgia and Russia.

6.2.3 Turkey's Foreign Policy towards the Repatriation of Ahiska Turks

During the World War II, Ahiska Turks were deported by Joseph Stalin to Central Asia and Siberia. During 1944, amongst 120.000 Ahiska Turks, 20.000 people died during the deportation.⁸⁵⁶ Ayşegül Aydingün argues that:

The main reason for their deportation was that Stalin did not want to have a Turkish or Turkified population near the border with Turkey for security reasons since during the Turkish-Russian wars, the Turks of the region had always been loyal to the Ottoman Empire.⁸⁵⁷

After their deportation, they were mostly populated in the Fergana Valley in Uzbekistan and they experienced their second tragedy there just before the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1989. In 1989, as a result of the conflicts between Uzbeks and

⁸⁵⁶ Resul Yalçın, "Turkey's Primary Concerns in Georgia: An Analysis of Three Cases", *Insight Turkey*, Vol.6, No.2, April-June 2004, p. 109.

⁸⁵⁷ Aysegul Aydingun, "Ahiska (Meskhetian Turks): Source of Conflict in the Caucasus", *The International Journal of Human Rights*, Vol.6, No.2, pp.49- 50.

Ahiska Turks, 75.000 Ahiska Turks had to leave their country for the second time.⁸⁵⁸ Deported from Uzbekistan, they were sent to Azerbaijan, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan and the Russia Federation.⁸⁵⁹

In 1991, a rehabilitation plan for the return of Ahiska Turks to Georgia were prepared by Gorbachov and presented to the Upper Soviet of the USSR, but due to the collapse of the Soviet Union, this plan could not be implemented.⁸⁶⁰ Till 1999, there were not concrete attempts from Georgia about the return of Ahiska Turks. In 1999, as a condition to be a member of the European Council, Georgia adopted a 12 years program that organizes the return of the Ahiska Turks.⁸⁶¹ Turkey, on the other hand, supported Georgia for the proper implementation of this program conducted by European Council and UN High Commissioner for Refugees.⁸⁶² Nevertheless, there had not been any proper practical implementation of this program.

By the end of 2001, the official number of repatriates to Georgia was 644 persons.⁸⁶³ Furthermore, since the end of 2000, according to the UNHRC statistics, there has been no new Ahiska Turks settled in Georgia.⁸⁶⁴ Considering all, currently, it is

⁸⁵⁸ Resul Yalçın, “Turkey’s Primary Concerns in Georgia: An Analysis of Three Cases”, *Insight Turkey*, Vol.6, No.2, April-June 2004, p. 109

⁸⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

⁸⁶⁰ Resul Yalçın, “Turkey’s Primary Concerns in Georgia: An Analysis of Three Cases”, *Insight Turkey*, Vol.6, No.2, April-June 2004, p. 110.

⁸⁶¹ Resul Yalçın, “Turkey’s Primary Concerns in Georgia: An Analysis of Three Cases”, *Insight Turkey*, Vol.6, No.2, April-June 2004, p. 110.

⁸⁶² *Ibid.*

⁸⁶³ Oskari Pentikainen and Tom Trier, “Between Integration and Resettlement: The Meskhetian Turks”, European Center for Minority Issues, *ECMI Working Paper*, p.16.

⁸⁶⁴ UNHCR Global Report 2001 – Georgia, 383, 384; UNHCR Global Report 2002 - Georgia; telephone interview with UNHCR/Protection Unit, Tbilisi, Georgia, 30.7.2003., cited in Oskari Pentikainen and Tom Trier, “Between Integration and Resettlement: The Meskhetian Turks”, European Center for Minority Issues, *ECMI Working Paper*, p.16.

estimated that 1000 Ahiska Turks live in Georgia.⁸⁶⁵ Though there is a very low amount of return, Ahiska Turks who returned had deep problems in their relations with the local people. By Oskari Pentikainen and Tom Trier, this situation is explained as:

The lack of integration programs and language tuition has made it increasingly difficult for Meskhetian Turks to integrate into society. The lack of Georgian language skills caused problems among the repatriate community with respect to their integration into Georgian society. Many of these obstacles are seen as deliberate attempts by the authorities to prevent a larger repatriation. Georgian public opinion is predominantly against Meskhetian Turks' resettlement to Georgia and popular prejudices seem, to a large extent, to guide the course of debate over the repatriation issue. This is especially the case in Samtskhé-Javakheti, making the promotion of resettlement a daunting task for any politician in the country.⁸⁶⁶

Most of the Georgians thought that Ahiska Turks lost their ties with Georgia.⁸⁶⁷ Furthermore, the propaganda of "Vatan" one of the organisations of the Ahiska Turks for giving autonomy to the region where Ahiska Turks would be placed, caused a reaction in Georgia.⁸⁶⁸ Georgia has been afraid of any possible demand of territory from Turkey in case of any return of Ahiska Turks to the region.⁸⁶⁹ Furthermore, on the southwest part of Georgia, there is a huge Armenian population that lives and with the return of Ahiska Turks to this region, there is high risk of

⁸⁶⁵ Nino Gertsmava, "Meskhetians Make a New Life in Georgia", Institute for War & Peace Reporting Caucasus Reporting Service CRS No. 199 at http://www.iwpr.net/index.pl?archive/cau/cau_200310_199_5_eng.txt, cited in Oskari Pentikainen and Tom Trier, "Between Integration and Resettlement: The Meskhetian Turks", European Center for Minority Issues, ECMI Working Paper, p.16.

⁸⁶⁶ Oskari Pentikainen and Tom Trier, "Between Integration and Resettlement: The Meskhetian Turks", European Center for Minority Issues, *ECMI Working Paper*, p.17.

⁸⁶⁷ Emmanuel Karagiannis, The Turkish-Georgian Partnership and Pipeline Factor", *Journal of Southern Europe and the Balkans*, Vol.6, No.1, April 2004, p.17.

⁸⁶⁸ See J. C. Peuch, 'Georgia: Meskhetians search for cultural identity', RFE/RL Special Report, 25 May 2001., cited in, Emmanuel Karagiannis, The Turkish-Georgian Partnership and Pipeline Factor", *Journal of Southern Europe and the Balkans*, Vol.6, No.1, April 2004, p.17.

⁸⁶⁹ S. Goldenberg, The Pride of Small Nations: The Caucasus and Post-Soviet Disorder, Zed Books, London, 1994, p. 101., cited in, Emmanuel Karagiannis, The Turkish-Georgian Partnership and Pipeline Factor", *Journal of Southern Europe and the Balkans*, Vol.6, No.1, April 2004, p.17.

conflict between these two societies. Georgia thinks that such a situation may cause the involvement of Turkey to the region.⁸⁷⁰

The region which was the homeland of Ahiska Turks currently carries also great strategic importance. The Meskheti-Javakheti region is the route where the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline passes through.⁸⁷¹ The B.T.C pipeline first passes through Akhalsikhe in Meskheti and then through Akhalkalaki in Javakheti. Aysegül Aydingün argues that:

The strategic importance of the region due to the pipeline issue and its ethnic composition, with Akhalsikhe mainly inhabited by Georgians and Akhalkalaki mainly inhabited by Armenians are factors that endanger the return of the Ahiska Turks to their original villages.⁸⁷²

Furthermore, Aysegül Aydingün added that:

The region can be seen as an area of potential conflict, and since peace and stability in the region are important for the construction of the pipeline, the return of the Ahiska Turks is considered as constituting a serious reason for ethnic conflict between Armenians and the Ahiska Turks. That is why certain analysts consider Meskheti-Javakheti the next Nagorno-Karabakh. Russia political and military involvement in the region, both through the support for the return of Ahiska Turks and through encouragement of Armenian unrest could pose a serious threat to the passage of the pipeline as well as the railway through the region.⁸⁷³

⁸⁷⁰ Emmanuel Karagiannis, “The Turkish-Georgian Partnership and Pipeline Factor”, *Journal of Southern Europe and the Balkans*, Vol.6, No.1, April 2004, p.18.

⁸⁷¹ Uğur Akıncı, “Javakhetia: The Battle Neck of Baku- Ceyhan Pipeline”, *Sik Road: A Journal of West Asian Studies*, Vol.1, December, 1997., cited in Aysegül Baydar Aydingün, Ahiska (Meskhetian Turks): Source of Conflict in the Caucasus” *Op.cit.*, p.52..

⁸⁷² Aydingun, “Ahiska (Meskhetian Turks): Source of Conflict in the Caucasus” *Op.cit.*, p.53.

⁸⁷³ *Ibid.*, p.53.

Regarding the fact that, the return of Ahiska Turks also constituted a foreign policy agenda for the Russian Federation, by Aysegül Aydingün, it was stated that:

Considering the significance of the Meskheti-Javakheti for the Russian Federation, one can argue that the repatriation of the Ahiska Turks may have an important impact on the Russian Federation. If they were repatriated in Georgia, this would constitute a solution for Russia concerning the ethnic tensions and human rights violations directed at the Ahiska Turks living in Krasnador Krai through encouraging their repatriation to Georgia. Furthermore, this repatriation would also give Russia the opportunity to destabilize southern Georgia through manipulations aimed to put into danger the Baku-Ceyhan project.⁸⁷⁴

The repatriation of the Ahiska Turks was also directly linked with the full membership of Georgia to the Council of Europe.⁸⁷⁵ While the Council of Europe officially expected Georgia to adopt a legal framework to accommodate the repatriation of the Ahiska Turks⁸⁷⁶, the draft law prepared by the consultations of the Council of Europe and UNHRC was criticized by many legal experts and organizations dealing with the agenda of Ahiska Turks.⁸⁷⁷ While Georgia agreed to provide a legal framework under pressure from international community, the practical reality showed that, Georgia was reluctant in trying to solve the issue.⁸⁷⁸ While in 2001, the Council of Europe and UNHCR urged Georgia for the acceleration of the process of repatriation, there was not any concrete development.⁸⁷⁹ The repatriation of the Ahiska Turks, indeed, emerged as a much

⁸⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, p.58.

⁸⁷⁵ Liz Fuller (RFE \RL), “Georgian Repatriation Service Head Interviewed” at <http://www.rferl.org/caucasus-report/1998/12/42-161298.html>, cited in., Oskari Pentikainen and Tom Trier, “Between Integration and Resettlement: The Meskhetian Turks”, European Center for Minority Issues, *ECMI Working Paper*, p. 34.

⁸⁷⁶ Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly, “Georgia’s Application for Membership of the Council of Europe”, text adopted by the Assembly on 27 January 1999, at <http://assembly.coe.int/Main.asp?link=http%3A%2F%2Fassembly.coe.int%2Fdocuments%2Fadoptedtext%2Fta99%2Feopi209.htm#1>, cited in., Oskari Pentikainen and Tom Trier, “Between Integration and Resettlement: The Meskhetian Turks”, European Center for Minority Issues, *ECMI Working Paper*, p. 34.

⁸⁷⁷ Oskari Pentikainen and Tom Trier, “Between Integration and Resettlement: The Meskhetian Turks”, European Center for Minority Issues, *ECMI Working Paper*, pp. 34-36.

⁸⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 36-37.

⁸⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, pp.37-38.

more important policy agenda for Georgia than Turkey. While it was a sign of Georgia's commitment to its Western orientation and democratisation, on the other hand, sensitivities in Georgian society towards the issue when combined with the socio-economic realities of Georgia, put the process of repatriation at stake.

Furthermore, considering the fact that Ahiska Turks felt themselves identified with Turkey more than Georgia⁸⁸⁰, how Turkey's policy towards the repatriation of Ahiska Turks evolved became much more important. Turkey's policy towards the repatriation of the Ahiska Turks to their homeland carried great ambiguities. While Turkey declared its readiness to offer financial and material support to Georgia for the rehabilitation and considered the rehabilitation as a source of peace in the region, officially the problems experienced by the Ahiska Turks did not concern Turkey much in order not to damage its relations with Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan and Georgia.⁸⁸¹ Ayşegül Aydıngün argues that: "The official position of Turkey concerning all ethnic Turks outside Turkey in general and Ahiska Turks specifically, is to help to keep these people where they are."⁸⁸²

It was during the Turgut Özal Presidency that Turkey had declared that all Ahiska Turks coming to the border of Turkey legally and illegally would be welcomed by Turkey.⁸⁸³ This legal measure was implemented only for a limited period of time and currently the Ahiska Turks that migrate to Turkey are allowed to stay unofficially without getting Turkish citizenship.⁸⁸⁴ While Ahiska Turks had the right of getting the "national refugee" status in Turkey which meant that they are officially entitled to have Turkish citizenship, it was observed that practical implementation did not fit

⁸⁸⁰ Aydingun, "Ahiska (Meskhetian Turks): Source of Conflict in the Caucasus" *Op.cit.*, p.51.

⁸⁸¹ *Ibid.*,p.59.

⁸⁸² *Ibid.*

⁸⁸³ *Ibid.*

⁸⁸⁴ Ayşegül Baydar Aydıngün, "A deported Nationality: Ahiska Turks", Perception, Vol.3, No.4, December 1998- February 1999, p.4.

the official attitude of Turkey.⁸⁸⁵ This situation was explained through the argument that Turkey feared of receiving an unmanageable volume of immigration from Central Asia.⁸⁸⁶ It was further argued that: “The Turkish government provides the communities with little, if any, financial support, but on the other hand it does not prosecute Meskhetian Turks who live illegally in the country.”⁸⁸⁷

To sum up, it can be well argued that considering the repatriation of Ahiska Turks in Turkey, there is lack of political will⁸⁸⁸ and Turkey does not currently have a functioning policy. Considering its relations with regional countries and Georgia and the geo-strategic importance of the Meskheti-Javakheti region since it is on the Baku-Tiblisi-Ceyhan pipeline route, Ahiska Turks have not been in the foreign policy agenda of Turkey.

6.3 Turkey’s Diplomatic Relations with Georgia between 2003- 2009

Turkey diplomatic relations with Georgia between 2003 and 2009 experienced many important developments. The major question related to this period was whether the strategic partnership established in the previous period between Turkey and Georgia would continue. The Rose Revolution in Georgia, the political chaotic situation in

⁸⁸⁵ Aydingun, “Ahıskası (Meskhetian Turks): Source of Conflict in the Caucasus” *Op.cit.*, p.59.

⁸⁸⁶ Oskari Pentikainen and Tom Trier, “Between Integration and Resettlement: The Meskhetian Turks”, European Center for Minority Issues, *ECMI Working Paper*, p.26.

⁸⁸⁷ Interviews with the chairman, Murtaza Hocaoğlu, and members of Ahiska Refugee Turks’ Cultural and Social Assistance Association in Bursa; the vice-chairman of The Federation of Ahiska Turks’ Associations, Hamit Muzafferoglu, and other committee members in 3.9.2003 in Bursa, Turkey; Interview with the chairman of Ahiska Türkleri Yardimlaşma ve Dayanışma Derneği (Ahiska Turks’ Association for Assistance and Solidarity), Mevlüt Temindaroğlu in Bursa; Interview with the chairman of Ahiska Turks’ Educational, Cultural and Social Assistance Association, Rüstem Mürseloglu, in 1.9.2003 in Istanbul, Turkey. Yunusov, “Meskhetian Turks...”, at <http://kavkaz.memo.ru/bookstext/books/id/409933.html#i13>; Ali Gürlek, “Ahıskası Türkliği”, at <http://moyerodina.sitemynet.com/ali/aliindex.htm>., cited in Oskari Pentikainen and Tom Trier, “Between Integration and Resettlement: The Meskhetian Turks”, European Center for Minority Issues, *ECMI Working Paper*, p.27.

⁸⁸⁸ Parikrama Gupta, “De Facto Stateless: The Meskhetian Turks”, *The Central Asia and the Caucasus Journal of Social and Political Studies*, Vol.5, No.41, 2006,, <http://www.ca-c.org/journal/2006-05-eng/11.pr.gupeng.shtml>

the country and Saakashvili coming to power were turning points in Georgian political life and definitely they all have had implications on Turkey's relations with Georgia.

Another important factor was the governmental change in Turkey. AK Party came to power in Turkey in 2002. During 2002–2007, Turkey's relations with Georgia was inactive due to some other domestic and international priorities.⁸⁸⁹ In 2008, on the other hand, the August War created new challenges and opportunities for Turkey's relations in the region and in Georgia.

The Rose Revolution was important in order to show that it was the first time in the history of the Caucasus states that a leader not from the Soviet nomenklatura gained the authority to rule the country. Towards the end of this period, another important event in relations was the August 2008 War and the recognition of South Ossetia's and Abkhazia's independence by Russia. Turkey's foreign policy during the August War became a point of discussion and critic. Attitudes of the Circassian diaspora in Turkey and relations with Russia and the US within this context all constituted important aspects in Turkey's relations with Georgia.

Considering all, in this part, regarding Saakashvili's statements after the Rose Revolution and concerning the developments during the August 2008 War and its aftermath, conflicting interests of Turkey and Georgia will be more outlined and it will be argued that the strategic partnership discourse is challenged.

6.3.1 Effects of the Rose Revolution on Turkey's Relations with Georgia

Saakashvili after getting %96 of the votes in the presidential elections on 4 January 2004, started office on 25 January 2004.⁸⁹⁰ While Ajaria participated to the elections,

⁸⁸⁹ Mustafa Aydin, "Turkey's Caucasus Policies", *UNISCI Discussion Paper*, No.3, 2010,p. 181.

⁸⁹⁰ "Georgia swears in new President", *BBC News*, 25 January 2004,

South Ossetia and Abkhazia did not participate and boycotted elections. On 28 March 2004, the parliamentary elections were renewed and the new government was established through the nomination of Zurab Zhvania as the Prime Minister by Saakashvili.⁸⁹¹

An important argument concerning Turkey's indirect role was that "Turkey played an important role in the period that lead up to the Rose Revolution of the Saakashvili government in terms of strengthening the central state and the government of Saakashvili in Georgia."⁸⁹² Mitat Celikpala in his article "From a failed state to a weak one argues that:

Turkey contributed to the transformation of Georgia from being failed or weak state to being a strong and effective one. By increasing the economic relations with Georgia helping in the military restructuring of the country, Turkey played an indispensable role in strengthening the state structure in his neighbouring nation. It was this new structure that improved the political chances of the new political leader, Saakashvili.⁸⁹³

After the Rose Revolution, the fact that Western oriented leader Saakashvili came to power seemed as a facilitating and positive factor in relations between Turkey and Georgia at the first sight. Nevertheless, there were also some potential areas of risks and challenges for Turkey. While Shevardnadze was a leader trying to conduct a more balanced policy against Russia⁸⁹⁴, Saakashvili as a Western oriented leader gave the first signs of his foreign policy by declaring his intention to integrate Ajaria, South

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/3426977.stm> ; "Saakashvili Inaugurated as New President of Georgia", *Civil Georgia*, 25 January 2004,
<http://civil.ge/eng/article.php?id=6097&search=inauguration>

⁸⁹¹ "Georgia Partial Repeat Parliamentary Elections 28 March 2004", *OSCE/ ODIHR Election Observation Mission Report*, Part 2, Warsaw, 23 June 2004, p. 5.
<http://www.osce.org/odihr/elections/georgia/34196>

⁸⁹² Mitat Çelikpala, " From a failed state to a weak one? Georgia and Turkish-Georgian Relations", *The Turkish Yearbook*, Vol. 26, p.196.

⁸⁹³ *Ibid.*

⁸⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

Ossetia and Abkhazia to Georgia.⁸⁹⁵ This was an important change in Georgian foreign policy that could put Turkey in a hard political situation while balancing its relations against Russia. Within this context, Turkey carried a vital role due to the large Circassian diaspora in the country and the fact that any conflict or political chaos in Georgia could have direct implications on Turkey's role in the region and relations with Georgia, Russia and the US.

In such a context, the first diplomatic move of Saakashvili was to dispatch an envoy to Ankara to reassure the Turkish decision makers of his commitment to the BTC pipeline.⁸⁹⁶ This was followed by the official visit of Saakashvili to Turkey on 20 May 2004 during which Saakashvili met with Prime Minister of Turkey- Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and Turkish Joint Chief of Staff and they expressed their commitment for the continuation of existing programs and projects between two countries.⁸⁹⁷ This visit was important to show that, existing relations with Turkey would continue to be an important agenda for Saakashvili.⁸⁹⁸ During a conference Saakashvili participated during this visit, he said that:

... About relations of Georgia with Turkey, we should say that Turkey and Georgia are strategic partners. During years Turkey has been the country which we had the least problem. Both of us want the stability of the region and we are partners in fighting terrorism..... I am expecting Turkey's support in Georgia's membership to NATO. Both of us want the economic development of the region and develop the energy potential of the region. The interest of Turkey is to see Georgia as a strong, developed country that achieved its territorial integrity. Atatürk never wanted the dissolution and separation of Turkey. Today, we saw a picture in Anıtkabir. Turkey's separation was supposed. Atatürk ensured the territorial integrity of Turkey. As a political leader, for me Atatürk is a ideal personality.⁸⁹⁹

⁸⁹⁵ Suat Kiniklioglu, "Turkey-Georgian Relations in the light of Rose Revolution". 25 December, 2003,
<http://www.suatkiniklioglu.org/tr/makaleler/kadife-devrim-isiginda-turkiye-gurcistan-iliskileri.html>

⁸⁹⁶ Mitat Çelikpala, " From a failed state to a weak one? Georgia and Turkish-Georgian Relations", *The Turkish Yearbook*, Vol. 26, p.197.

⁸⁹⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

⁸⁹⁹ Hasan Kanbolat, "Gürcistan Cumhurbakanı Mikhail Saakasvili: Siyasi bir lider olarak benim için örnük insan Atatürk'tür", *Stratejik Analiz*, Sayı:50, Haziran 2004, ss.21-26., cited in Mert Taşkin, “
200

During the same visit, President of Turkey at the time, Ahmet Necdet Sezer said that:

In recent months, Georgia experienced a very tensioned and hard period. It is satisfactory for all of us that this period was sucessfully got over. I would once more indicate my belief that with the common sense of the Georgian leadership all problems will be solved peacefully. Turkey wants to see a strong and stable Georgia in the problematic area of Caucasus. A strong Georgia is the guarantee of protecting peace in the region.⁹⁰⁰

This visit was also important considering the fact that it happened just after the crisis on Ajaria was solved. During the visit, it was argued that Sakaashvili thanked Turkey for its constructive and important role during the crisis.⁹⁰¹ Furthermore, Saakashvili stated that "the change of leadership in Adjara had removed the "last obstacle" that was preventing full economic cooperation between Turkey and Georgia".⁹⁰²

During that period, there were also some criticism that, Turkey's policy towards Georgia was not that much active and constructive. For example; Suat Kinklioglu in his article " Turkey-Georgian Relations in the light of Rose Revolution" based on a critical view towards Turkey's Georgia policy, argued that Georgia is a strategic country for Turkey and Turkey should conduct an active policy in the region by redefining its near abroad and her interests and objectives.⁹⁰³ In a more detailed way, Kinklioglu defined some strategic interests of Turkey. First, Georgia was a strategic

Bağımsızlıktan Sonra Gürcistan Türkiye İlişkileri, *Yüksek Lisans Tezi*, Dokuz Eylül Üniversitesi, İzmir, 2006, p.97

⁹⁰⁰ Ahmet Necdet Sezer, "Gürcistan Devlet Başkanı Mikheil SAAKAŞVILI onuruna verdiği akşam yemeğinde yaptıkları konuşma.", 20 Mayıs 2004,
<http://www.tccb.gov.tr/ahmet-necdet-sezer-konusmaları/495/56664/gurcistan-devlet-baskani-mikheil-saakasvili-onuruna-verdigi-aksam-yemeginde-yaptiklari-konusma.html>

⁹⁰¹ Jean-Christophe Peuch "Georgia: Hopeful President Pays First Official Visit To Turkey", 20 May 2004, *RFE/RL*,
<http://www.rferl.org/content/article/1052878.html>

⁹⁰² Jean-Christophe Peuch "Georgia: Hopeful President Pays First Official Visit To Turkey", 20 May 2004, *RFE/RL*,
<http://www.rferl.org/content/article/1052878.html>

⁹⁰³ Suat Kiniklioglu, "Turkey-Georgian Relations in the light of Rose Revolution". 25 December, 2003,
<http://www.suatkiniklioglu.org/tr/makaleler/kadife-devrim-isiginda-turkiye-gurcistan-iliskileri.html>

partner of Turkey and Turkey by taking place against the Russian Federation and next to the EU and the U.S with Georgia and by the military aid it gave to Georgia within this context, has already been part of the strategic game in the Caucasus region.⁹⁰⁴ Second, with the transit role Turkey plays in the East-West energy corridor, the strategic location of Georgia was vitally important in order to ensure the energy supply diversification against the strong dependence towards Russia with the Blue Stream project.⁹⁰⁵ Thirdly, Georgia was strategically important considering the critical and negative nature of relations and the closed borders with Armenia.⁹⁰⁶ Georgia stands as a transit country for the flow of goods from Turkey to Azerbaijan. Beyond this macro strategic approach towards the Rose Revolution in Georgia, Kinikioğlu also argued that all these developments could have dimensions that could have short term and practical outcomes for Turkey:

The Nationalistic Action Bloc of Saakashvili as the leading figure of Georgia opposition and his close supporter Nino Burjanadze- Bloc of Democrats has support with definitely strong nationalistic declarations. Both Saakashvili and Burjanadze mention about getting control of South Ossetia and Ajaria under Tbilisi. They even meant use of force for this purpose. About Abkhazia also, such similar declarations were made. For this sake, there is the likelihood for the autonomous status of Ajaria to be spoiled. Both in Ajaria, in South Ossetia and in Abkhazia, there are Russian military bases. Ajaria is on the border with Turkey and a great amount of its population is Muslim. From this perspective, there is the high risk of political instability and conflict close to our borders. Considering the probability that Saakashvili and Burjanadze may act on the Abkhazia nad South Ossetia issues, Ankara have to think, consider and elaborate the likelihood of the regional conflict which the Russian Federation will also directly involve.⁹⁰⁷

There were also some strong criticisms that were not much known in the Turkish public opinion. While Saakashvili has frequently been claiming and indicating that Georgians were friend and even relatives to Turkey, some of the implications during

⁹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*

⁹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*

⁹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

⁹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*

Saakashvili era was not supporting his declarations.⁹⁰⁸ First, is the propoganda of promoting the idea that the territories from Kars and Ardahan till Trabzon was Georgian territory named as “Tao-Klarjeti Region”.⁹⁰⁹ Second, is the promotion of radical nationalistic feelings among the Georgian diaspora in Turkey which had never been in such activities before.⁹¹⁰ As example to such activities, it is argued that:

Reporters from MZE, IMEDI and RUSTAVI-2 Television channels which are national broadcasting televisions came to our villages in Eastern Black Sea and Eastern Anatolia and asked misleading questions to people and led them to say that they are Georgians and they broadcasted these interviews in their channels. It is inferred that with these questions are tried to give a message that “Georgian people in Turkey was forced to convert to Islam during Ottoman Empire’s period. Some programs which argued that “ancient settlement and churches are neglected and defenseless, historical buildings are used as warehouse, shop, public bath and with similar purposes and thus they are damaged” are continued to broadcast in TV channels.⁹¹¹

Within this context, it is also argued that, Saakasvili also ignored the activities of the Cultural-Solidarity Foundation which his mother Prof. Dr. G. Alasania is the president of.⁹¹² Concerning his mother Prof. Dr. G. Alasania’s activities, it was stated that:

There is a person who is a leading figure of this kind of activities and has an interesting personality: Prof. Dr. Giuli Alasania. She is a leader of an existence called “Cultural Solidarity Foundation for Georgians who live in Georgia and abroad” and she is a Turcologist. In addition she is President Saakashvili’s mother. She has gone frequently to Turkey on the ground of cultural, touristic or scientific activities and she seeks to be opened Georgian schools in Turkey.⁹¹³

⁹⁰⁸ ““Kadife Lider” Saakashvili’nin Türk Dostluğu!!!”, *Diplomatik Gözlem*, 8 April 2005, <http://www.diplomatikgozlem.com/TR/belge/1-5863/kadife-lider-saakasvilinin-turk-dostlugu-.html>

⁹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*

⁹¹⁰ *Ibid.*

⁹¹¹ “Georgia is Endangering Friendly Relations With Turkey”, *Diplomatic Observer*, 20 October 2005, <http://www.diplomaticobserver.com/EN/belge/2-1089/georgia-is-endangering-friendly-relations-with-turkey.html>

⁹¹² ““Kadife Lider” Saakashvili’nin Türk Dostluğu!!!”, *Diplomatik Gözlem*, 8 April 2005, <http://www.diplomatikgozlem.com/TR/belge/1-5863/kadife-lider-saakasvilinin-turk-dostlugu-.html>.

⁹¹³ Georgia is Endangering Friendly Relations With Turkey”, *Diplomatic Observer*, 20 October 2005,

Furthermore, in 2004 in his visit to Turkey, it was argued that Saakashvili invited Georgian people in Turkey to apply for Georgian citizenship and requested opening Georgian schools in Turkey.⁹¹⁴ Third, is the policy of the Georgian government leaded by Saakashvili towards the Muslims and Turks in Georgia. Establishment of churchs in the Turkish neighbourhoods, prevention of the operation of mosques and using the Shia influence of Iran as a trump, consciously gave harm to the national and religious feelings of people.⁹¹⁵ Though, Georgia's Christianization policy in Georgia and spesifically in Ajaria is out of the scope of this thesis, it can be well argued that:

In the past twenty years, many Ajarians have converted to Christianity. This is due to the character of the Georgian national project, which embodies a very close relationship between nation, state and religion. Public opinion operates with the stereotype of the real Georgians being Christians.⁹¹⁶

Further, it was stated that:

After the demise of Communism, Christian culture became the foundation of a new state, while Islam remained the religion of rural areas and lower social class. As the lower class wielded no real political and economic power, the marginalization of Islam continued. The Georgian government, as well as the local Ajarian, have morally and financially supported the Georgian Orthodox Church since the early 1990s.⁹¹⁷

<http://www.diplomaticobserver.com/EN/belge/2-1089/georgia-is-endangering-friendly-relations-with-turkey.html>

⁹¹⁴ "“Kadife Lider” Saakashvili’nin Türk Dostluğu!!!", *Diplomatik Gözlem*, 8 April 2005, <http://www.diplomatikgozlem.com/TR/belge/1-5863/kadife-lider-saakasvilinin-turk-dostlugu-.html>.

⁹¹⁵ *Ibid.*

⁹¹⁶ Tomáš HOCH; Vincenc KOPEČEK, “Transforming Identity of Ajarian Population (Why the 1991-2004 conflict did not assume armed character)”, *The Annual of Language & Politics and Politics of Identity*, Vol. V., 2011, p. 65.

⁹¹⁷ Tomáš HOCH; Vincenc KOPEČEK, “Transforming Identity of Ajarian Population (Why the 1991-2004 conflict did not assume armed character)”, *The Annual of Language & Politics and Politics of Identity*, Vol. V., 2011, p. 65.

Furthermore, as a result of the deliberate policies of Christianization, three villages in the Macahal region of Ajaria had to adopt Christianity.⁹¹⁸ In *Diplomatic Observer*, in the article, “Georgia is Endangering Friendly Relations with Turkey”, it stated that:

Georgian Patriarch Ilia II officially declared that “they seek to restore Georgian Churches which are on the point of collapse in Eastern Black Sea and Eastern Anatolian regions in Turkey and to open new ones and this is a requirement of an order of President Saakashvili.”⁹¹⁹

Considering all, while these arguments and examples from one perspective may be evaluated as a conspiracy theory, concerning the role affiliated to Orthodox Christianity in Georgia, its possible reflections towards Turkey should be taken into consideration. Considering its defined interests in Georgia, Turkey currently seems as if ignoring these potential problems. Nevertheless, Georgia’s attitude with Saakashvili well shows that cooperation between Turkey and Georgia is not based on unchangeable common values but rather on differently interpreted interests of the sides. Beyond all, regarding Saakashvili’s declarations about Abkhazia and South Ossetia, the challenges for the security and stability in the region and for Turkey’s security interests were obvious.

6.3.2. The August 2008 War and Turkey’s Foreign Policy

The August 2008 War between Georgia-South Ossetia which was later followed with the conflict against Abkhazia and the recognition of their independence by the Russian Federation, had implications on Turkey’s relations with Georgia, as well.

There were some arguments that this conflict created a turning point and a serious challenge to Turkey’s relations with the region and Georgia. Igor Torbakov argued

⁹¹⁸ ““Kadife Lider” Saakashvili’nin Türk Dostluğu!!!”, *Diplomatik Gözlem*, 8 April 2005, <http://www.diplomatikgozlem.com/TR/belge/1-5863/kadife-lider-saakasvilinin-turk-dostlugu-.html>.

⁹¹⁹ “Georgia is Endangering Friendly Relations With Turkey”, *Diplomatic Observer*, 20 October 2005, <http://www.diplomaticobserver.com/EN/belge/2-1089/georgia-is-endangering-friendly-relations-with-turkey.html>

that till that time, “geopolitical pluralism”⁹²⁰ which Turkey’s policy was based, was challenged and Turkey in order to overcome the damage, looked for ways in order to advance a regional security framework.⁹²¹ He indicated that:

Since the preservation of the status quo in the South Caucasus – and thus the ability to pursue an ambivalent policy – by and large suited Ankara’s purposes just fine, the key foreign policy mantras reiterated by the Turkish elite have until very recently been “maintaining regional stability” and “keeping intact the existing balance of power and interests.” The Georgia war disrupted the pre-August status quo as Turkey’s two main pillars of regional policy were effectively destroyed: two of the Caucasus “frozen” conflicts became “defrosted”, and Russia chose to forgo restraint, displaying instead the willingness and resolve to resort to force.⁹²²

Within this context, first a short background of the conflict and later on Turkey’s attitude and implications on Turkey’s foreign policy will be discussed.

Though the war is called the August War, when looked to the background of the war, it can be well argued that the background of the war dated back to the beginning of 2008, even to the recognition of Kosovo’s independence by the Western world

⁹²⁰ Politically, maintaining “pluralism” meant the strengthening of regional countries’ political sovereignty, countering the growth of Russian influence in the Caucasus (which has been done largely in a covert rather than overt way), and fostering the development of closer ties between nations in the South Caucasus and Euro-Atlantic organizations. Naturally, Ankara’s understanding of “pluralism” included the growth of Turkey’s own influence in the region (like post-Soviet Russia, the post-Ottoman Republic of Turkey is a nation with a pronounced imperial outlook, which, depending on the context, readily regards itself as a Balkan, Middle East, or Caucasus power). Economically, “pluralism” largely meant the construction of multiple oil and gas pipelines traversing the “Caucasus transit corridor” (and Turkey’s territory) and bringing Caspian hydrocarbons to the world markets while bypassing Russia. Turkey’s strategic goal has been to maximally exploit the economic dimension of the “pluralism” policy in order to turn the country into a major energy transit hub, through which Caspian fuel would be transported to Europe and other markets. It would appear that this goal so much cherished by Turkish elites was almost within reach before the Georgia war broke out: two major projects – the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan (BTC) oil pipeline and the parallel Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum (BTE) gas pipeline – had been recently realized, and several new ambitious projects, such as the Trans-Caspian pipeline and Nabucco pipeline, were being actively discussed., cited in: Igor Torbakov, “The Georgia Crisis and Russia-Turkey Relations”, *The Jamestown Foundation*, 2008, p.9.

<http://www.jamestown.org/uploads/media/GeorgiaCrisisTorbakov.pdf>

⁹²¹ Igor Torbakov, “The Georgia Crisis and Russia-Turkey Relations”, *The Jamestown Foundation*, 2008, p.6.

<http://www.jamestown.org/uploads/media/GeorgiaCrisisTorbakov.pdf>

⁹²² Igor Torbakov, “The Georgian Crisis and Russian-Turkish Relations”, *The Jamestown Foundation*, 2008, p.10.

including the US. While this was followed by the NATO Summit in Bucharest in April 2008, during April and May, tension between Georgia and Russia increased too much and this was evaluated as signals of the war in August 2008. While after about two weeks from the NATO Summit, Russia stated that it would strengthen the Russia peace forces in two breakaway republics considering the threat of any Georgian attack, Georgia blamed Russia for provocation.⁹²³ Towards the end of April, while Russia warned Georgia not to trust NATO for the solution of the Abkhaz and South Ossetia problems, the increasing number of soldier in Abkhazia was regarded with suspicion by the US and NATO.⁹²⁴ Furthermore, in the beginning of May, Georgia Vice Prime Minister Giorgi Baramizde stated that “Russia-Georgia war could erupt at any time, it can erupt this evening or tomorrow”⁹²⁵.

During June and July, the increasing tension between the sides continued. As a response to the clashes between Georgia and South Ossetia, Russia disturbed the air space of Georgia for 40 minutes during the US Foreign Minister Condoleezza Rice’s visit in Georgia as if trying to give the message that these territories were under the protection of Russia.⁹²⁶ In mid July, the common military training programme and military practice called “Emergency Response” by the US and Georgia, was replied by a military practice in the same day by Russia.⁹²⁷ Furthermore, Russia through several ways stated Georgia that the Abkhaz and South Ossetia problems were strictly related with Georgia’s intention for NATO membership and unless Georgia give up its membership aim for NATO, Russia would not be able to help in these matters.⁹²⁸

⁹²³ “Gürcistan-Rusya Krizi Değerlendirme Raporu Krizin Türkiye’ye, Bölgeye ve Küreye Etkileri”, Hasan Selim Özertem (Ed.), *Usak Raporları No. 08-03*, Usak Yayınları, September, 2008, p. 5.

⁹²⁴ *Ibid.*, p.5.

⁹²⁵ *Ibid.*, p.6.

⁹²⁶ *Ibid.*, p.6.

⁹²⁷ *Ibid.*, p.7.

⁹²⁸ *Ibid.*, p.7.



Figure 2. Russian Georgian War Map 11 August 2008 (12 August 2008)⁹²⁹

Considering this process, the tension did not calm down and in the beginning of August clashes between Georgia and South Ossetian forces started again. On 8 August 2008, Georgian military forces started the military operation in South Ossetia for “re-establishing the territorial integrity and stability and order”⁹³⁰. After a short time, Russia with about 150 tanks and armoured vehicle entered to South Ossetia and started to fight against Georgian forces.⁹³¹ Following that, mobilization was declared in Georgia.⁹³² On 9 August, Abkhazia also get involved to the war and Russian

⁹²⁹ Russian Georgian War Map 11 August 2008 (12 August 2008) in dailymail.co.uk, cited in., http://global-atlas.jrc.it/maps/PUBLIC/1555_article-1043236-023E6DB800000578287_468x299_popup.jpg

⁹³⁰ Mitat Çelikpala, “Kafkaslarda Son Gelişmeler ve Türkiye”, 2008. <http://www.nartajans.net/nuke//modules.php?name=News&file=article&sid=4250>

⁹³¹ Prof. Dr. Mehmet Can, “Türkiye Dış Politikasının Gürcistan Rusya Savaşı ile Sınavı”, International University of Sarayovo, p.5. <http://www.ius.edu.ba/mcan/CPAPERS/CPDF/T%C3%BCrkkiye%20Politikasi.pdf>

⁹³² “Kafkasya Gerildi; Gürcistan’dan Seferberlik İlanı”, 08.08.2008, *Zaman Gazetesi*, <http://www.zaman.com.tr/haber.do?haberno=723705&title=kafkasya-gerildi-gurcistandan-seferberlik-ilani&haberSayfa=0>

media informed that Abkhazian air and military forces started to bomb the Kodor valley which had been for long a problem of control between Abkhazia and Georgia.⁹³³ On 10 August, Sergei Bagapsh- then President of Abkhazia declared that Georgian forces should get back out of Upper Kodor region.⁹³⁴ On the third day of the war, the capital city of South Ossetia- Shinvali and many parts of South Ossetia got under the control of Russian military and South Ossetian forces. While the number of Russian military forces increased in South Ossetia, meanwhile Abkhazia broke out the peace talks with Georgia. The Foreign Ministry of Abkhazia said that Abkhazian forces organized operations in order to get out Georgian forces from the Upper Kodor region and added that they would not participate to the peace talks with Georgia.⁹³⁵ On 11 August 2008, the Russian Federation gave an ultimatum to Georgia in order to get out its forces back from South Ossetia and Russian forces were directed to Abkhazia and entered about 40 km inside Abkhaz territories.⁹³⁶ Furthermore, Russian forces entered to Zugdidi and Senaki near Abkhazia and got the control of the police station in Zugdidi and military base in Senaki.⁹³⁷

Considering all, on 12 August 2008, Russian President Medvedev decided to stop the operations and as the first step, Russian forces started to withdraw from Georgian military base in Senaki.⁹³⁸ On the other hand, Abkhazian forces which had started

⁹³³ “Stratejik Üstünlük Ruslara Geçti”, 9 August 2008, *Dünya Bülteni*,
<http://www.dunyabulteni.net/index.php?aType=haberArchive&ArticleID=49730>

⁹³⁴ “Rus Savaş Gemileri Gürcistan Kıyılarında”, 10 August 2008, Habertürk,
<http://www.haberturk.com/dunya/haber/90460-rus-savas-gemileri-gurcistan-kiyilarinda>

⁹³⁵ “Abhazlar da Saldırıya Geçti”, 09.08.2008, Yenisafak,
<http://yenisafak.com.tr/Dunya/?t=10.08.2008&i=133740&k=11>

⁹³⁶ “ Rusya’nın Saldırganlığı Cevapsız Bırakılmamalı”, 11.08.2008, Zaman Gazetesi,
<http://www.zaman.com.tr/haber.do?haberno=724692&title=cheney-rusyanin-saldirganligi-cevapsiz-birakilmamali>

⁹³⁷ “Rusya Gürcistan'a Girdi”, 12 August 2008, Habertürk,
<http://www.haberturk.com/dunya/haber/90746-rusya-gurcistana-girdi>

⁹³⁸ “Medvedev Operasyonları Durdurdu”, 12 August 2008, Habertürk,
<http://www.haberturk.com/dunya/haber/90849-medvedev-operasyonlari-durdurdu>

operation to get back the control of the Upper Kodor region, get the control of the Ajara Village and put the Abkhaz flag there.⁹³⁹ On 13 August 2008, Russian Federation and Georgia agreed on the ceasefire agreement consisting of 5 items: All sides would give up violence; military operations would stop; access to humanitarian aid would be provided; Georgia forces would return to their permanent situation and Russian forces would return to their position before the war and Russia would take additional security precautions within the borders of South Ossetia.⁹⁴⁰

As a result of all, on 14 August President of South Ossetia Edward Kokouty and President of Abkhazia Sergei Bagapsh went to Russian Federation in order to sign the agreement with the European Union and the Russian Federation and there they declared that they would achieve independence within all the rules and principles of international law and added that the purpose was put forward as independence and they would step forward for this aim together.⁹⁴¹ Finally, on 16 August 2008, the ceasefire talks between Russia and Georgia ended and the ceasefire agreement was signed.⁹⁴²

After the ceasefire agreement, South Ossetia and Abkhazia applied to the Russian Federation for the recognition of their independence. On 25 August 2008, with the approval votes of the Russian Parliament, both Duma and the Federation Conseil, the motion was presented to Russian President Medvedev. On 26 August 2008, Medvedev said that it was the time for Russia to give a decision and considering all

⁹³⁹ “Kodor’da Abhaz Bayrağı Dikildi”, 12 August 2008, Ajans Kafkas,
http://ajanskafkas.com/haber,19869,kodorda_abhaz_bayragi_dikildi.htm

⁹⁴⁰ “Ateşkes için Mütabakat Sağlandı”, 13.08.2008, Ajans Kafkas.
http://ajanskafkas.com/haber,19895,ateskes_icin_mutabakat_saglandi.htm

⁹⁴¹ “Bagaps ve Kokoyti’den Söz Birliği: Tek Yol Bağımsızlık”, 14.08.2008, Ajans Kafkas,
http://ajanskafkas.com/haber,19907,bagaps_ve_kokoytiden_soz_birligi_tek_yol_bagimsizl.htm

⁹⁴² “Kafkasya’da Ateşkes”, 16. August 2008, Habertürk,
<http://www.haberturk.com/dunya/haber/91719-kafkasyada-ateskes>

related international laws, they approved the motion and thus declared that they recognized the independence of South Ossetia and Abkhazia.⁹⁴³

Within the regional context, Mitat Çelikpala argued that:

The situation which turned to a small war with the involvement of Russia to Georgia besides its involvement to the developments in South Ossetia, was first defined by the world as a regional Russian-Georgian war, nevertheless, afterwards, with Medvedev signing the decree recognizing the independence of South Ossetia and Abkhazia, the situation was considered as the beginning of a new Cold War between Russia and the Western world (the U.S).⁹⁴⁴

Following the ceasefire agreement, the outcomes of this war had implications for Russia, Georgia, South Ossetia, and Abkhazia but also for neighbouring countries such as Turkey. Implications on Turkey and as well Turkey's foreign policy towards the developments were greatly effected from its relations with Russia, the US, Georgia and from its so called regional role in the South Caucasus.

Considering relations with Russia, first it should be noted that many countries criticized Russian policy and attitude towards the situation. The criticisms towards Russia was first focused on the extreme dimension and unbalanced way of its military operation. Afterwards, the criticisms got more hard nature following Russia's decision to recognize South Ossetia and Abkhazia. Mitat Çelikpala defined this situation as if the core issue was no more focused to Georgia and its territorial integrity but to the center of international competition and struggle.⁹⁴⁵ While the expectation of the international world from Russia to postpone its decision to recognize Abkhazia and South Ossetia took some time in the international agenda,

⁹⁴³ "Rusya Kritik Bağımsızlık imzasını Attı Gürcistan bu bir ilhaktır dedi", 26.08.2008, Zaman Gazetesi,
<http://www.zaman.com.tr/haber.do?haberno=730475&title=rusya-kritik-bagimsizlik-imzasini-atti-gurcistan-bu-bir-ilhaktir-dedi>

⁹⁴⁴ Mitat Çelikpala, "Kafkaslarda Son Gelişmeler ve Türkiye", 2008.
<http://www.nartajans.net/nuke//modules.php?name=News&file=article&sid=4250>

⁹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

Russia's reaction to ignore all these caused the international public opinion to discuss the 'New Cold War' option.⁹⁴⁶

Some Western actors leaded by the US started to consider applying some hard sanctions against Russia such as excluding Russia from G8, implementing pressure under the UN structure, boycotting the 2014 Sochi Olimpic Games, suspending its relations with NATO.⁹⁴⁷ Among the Western actors, some countries such as Britain, France and Germany considered some more rational and moderate reactions against Russia, probably in order to not provoke Russia more. Within this context, where Turkey placed itself became important. Turkey was more among the Western countries including some of EU countries which decided to implement a more rational policy.⁹⁴⁸ On the other hand, due to the fact that the US- Russian confrontation was steadily increasing after the Georgian crisis, Turkey felt uncomfortable of this situation and Erdogan indicated that:

It would not be right for Turkey to be pushed toward 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 the line with what Turkey's national interests require.⁹⁴⁹

⁹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

⁹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

⁹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹⁴⁹ Bulet Ali Riza, "Turkey and the Crisis in the Caucasus," CSIS Turkey Project Commentary, September 9, 2008, www.csis.org/turkey.

In addition, Ahmet Davutoglu, indicated that Turkey as a NATO member and candidate member of EU and as part of the Western bloc had chosen its international place and had no problems with its international identity and added that:

You can't say that Turkish-Russian relations can be like Danish-Russian relations, or Norwegian-Russian relations, or Canada-Russian 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 don't 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.⁹⁵⁰

The last statement of Ahmet Davutoğlu that “We don’t want to pay the bill of strategic mistakes or miscalculation by Russia, or by Georgia” well shows that Turkey’s strategic interests do not always coincide but even conflict with Georgia.

Considering Georgia, on the other hand, implications were much more vital and severe after the war. The complete infrastructure system of the country collapsed, the army which was modernized by NATO, the US and Turkey was demoralized.⁹⁵¹ More specifically, some of the military facilities including the Vaziani and Merneuli military bases modernized by Turkey and the economically important Poti port was severely destructed.⁹⁵² Furthermore, most of the transport means of the country including bridges were collapsed and severe problems in the transfer of energy pipelines occurred.⁹⁵³ The Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan Pipeline became out of operation and the Baku-Tbilisi-Kars natural gas transport was suspended for security reasons.⁹⁵⁴ All

⁹⁵⁰ “Turkey’s Top Foreign Policy Aide Worries about False Optimism in Iraq,” *Council on Foreign Relations*, CFR.org, September 19, 2008.
<http://www.cfr.org/turkey/turkeys-top-foreign-policy-aide-worries-false-optimism-iraq/p17291>

⁹⁵¹ Mitat Çelikpala, “Kafkaslarda Son Gelişmeler ve Türkiye”, 2008.
<http://www.nartajans.net/nuke//modules.php?name=News&file=article&sid=4250>

⁹⁵² Mitat Çelikpala, “Kafkaslarda Son Gelişmeler ve Türkiye”, 2008.
<http://www.nartajans.net/nuke//modules.php?name=News&file=article&sid=4250>

⁹⁵³ Mitat Çelikpala, “Kafkaslarda Son Gelişmeler ve Türkiye”, 2008.
<http://www.nartajans.net/nuke//modules.php?name=News&file=article&sid=4250>

⁹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

these outcomes had direct concern for Turkey as a neighbour and so called strategic partner of Georgia. Considering the emerging regional and international tension and the fact that Russia has consolidated a strong military and political ground in the region, the position and policy of Turkey became crucial.

Turkey's foreign policy during these developments had two different but complementary aspects. The bilateral policy of Turkey was based on finding a balance between the U.S and the Russian Federation. The regional policy of Turkey on the other hand, was based on a regional initiative for the establishment of stability, cooperation and security in the region with the inclusion of the Russian Federation but exclusion of the US. Turkey's position was stated by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs during a press release on 8 August 2008 that:

Turkey believes that the sides should refrain from further steps that could lead to new tensions. This conflict situation which could threaten regional peace and security should be overcome through restraint, common sense and dialogue. Turkey calls on the sides to end clashes and military actions and to engage in direct talks.⁹⁵⁵

As a first step, Prime Minister Erdogan underlined the problem solving role of Turkey for the problems in its surroundings.⁹⁵⁶ After that, Turkey's proposal called "the Platform of Cooperation and Stability in the Caucasus" and visits of Prime Minister Erdogan to Moscow and Tbilisi underlined the regional role of Turkey. How this initiative of Turkey would help to the establishment of peace and stability in Caucasus and whether it would be successful or not has remained a point of great debate due to the fact that the initiative was limited and restricted in several ways. The main purpose of this initiative of Turkey was to re-construct the trade and economic relations and contribute to the establishment of peace and stability in the region.⁹⁵⁷ Thus, through the initiative, the current level of confrontation was aimed to

⁹⁵⁵ Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Press Release no. 141. "Regarding the Armed Clashes in South Ossetia." 8 August 2008.

[http://www.mfa.gov.tr/no_141---08-august-2008_-press-release-regarding-the-armed-clashes-between-georgia-and-south-ossetia.en.mfa]

⁹⁵⁶ Mitat Çelikpala, "Kafkaslarda Son Gelişmeler ve Türkiye", 2008.
<http://www.nartajans.net/nuke//modules.php?name=News&file=article&sid=4250>

⁹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

be lowered by setting up a regional forum where local conflicts can be discussed and resolved.⁹⁵⁸ This initiative was important in two ways. First, it was an independent initiative of Turkey apart from the support of the EU and the US and second it was important because of its timing as it was proposed while the conflict was continuing and before the sides had sat together for any negotiation.⁹⁵⁹ Furthermore, from Turkish point of view, even if not achieved its territorial integrity, a Georgia in stability rather than in chaos and conflict was preferable.⁹⁶⁰

Beyond all, one of the strong arguments against Turkey's policy was that, Turkey's reaction to the conflict between Georgia and Russia has been remarkably muted.⁹⁶¹ In their article, "Georgian conflict poses dilemma for Turkey The Strait Question", Sinan Ekinci and Peter Schwarz argued that:

While NATO (of which Turkey is a member) has openly sided with Georgia, and the European Union (which Turkey wants to join) has strongly condemned Russian recognition of Abkhazian and South Ossetian independence, the Turkish government has made no such statement. Instead the Turkish foreign ministry has issued a short statement limited to expressing Turkish anxiety over recent events. The growing tensions between Washington and Moscow are clearly viewed nervously within ruling circles in Ankara and present them with a dilemma.⁹⁶²

This argument was reinforced in the Turkish and foreign media press. One of the columnist Nasuhi Gungor argued that: "Due to the current situation, Turkey is now moving through a difficult time, unlike anything it has seen in years. Now it's more difficult to make our stand."⁹⁶³

⁹⁵⁸ Igor Torbakov, *Op.cit*, p.22.

⁹⁵⁹ Mitat Çelikpala, "Kafkaslarda Son Gelişmeler ve Türkiye", 2008.
<http://www.nartajans.net/nuke//modules.php?name=News&file=article&sid=4250>

⁹⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

⁹⁶¹ Sinan Ikinci and Peter Schwarz, "Georgian conflict poses dilemma for Turkey The Straits Question", 9 September 2008,
<http://www.wsws.org/articles/2008/sep2008/turk-s09.shtml>

⁹⁶² *Ibid.*

⁹⁶³ *Ibid.*

The *Turkish Daily News* commented on the same day:

Turkey's position as a precarious bridge between East and West is highlighted once more as it is torn between its NATO obligations and its important trade partner Russia. Barriers at customs remind Turkey of the potential danger of upsetting Moscow, while NATO ships on the Black Sea armed with Tomahawks and anti-ship missiles irritate Russians.⁹⁶⁴

It was further argued that Turkey's makeshift diplomacy carried an unsustainable characteristic.⁹⁶⁵ It was indicated that:

Walking along the lines of a fragile diplomacy towards the latest Caucasus crisis between Russia and Georgia, Turkey wants to neither disengage itself from its Western allies nor alienate its trade and energy partner Russia.⁹⁶⁶

A symbolic, perhaps, but important implication for Turkey was Russia's reactions to all these makeshift diplomacy of Turkey. The strict control implied on Turkish lorries entering to Russia, extending their waiting time at the border up to one month were all interpreted as a retribution for Turkey's decision to allow US warships to pass the Turkish Straits and enter the Black Sea under the pretext of bringing humanitarian aid to Georgia.⁹⁶⁷

The Straits Question was an important issue to show the dilemma of Turkey between Russia and the U.S. The Montreux Convention was started to be discussed when the US attempted to send two hospital warships, weighing a total of 140,000 tons, through the Straits carrying "aid" to Georgia.⁹⁶⁸ The Turkish government refused permission arguing that this contradicted the Montreux Convention.⁹⁶⁹ Washington

⁹⁶⁴ "A precarious bridge between East and West", *Turkish Daily News*, 28 August 2008, <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/h.php?news=a-precarious-bridge-between-east-and-west-2008-08-28>

⁹⁶⁵ Sinan Ikinci and Peter Schwarz, "Georgian conflict poses dilemma for Turkey The Straits Question", 9 September 2008, <http://www.wsws.org/articles/2008/sep2008/turk-s09.shtml>

⁹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

⁹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

⁹⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

finally sent three smaller ships instead.⁹⁷⁰ Nevertheless, this situation covered large discussion in Turkish media. Along with criticisms on the US attitude, there were criticisms against Turkish policy. On August 22, Oktay Eksi in *Hurriyet* newspaper noted that the US administration had already asked for changes to the Montreux Convention before attacking Iraq, pointing out that this was aimed at Iran and Russia and added that:

Now we are seeing signs from the United States that it is not comfortable with the Montreux Convention. For example, the United States tried to test the convention when it got the notion to attack Iraq in 2003. Thankfully this project failed when the infamous granting of permission, which anticipated Turkey supporting the US operation in Iraq, was rejected by the Turkish parliament. In all honesty, from Trabzon and Samsun in Turkey [on the Black Sea coast] would you go to Iraq or would you go to Iran and other countries in the Caucasus? Isn't this example enough to show what reckoning lies behind scratching the Montreux itch?⁹⁷¹

Furthermore, in the August 20 issue of the *Star*, Beril Dedeoglu explained Turkey's dilemma as:

While the US and Russia are both happy to find a 'real' enemy to legitimize their actions, difficult days lie ahead for countries caught in the middle. Turkey is one of those countries, and one vexing issue concerns the Black Sea. In Georgia, where two players are now meeting, Turkey is about to lose its basis for working with the US in the south and Russia in the north. This could force Turkey to make a choice. I hope Russia will be able to make the US abandon this push, and Turkey will be able to explain to Washington why its request is problematic.⁹⁷²

Carol R. Saivetz in her article "Tangled Pipelines: Turkey's Role in Energy Export Plans" also explained Turkey's dilemma during the August 2008 War:

The war between Georgia and Russia also highlighted fundamental contradictions in Turkey's foreign policy on a global level. As the hostilities in Georgia have become an East-West flashpoint, Turkey's EU aspirations and its membership in NATO ran directly counter to its need to protect its relationship with Russia.⁹⁷³

⁹⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

⁹⁷¹ *Ibid.*

⁹⁷² *Ibid.*

⁹⁷³ Carol R. Saivetz, "Tangled Pipelines: Turkey's Role in Energy Export Plans", *Turkish Studies*, Vol.10, No.1, 2009, p.103.

Considering all, it was argued that Turkey had no solution to crisis and was about to lose all of its “manoeuvring capacity”⁹⁷⁴. Considering all dynamics, close relations with Georgia in economic, political and military fields and with Russia in trade and energy, the strategic level of relations with the US, the internal dynamics consisting of a relatively strong Circassian Diaspora in Turkey, the regional developments and dynamics caused the emergence of a chaotic and mixed situation for Turkey. On the one hand, Turkey’s policy was considered to be passive and muted and caught in a dilemma, but on the other hand, considering the regional initiative of Turkey-Platform of Cooperation and Stability in the Caucasus- independent of the US, it seems that Turkey with the purpose of protecting its national interests, tried to display a constructive policy. As Igor Torbakov stated, “Ankara sought to repair the damage by advancing a regional security framework within which it would be possible to constrain Russia’s assertive impulses as well as revitalize efforts to solve the regional conflicts, which Turkey recognizes may lead to new flare-ups and more destabilization.”⁹⁷⁵ For that situation, Igor Torbakov argued that Turkey’s political and economic interests in the region were vulnerable.⁹⁷⁶ Furthermore, he stated that: “That’s why Ankara wasted no time embarking on an urgent “damage control” operation, having advanced a grand scheme to (re)stabilize the region – the Caucasus Stability and Cooperation Platform (CSCP).”⁹⁷⁷

Turkey’s attitude towards the war was in a great extent shaped by her motivation to re-ensure the stability in the region which was vital for the secure transfer of energy and controlling the assertive policy of Russia with the idea of the Caucasus Stability and Cooperation Platform. Russia’s importance for Turkey was expressed by Igor

⁹⁷⁴ Sinan Ikinci and Peter Schwarz, “Georgian conflict poses dilemma for Turkey The Straits Question”, 9 September 2008,
<http://www.wsws.org/articles/2008/sep2008/turk-s09.shtml>

⁹⁷⁵ Torbakov, *Op.cit*, p. 6.

⁹⁷⁶ Torbakov, *Ibid.*, p. 10.

⁹⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, pp.10-11.

Torbakov as: "This decision reflects Ankara's awareness of an increasingly complex reality: Russia is potentially both a threat and the main partner in the challenging business of stabilizing the volatile Caucasus."⁹⁷⁸

Suming up all, the August 2008 War was a clear example of that, Georgia and Russia's policy and strategic calculations could create outcomes directly and strictly challenging Turkey's national and security interest in the region.

6.3.3 “The Platform of Cooperation and Stability in the Caucasus” by Turkey

After the emergence of the war, Prime Minister Erdoğan after his visits first to Moscow and then Georgia outlined the content and purpose of the Caucasus Pact. The main objective of the Pact was indicated to ensure the establishment of a permanent peace, stability and security by including all regional states in a joint formation.⁹⁷⁹ It was further argued that this could be achieved through increasing economic cooperation among regional states.⁹⁸⁰ As more concrete examples, Prime Minister Erdoğan gave the example of the energy projects such Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline, Baku- Tbilisi-Erzurum and Baku-Tbilisi-Kars projects and argued that such new projects should be developed.⁹⁸¹

This initiative of Turkey to create a “Platform of cooperation and stability in the Caucasus” or in other words “ The Caucasus Pact” idea of Prime Minister Erdoğan carried both some opportunities and risks. The opportunity of this initiative was its so called inclusive characteristic. Thus, this initiative was an opportunity to create an

⁹⁷⁸ *Ibid.*p.11.

⁹⁷⁹ Guner Ozkan, “Turkey’s Proposal of “Caucasus Alliance”: How Likely is Its Success?”, *Journal of Turkish Weekly*, 21 August, 2008.

⁹⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

⁹⁸¹ *Ibid.*

inclusive new foreign policy approach of Turkey.⁹⁸² Furthermore, this approach, for success, need to include also representatives of all frozen and unfrozen conflict areas, peoples, ethnic groups and regions.⁹⁸³ Hasan Ali Karasar argued that this approach should be productively supported by economic and energy concerns and perhaps, more importantly, with more humanitarian and inter-ethnic dialogue patterns.⁹⁸⁴

More specifically, he argued that:

If Turkey could develop such an inclusive approach, not only establishing relations with the “centers” of the nation states but also with the “problematic regions” by capitalizing on its historical and ethnic heritage, it would succeed in establishing secure links between its allies in the West and those regions without alienating any regional power.⁹⁸⁵

Within this context, the risks and the challenges of such a new initiative and how likely it was to succeed should be discussed. The major question was asked by Guner Ozkan: “How easy is it to bring them all together while they all have polarizing priorities and interests?”⁹⁸⁶ According to Turkey, diversification of energy pipelines in the region is the backbone of the suggested ‘Alliance’.⁹⁸⁷ This refers to the point that “if those actors such as Abkhazia, South Ossetia (S.Ossetia) and Armenia benefit from existing or impending regional big economic projects like energy lines and railways, ethnoterritorial wars, the most serious regional security issues, can be prevented and even resolved totally.”⁹⁸⁸

⁹⁸² Hasan Ali Karasar, “Saakashvili Pulled the Trigger: Turkey between Russia and Georgia”, *SETA Policy Brief*, August 2008, No.20, p.8.

⁹⁸³ Hasan Ali Karasar, “Saakashvili Pulled the Trigger: Turkey between Russia and Georgia”, *SETA Policy Brief*, August 2008, No.20, p.8.

⁹⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

⁹⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

⁹⁸⁶ Güner Özkan, “Turkey’s Proposal of “Caucasus Alliance”: How Likely is Its Success?”, *Journal of Turkish Weekly*, 21 August, 2008.

⁹⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

⁹⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

While Georgia as a first reaction approached positively to the idea of the Pact, the Russian direct involvement to the conflict and Russian recognition of Abkhazia and South Ossetia caused Georgia to think that conditions changed in a radical way and Georgia rejected to be part of a joint security mechanism in the region which Russia was also included.

Concerning Turkey's motivation, Igor Torbakov argued the Caucasus Stability and Cooperation Platform seeks to lower the current level of confrontation by setting up a regional forum where local conflicts can be discussed and resolved.⁹⁸⁹ It was further argued that "Ankara appears to have no illusions about the immediate success of the CSCP and the Turkish objective is rather to facilitate talks between the five countries that would reduce tensions and ultimately strengthen stability and support regional relations."⁹⁹⁰ A second concern of Turkey about this initiative is that, instability in the Caucasus would be bad for business.⁹⁹¹ The August 2008 war exposed the vulnerability of the energy transit routes that pass through Georgian territory. Thus, it was argued by Igor Torbakov that, "If Turkey wants to realize its goal of becoming a major energy hub, Turkish and international analysts argue, it has to find an alternative transit corridor for Caspian hydrocarbons to match the one running across Georgia."⁹⁹² Concerning all, it was argued that: "the stability of energy transit lies at the heart of Turkey's Caucasus Pact."⁹⁹³ In order to explain this situation more explicitly, Abdullah Güл explained that:

The Caucasus is key as far as energy resources and the safe transportation of energy from the east to the west. That 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 the

⁹⁸⁹ Torbakov, *Ibid.*, p.22.

⁹⁹⁰ *Ibid.*

⁹⁹¹ *Ibid.*

⁹⁹² *Ibid.*

⁹⁹³ *Ibid.*

Caucasus, it would be sort of like a wall between the East and West; if you have stability in the region, it could be a gate.⁹⁹⁴

There were also some critical views concerning Turkish attempt for the Platform of Security and Cooperation in the Caucasus. M.K Kaya and Svante Cornell argued that Turkey's reaction was a reflection of the conflicting pressures and instincts in its decision making process:

On the one hand, Ankara paid lip service to its western alignment and the joint projects it has been pursuing with the West for years; but on the other, it launched an initiative that explicitly kept the West out..... Most obviously, the prospect of achieving consensus around a multilateral mechanism in the middle of a raging war between Russia and Georgia appeared to be guided either by wishful thinking or a serious underestimation of the gravity of the events. Indeed, Georgia's official reaction suggested no less, agreeing to consider the initiative only once its territory had been liberated from Russian occupation.⁹⁹⁵

Considering all, the project launched by Erdoan appeared was evaluated as:

In effect, although a Turkish initiative, this mechanism would create a structure dominated by Russia, with Turkey playing a secondary role. Given Russia's overt claims to a sphere of interest of its own in the South Caucasus, it is difficult to see what role Moscow sees for Turkey in the region, other than a secondary power legitimizing its dominance. Such a structure would therefore clearly not be in the interest of Azerbaijan and Georgia. Moreover, creating a structure that, by excluding the west, legitimizes Russian primacy in the region does not seem to be congruent with Turkey's own long-term interests.⁹⁹⁶

Based on this analysis and view, the point that Russia's place in Turkish foreign policy gains more and more importance as time goes by, becomes more important. In terms of trade volume, Russia is a key partner for Turkey. Turkey generates half of its electricity from natural gas turbines, and buys over two thirds of its natural gas from Russia. Sedat Lacin in his article "Is Turkey getting away from the U.S in the

⁹⁹⁴ Rana Foroohar, "Pulled From Two Directions," *Newsweek*, October 3, 2008.
<http://www.thedailybeast.com/newsweek/2008/10/03/pulled-from-two-directions.html>

⁹⁹⁵ M.K. Kaya, Svante Cornell, "Turkey and Georgia a Blunged Stability Initiative", *Turkey Analyst*, 29 August 2008,
<http://www.silkroadstudies.org/new/inside/turkey/2008/080829B.html>

⁹⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

Caucasus" defines the Caucasus Platform as a proposal that excludes the US.⁹⁹⁷ He argued that:

Ankara neither aimed to punish Russia, nor spent effort for it. Contrarily, it tried to prevent America's or another country's (like Ukraine) intervention to the war by not allowing the armed cargo or warplanes of these countries while Russia and Georgia were fighting.⁹⁹⁸

The US also showed reaction to this initiative of Turkey. Sedat Laçiner explained the US reaction as:

The Secretary of State of the US said that they had no idea about the project and it is surprising for them. Matt Bryza, US deputy assistant secretary of the state for European and Eurasian affairs, said "I must say I was surprised. I hadn't been briefed that that was going to happen. We have a partnership with Turkey on the Caucasus, and I presume that we'll be able to work together very closely now with Turkey and other allies since we do have clearly shared interests, not to mention values, throughout the Caucasus with Turkey."⁹⁹⁹

Furthermore, Turkey underlined that the Caucasus platform was a geographical based initiative which meant that the US could not be part of it.¹⁰⁰⁰ In other words, while the initiative excluded the US, it included Russia too much.¹⁰⁰¹ Concerning Turkey's policy of excluding the U.S, Sedat Laçiner argued that:

Turkey's moderate policy is fair. Not provoking Russia and protecting our national interests by not staying against Russia for American's adventures is reasonable. But we don't have to forget that Turkey, by itself, does not have the power to stop Russia. Russia evaluates the proposals like "Caucasus Platform" as a piece of cake. This proposal does not have the characteristics that may stop Russia's local goals. On the other hand, excluding the West and being a part of a club only with Russia and three small countries is like entering a small cave with a huge bear.¹⁰⁰²

To sum up, the Turkish initiative was directed solely to the three Caucasian states and Russia. It was not envisioned to invite representatives of the secessionist

⁹⁹⁷ Sedat Laçiner, "Is Turkey Getting Away from the U.S in the Caucasus?", *Journal of Turkish Weekly*, 01.09.2008

⁹⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁰⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁰¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁰² *Ibid.*

provinces South Ossetia, Abkhazia, or Nagorno-Karabakh, nor the extra-regional actors EU or USA. Through this initiative, the Turkish government aimed to deal with two strategic problems. First, Turkey wanted to eradicate possible security problems that could emerge due to an instable situation and therefore could at least build confidence among countries in the region.¹⁰⁰³ Second, since Turkey wants to become an energy hub through which oil and gas will be transported from East to West, ensuring a stable situation along the energy routes was of strategic importance.¹⁰⁰⁴

Considering Turkey's short and long term interests, Turkey's policy during the August War and Turkey's proposal for the establishment of a Caucasus Platform in the region, showed how the establishment of stability and security in the region was important for Turkey. Nevertheless, Turkey during the war faced with a dilemma of acting next to the US or Russia. Though, Turkey seemed to conduct an independent policy trying to balance both the US and Russia, Turkey acted more with the conscious that she did not have the luxury to annoy Russia as its northern neighbour and strategic economic partner. Turkey did not want to lose Russia because of Georgia.¹⁰⁰⁵ In other words, it can be well argued that Turkey could not stand behind Georgia against Russia during the war and its aftermath. Even though Turkey tried to keep a balance with the US and Russia, Turkey's policy was a challenge to Turkey-US and Turkey-Georgia so called strategic partnership. Turkey showed that her policy in the region was not completely in line with the US policy. Furthermore, Turkey, through the policy she conducted, reflected that she refrained from any concrete involvement of the US in the region.

¹⁰⁰³ Ekrem Guzeldere, " Turkish Foreign Policy: From "Surrounded by Enemies" to "Zero Problems""", *C.A.P Policy Analysis*, p. 19

¹⁰⁰⁴ Ekrem Guzeldere, " Turkish Foreign Policy: From "Surrounded by Enemies" to "Zero Problems""", *C.A.P Policy Analysis*, p. 19

¹⁰⁰⁵ Sedat Laciner, *Op.cit.*

6.3.4 General Evaluation of the August 2008 War

The August 2008 War had international implications and outcomes as well as regional ones. Nevertheless, as well as its implications and outcomes, the nature of the war was of equal importance for a proper at least just analysis. Paul Goble defined this as:

Both the Russian Federation and Georgia engaged in an intensive information war before, during, and after the fighting raged, in order to define for their own peoples, their opponents, and the international community not only who won and who lost, but more to the point, who was the aggressor, and thus deserves blame, and who was the victim, and thus thereby earns sympathy.¹⁰⁰⁶

Based on that argument, according to Paul Goble, Moscow argued that Georgian President Saakashvili and Georgia was the aggressor and Moscow had no choice except to intervene for the defense of its citizens.¹⁰⁰⁷ Georgia, on the other hand, argued that Russia violated the international law by invading a sovereign country and added that Georgia's deployment of troops to South Ossetia was legitimate and could not be evaluated as a reason of war.¹⁰⁰⁸

Per Gahrton in his book “Georgia Pawn in the New Great Game”, mentions of two opposing conspiracy theories about the beginning of the August 2008 war. The first theory is based on the argument that “the Georgian-Russian war was ther result of a Georgian-American- Israeli conspiracy in order to lure Russia into a trap and thus create a basis for a new cold war, for the benefit of the arms industry, not least in Israel, which has been rearming Georgia for several years.”¹⁰⁰⁹ There were also some supportive ideas of this hypothesis. Georgia's last ambassador Moscow- Erosi

¹⁰⁰⁶ Paul A. Goble, “Defining Victory and Defeat: The Information War Between Russia and Georgia”, Svante E. Cornell and S. Frederick Starr, (Eds), *The Guns of August 2008 Russia’s War in Georgia*, M.E. Sharpe, 2009, p. 181.

¹⁰⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 183.

¹⁰⁰⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁰⁹ Ali Abunimah, “Tel Aviv to Tibilisi: Israel’s role in the Russia-Georgia war”, The Electronic Intifada, August 12, 2008, cited in Per Gahrton, *Georgia Pawn in the New Great Game*, Pluto Press, 2010, p. 182.

Kitsmarishvili indicated that “President Saakashvili had been on the verge of a military operation against Abkhazia in the spring of 2008”¹⁰¹⁰. Former Defense Minister of Georgia, Georgi Karkarashvili, told BBC that “ it was obviously untrue that the Georgian troops in South Ossetia had only undertaken defensive action”¹⁰¹¹. Furthermore, Irakli Alasania- the former Georgian Ambassador to the United Nations- argued that “the President of Georgia is responsible for engaging Georgia in this provocative war”¹⁰¹². Nino Burjanadze, former Speaker of the Georgian Parliament, also declared that “following the Russian military withdrawal, the Georgian leadership would face ‘though questions’ about the circumstances in which the war was launched”¹⁰¹³.

Opposing to these arguments and ideas, another theory was expressed out by Pavel Felgengauer in Novaya Gazeta that “the war was a provocation by Kremlin to lure Saakashvili into trap in order to clear the way for a comeback for Russia as the superior watchman in Caucasus and as a superpower on the world stage”¹⁰¹⁴. Furthermore, Pavel Felgengauer in his article “After August 7: The Escalation of the Russia-Georgia War” stated that, “The Russians and their seperatist allies in Abkhazia and South Ossetia prepared and exacuted in August 2008 a war which the

¹⁰¹⁰ Per Gahrton, *Georgia Pawn in the New Great Game*, Pluto Press, 2010, p. 182.

¹⁰¹¹ BBC (in Russian), December 20, 2008., cited in Per Gahrton, *Georgia Pawn in the New Great Game*, Pluto Press, 2010, p. 182.

¹⁰¹² Civil Georgia, December 24, 2008., cited in Per Gahrton, *Georgia Pawn in the New Great Game*, Pluto Press, 2010, p. 182.

¹⁰¹³ Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty: South Ossetia debacle could trigger political backlash in Georgia, 21 August 2008, Available from: http://www.rferl.org/content/South_Ossetia_Debacle_Could_Trigger_Political_Blacklash_In_Georgia/1192751.html(23 August 2008.), cited in Vicken Cheterian, “The August 2008 War in Georgia: from Ethnic Conflict to Border Wars”, Stephen F. Jones, (Ed.), *War and Revolution in the Caucasus: Georgia Ablaze*,Routledge, 2010, p.68

¹⁰¹⁴ Pavel Felgengauer, Novaya Gazeta, 14 August, 2008, cited in., Per Gahrton, *Georgia Pawn in the New Great Game*, Pluto Press, 2010, p. 183.

Georgians did not predict or expect”¹⁰¹⁵. Andrei Illarionov- former Advisor of Putin- also said that “Russia had prepared and started the war”¹⁰¹⁶. In Central Asia-Caucasus Institute, it was argued that:

Hawks in the Georgian government had been drafting plans to re-take at least parts of the conflict zones by force, despite strong warnings by Georgia’s Western allies. While Tbilisi may well have used disproportionate force against Ossetians, Russia’s aggression against Georgia appears well prepared and pre-meditated.¹⁰¹⁷

In the same way, Vicken Cheterian, in his article “The August 2008 War in Georgia: from Ethnic Conflict to Border Wars”, argued that:

The Russian military was evidently ready for an eventual war with the Georgian armed forces. By all accounts, the Russian 58th Army started moving into South Ossetia in the early hours of 8 August, within hours of the Georgian attack on Tskhinvali. This means the Russian leadership was seriously preparing for an eventual war with its southern neighbour.¹⁰¹⁸

These arguments even went further arguing that “The Russian military had plans to attack Georgia and was waiting for a pretext”¹⁰¹⁹. Nino Burjanadze also argued that “what happened in South Ossetia was a provocation prepared in Russia a long time ago. The problem is that our government led us into the trap”¹⁰²⁰.

¹⁰¹⁵ Pavel Felgenhauer, “After the August 7: The Escalation of the Russia-Georgia War”, Svante E. Cornell and S. Frederick Starr (Eds.), *The Guns of August 2008 Russia’s War in Georgia*, M.E.Sharpe, 2009, p. 162.

¹⁰¹⁶ Andrei Illarionov, “Kto byl pervym?” (who was first), www.illarionovlivejournal.com, February 20, 2009., cited in Per Gahrton, *Georgia Pawn in the New Great Game*, Pluto Press, 2010, p. 183.

¹⁰¹⁷ Blanka Hancilova and Magdalena Frichova, *CACI Analyst*, August 20, 2008.cited in Per Gahrton, *Georgia Pawn in the New Great Game*, Pluto Press, 2010, p. 183.

¹⁰¹⁸ Vicken Cheterian, “The August 2008 War in Georgia: from Ethnic Conflict to Border Wars”, Stephen F. Jones, (Ed.), *War and Revolution in the Caucasus: Georgia Ablaze*,Routledge, 2010, p. 71.

¹⁰¹⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰²⁰ Author’s interview with Nino Burjanadze, Tbilisi, 12 October 2008., cited in Vicken Cheterian, “The August 2008 War in Georgia: from Ethnic Conflict to Border Wars”, Stephen F. Jones, (Ed.), *War and Revolution in the Caucasus: Georgia Ablaze*,Routledge, 2010, p. 71.

Considering all these arguments and ideas, Per Gahrton in his book “Georgia Pawn in the New Great Game”, stated that: “German weekly magazine *Der Spiegel* was closest to the truth when it concluded that both sides mobilized during the summer in a kind of ‘chicken race’.”¹⁰²¹

He further argued that “both Kremlin and Mikheil Saakashvili set traps for each other”¹⁰²². Oktay F. Tanrisever in his article, “Regional Security in the Caucasus in the post 9/11 era: Old Conflicts and New Openings”, stated that:

In the Georgia-Russia war that started on 8 August 2008, it is a widespread thought that Mikheil Saakashvili made wrong breakthroughs and Russia which waited for any opportunity to attack Georgia used these mistakes to start the war.¹⁰²³

In the light of these arguments, the writer of this thesis argues that this was not a war that erupted suddenly. Whether it was Russia or Georgia that started the first move of the war, developments before the war shows that actually, this was not a war of surprise for any of the sides. Furthermore, beyond having implications for Russia and Georgia, the war had regional and international implications, as well. Ronald D. Asmus in his book *A Little War That Shook the World* argues that:

This war was not fought over territory, minority rights, or the future status of the separatist provinces Abkhazia and South Ossetia.To be sure, Russo-Georgian relations were troubled and these conflicts real. But the root cause of the war was geopolitical. Georgia was determined to go West and Russia was determined to stop it from doing so. In that struggle, Moscow took these conflicts hostage and instrumentalized them as part of a broader Russian strategy to keep Georgia off balance and dependent on Moscow’s good will and to undercut Tbilisi’s Western aspirations.¹⁰²⁴

¹⁰²¹ Der Spiegel, August 25, 2008. The expression ‘chicken race’ originates in a car game popular in the United States in the 1950’s (according to the James Dean film *Rebel Without a Cause*) where two cars drive as fast as possible towards an abyss and the driver who first diverts is considered the loser and a coward (a chicken). The expression is used also in a figurative sense, for political and diplomatic activities., cited in Per Gahrton, *Georgia Pawn in the New Great Game*, Pluto Press, 2010, p. 183.

¹⁰²² Per Gahrton, *Georgia Pawn in the New Great Game*, Pluto Press, 2010, p. 183.

¹⁰²³ Oktay F. Tanrisever, “Regional Security in the Caucasus in the post 9/11 era: Old Conflicts and New Openings”, Vol.6, No.11, *OAKA*, 2011,p.7

¹⁰²⁴ Ronald D. Asmus, *A Little War That Shook the World Georgia, Russia and the Future of the West*, Palgrave, 2010, p.8.

Based on that argument that the reason of the war was geopolitical, it was first the Western orientation of Georgia and its efforts to get rid of Russia's sphere of influence and second Russia's aim to control the energy sources and supply routes to Europe that made the August 2008 War inevitable.¹⁰²⁵ Further, Moscow's political aim can be defined as such:

Moscow's political aim was most likely the removal of Mikheil Saakashvili as Georgia's president, to drive a stake in the heart of the Rose Revolution as an example to the other countries of the former Soviet space, and to send a clear message to the United States and NATO that Georgia is in a zone of Russia's "privileged interests".¹⁰²⁶

Taking into consideration Georgia's Western orientation and how Russia perceived this as a threat, strategic mistakes of the West is also worth mentioning. The decision taken at the NATO Bucharest Summit that Georgia would be a NATO member in the future, provided Russia with a pretext to act against Georgia.¹⁰²⁷ The decision taken in the Bucharest Summit in April 2008 created the appropriate ground for the beginning of the war, anyway.¹⁰²⁸ In the report of the International Strategic Research Organisation, it was further argued that:

While the promise was given to Georgia that in the future it would be member of NATO, under Russian pressure, membership could not be realized. By this way, Georgia understood that it would not be able to get full guarantee in that way and so it had to make other attempts in order to be a member of NATO. On the other hand, Russia thought that it had one more chance to keep Georgia (and Ukraine) out of NATO. When looked to the scene, it can be stated that the hesitating decision of NATO to carry over the membership to a further date, concerned both sides and forced the sides for any possible conflict.¹⁰²⁹

¹⁰²⁵ *Ibid.*, pp.8-9.

¹⁰²⁶ Jon E. Chick, "The Russian-Georgian War: Political and Military Implications for U.S Policy", *Central Asia-Caucasus Institute*, February 2009, p.6.

¹⁰²⁷ Ronald. D. Asmus., *Op.cit*, p.12.

¹⁰²⁸ "Gürcistan-Rusya Krizi Değerlendirme Raporu Krizin Türkiye'ye, Bölgeye ve Küreye Etkileri", Hasan Selim Özertem (Ed.), Usak Raporları No. 08-03, Usak Yayınları, September, 2008, p.5.

¹⁰²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

Regarding the statement of Russia Foreign Minister Lavrov that “ We can do everything to prevent the membership of Georgia and Ukraine to NATO”¹⁰³⁰, it can be well argued that for Russia, NATO’s enlargement plans and the fact that this was discussed in the Bucharest Summit in April 2008, was perceived as serious threats.

It was further argued by Ronald D. Asmus that “the West had no plan to shield Tbilisi from the consequences of its own policies”.¹⁰³¹ Furthermore, reactions and attitudes of the Western states during and in the aftermath of the war draw attention to the pragmatic fact that they were rather afraid of deteriorating their relations with Moscow considering their growing dependency to Russian energy.¹⁰³² Considering the outcome of Russian-Georgian war, Ronald D. Asmus further argued that the war “underscores the need for rethinking and overhauling the Western strategy toward Russia and our European security architecture in general, enlargement and outreach to the European neighborhood in particular”¹⁰³³.

Another major criticism against the Western policy was their attitude towards the existing international involvement and mechanisms in Abkhazia and South Ossetia. Ronald D. Asmus, considering this situation, argued that:

These efforts were never transformed into the kind of support systems that could produce an authentic peace process or support reconciliation. Instead, over time they were used by Russia as a cover for its own goals. Yet no one in the West was willing to call Moscow to account for its abuse of them. It was a failure of the international community to not resist and correct this trend. Instead, the West regularly extended the arrangements that locked in Russian domination and allowed Moscow to block any initiative it did not like.¹⁰³⁴

¹⁰³⁰ *Gazeta*, 26 August 2008, http://www.gazeta.ru/politics/2008/08/26_a_2821737.shtml, cited in ¹⁰³⁰ “Gürcistan-Rusya Krizi Değerlendirme Raporu Krizin Türkiye’ye, Bölgeye ve Küreye Etkileri”, Hasan Selim Özertem (Ed.), Usak Raporları No. 08-03, Usak Yayınları, September, 2008, p. 27.

¹⁰³¹ Ronald D. Asmus, *Op.cit.*, pp-12-13.

¹⁰³² *Ibid.*, p.13.

¹⁰³³ *Ibid.*

¹⁰³⁴ *Ibid.*, p.11.

Supporting this argument of Asmus, Vicken Cheterian argued that “the August War was a failure of the international mediators to find a negotiated and peaceful solution to the conflicts in the Caucasus”¹⁰³⁵. It was further argued that:

Great powers’ military and economic interests, the US desire to limit Russian influence, and military and economic interests did not always work hand-in hand with the UN and OSCE diplomatic solutions. Western oil interests, the US desire to limit Russian influence, and military cooperation with Georgia on the ‘war on terror’, empowered Tbilisi to abandon diplomacy and seek solution by other means.¹⁰³⁶

Considering Georgia, beyond the point that whether it could prevent that war or it was a deliberate act of Georgia to take place in the war, it is a definite fact that Saakashvili had tactical and strategic mistakes as well. According to Ronald D. Asmus, “Saakashvili began a war his allies had warned him not to start,a war that they woud not support, and a war that he could not win”¹⁰³⁷. Matthew Byrza, also declared that it was their consistent advice for several years to the Georgian leadership not to get drawn into a trap.¹⁰³⁸ Furthermore, it was argued that what Georgia pursued was a “madman theory”- which referred threatening to go to war with Russia and drawing the attention of the West through that way.¹⁰³⁹

Considering all, the August 2008 War showed that the West including the U.S failed in their policies towards Russia and that the West and Georgia from now on should develop alternative ways and strategies against assertive policies of Russia. Also,

¹⁰³⁵ Vicken Cheterian, “The August 2008 War in Georgia: from Ethnic Conflict to Border Wars”, Stephen F. Jones, (Ed.), *War and Revolution in the Caucasus: Georgia Ablaze*,Routledge, 2010, p.73.

¹⁰³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 73.

¹⁰³⁷ Ronald D. Asmus, *A Little War That Shook the World Georgia, Russia and the Future of the West* , Palgrave, 2010,p.10.

¹⁰³⁸ C. Clover, Countdown in the Caucasus: seven days that brought Russia and Georgia to war. *Financial Times*, 26 August, Available from: <http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/af25400a-739d-11dd-8a66-0000779fd18c.html>. (Accessed 14 June 2009), cited in Vicken Cheterian, “The August 2008 War in Georgia: from Ethnic Conflict to Border Wars”, Stephen F. Jones, (Ed.), *War and Revolution in the Caucasus: Georgia Ablaze*,Routledge, 2010, p.71.

¹⁰³⁹ Ronald D. Asmus, *A Little War That Shook the World Georgia, Russia and the Future of the West* , Palgrave, 2010,p.10.

Cheterian argues that “Georgia should also revise its decision making mechanisms as well as its military policy to evaluate the security risks it faces”¹⁰⁴⁰. Furthermore, the so-called mutual trust and confidence between Georgia and the West including the U.S seemed to be evaporated through the August 2008 War. Based on the argument of Ronald D. Asmus that this war was not just a confrontation between Georgia and Russia but also a confrontation between the West and Russia¹⁰⁴¹, how the future of the trans-atlantic relations will be shaped and what kind of a role Turkey will play are matters of question.

6.3.5 Implications and Outcomes of the August War and Turkey’s Foreign Policy

Considering outcomes of the August 2008 War, there have been major implications on Turkey’s foreign policy. Concerning Georgia’s role as a buffer state against Russian presence and domination in the region, whether any change in Georgia’s role would happen and how Turkey-Georgia relations would be effected emerged as a question. Second, the major question has been about Turkey’s so called policy to Abkhazia.

Mitat Çelikpala, concerning the reflections of the August 2008 War on Turkey, indicated that “politically, Turkey should re-consider her Georgian centered Caucasus policy which was formulated in the last 10 years”¹⁰⁴².

¹⁰⁴⁰ Vicken Cheterian, “The August 2008 War in Georgia: from Ethnic Conflict to Border Wars”, Stephen F. Jones, (Ed.), *War and Revolution in the Caucasus: Georgia Ablaze*, Routledge, 2010, p.75.

¹⁰⁴¹ Ronald D. Asmus, *A Little War That Shook the World Georgia, Russia and the Future of the West*, Palgrave, 2010, p. 217.

¹⁰⁴² Mitat Çelikpala, “Kafkasya’da Son Gelişmeler ve Türkiye”, http://www.nartajans.net/site/haberler_4250_kafkaslarda_son_gelismeler_ve_turkiye_doc_dr_mitat_celikpala.html

It was further argued that:

The breaking down of Russia-Georgia relation and the uncompromising ground that would be created by the sides after a devastating war, have the potential to weight down Turkey's regional security initiatives such as BLACKSEAFOR and Black Sea Harmony beyond badly effecting Turkey's economic and political projects such as BSEC, BTC pipeline, BTK railway projects.¹⁰⁴³

Thus, it was claimed by Mitat Çelikpala that the recent developments as well as giving harm to Georgia, also gave harm to Turkey and Turkey's Caucasus policies.¹⁰⁴⁴ Concerning the harm Turkey had, it was stated that the political line and vision of Turkey in the region suffered great damage and that a Georgian centered instability and disorder could force Turkey to look for other alternatives.¹⁰⁴⁵

Considering the fact that Georgia was affiliated an effective role in several economic, political and security projects by Turkey and the US in order to prevent it to be a failed state,¹⁰⁴⁶ how and in what way Turkey's policy would be re-considered in the post-August 2008 war period is a question mark. Furthermore, considering the fact that Saakashvili put Georgia and Turkey with its partners through a hard process,¹⁰⁴⁷ it can be well argued that the August 2008 War became a litmus test for the so called strategic partnership between Turkey and Georgia. As well as showing that Turkey's and Georgia's interests were not congruent, the August 2008 War and its aftermath showed that Turkey-Georgia relations were including also conflicting interests. More important than all was that, considering relations with Russia, conflict of interests between Turkey and Georgia were obvious. Turkey in the existing conjonkture does not have any choice to turn its back to Russia.

¹⁰⁴³ Mitat Çelikpala, "Kafkasya'da Son Gelişmeler ve Türkiye", http://www.nartajans.net/site/haberler_4250_kafkaslarda_son_gelismeler_ve_turkiye_doc_dr_mitat_celikpala.html

¹⁰⁴⁴ Mitat Çelikpala, "Kafkasya'da Son Gelişmeler ve Türkiye", http://www.nartajans.net/site/haberler_4250_kafkaslarda_son_gelismeler_ve_turkiye_doc_dr_mitat_celikpala.html

¹⁰⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

Concerning the second question about Turkey's policy towards Abkhazia, it can be well argued that this also constitutes a challenge against the so called Turkey-Georgia strategic partnership and carry the potential to be an area of problem in Turkey-Georgia relations.

Following the recognition of Abkhazia's independence by Russia, Turkey has become faced with a practical Russian presence just on its north. With the agreements signed between Abkhazia and Russia after the war, Russia as well as increasing the number of Russian soldiers in Abkhazia, got the right to have a permanent Russian base and also the control of the communication and logistic sectors including control of the Abkhazian air space. Considering Turkey's strategic objective of balancing Russia's presence in the region, with the current situation it seems that Turkey will have to consider Abkhazia as an actor even if not as an independent state in the region.

Furthermore, since the main motivation of Turkey has been to secure the energy transit routes, the outcomes of the war showed that, not including the de facto independent states as subjects of Turkish foreign policy would not be a proper way of securing the energy transit routes. Since either formally independent or not, both Abkhazia and South Ossetia were important determinants for the security in the region, there should be other efficient ways of dealing with these countries except ignoring them. In other words, it became clear that an ignorance policy towards other actors of the region would not help to the establishment of a permanent stability and security in the region.

Another important implication and outcome for Turkey is the increasing and growing role of the Abkhaz Diaspora and the fact that there are no other ways for Turkish foreign policy than to take into consideration and keep a balance between the demands of the Abkhaz diaspora and official policy towards Georgia. It is also vital to note that Turkey may get use of the presence of the Abkhaz diaspora in its foreign policy formulation instead of perceiving it as an obstacle.

Considering both bilateral and regional aspect of developments and their implications it seems as Turkey's stance moves to be more on the Russian axis. Furthermore, Russia has been a state for Turkey which she cooperated but also has been a rival in the region. Nevertheless, though the August 2008 War caused the strategic partnership between Turkey and Georgia to be challenged, as long as Georgia is stable and secure, it will continue to carry importance for Turkey as a buffer state against Russia in the region. Furthermore, it can be well argued that in the following periods, Turkey-Georgia relations may be vulnerable to newly emerging problems.

6.4 Turkey's Diplomatic Relations with Georgia Between 2009–2012

Considering the period after the August 2008 War, Turkey–Georgia relations developed in a complex way. Considering bilateral relations, emphasis on the strategic partnership between Turkey and Georgia continued, nevertheless, in specific cases such as Turkey's policy towards Abkhazia, Turkey began to act as if challenging the so called strategic partnership with Georgia. Thus, conflicting interests of Turkey and Georgia came to surface more.

6.4.1 Turkey's Bilateral Relations with Georgia Between 2009-2012

After the August 2008 War, Foreign Minister of Turkey Ahmet Davutoğlu visited Georgia on 7-8 September 2009 upon the invitation of Foreign Minister of Georgia Grigol Vashadze.¹⁰⁴⁸ After the meeting, a common press release was organized and Ahmet Davutoğlu said that Turkey pays attention to bilateral and regional relations with Georgia.¹⁰⁴⁹ Furthermore, Ahmet Davutoğlu added that Turkey pays attention to

¹⁰⁴⁸ "Davutoğlu Gürcistan Yolcusu", 4 September 2009,
<http://yenisafak.com.tr/politika-haber/davutoglu-gurcistan-yolcusu-04.09.2009-209176>

¹⁰⁴⁹ "Ahmet Davutoğlu Gürcistan'da", 07.09.2009,
<http://www.gdd.org.tr/haberdetay.asp?id=318>

the territorial integrity of Georgia and bilateral relations between Turkey and Georgia was in good level.¹⁰⁵⁰ He added that:

Turkey and Georgia are strategic partners associated to each other with historical and cultural ties. With these cultural ties, Turkey after Georgia got its independence stood near Georgia and Turkey will continue to be next to Georgia. As our friend and neighbour country, Georgia's political and economic prosperity and territorial integrity are among the issues we pay attention. As it is the case with our all neighbours, we want to establish deep social and economic relations with Georgia. We pay attention to cooperation in our common regions Caucasus and the Black Sea. Because; we know that unless the establishment of peace and stability in Georgia, it is hard to bring peace and stability to the Caucasus.¹⁰⁵¹

Jonathan Kulick indicated that “Georgia needs Turkey in its regional policies”¹⁰⁵². Georgian Foreign Minister Grigol Vashadze indicated that Georgia sees Turkey as a friend and strategic partner.¹⁰⁵³ Grigol Vashadze added that:

Our strategic partnership with Turkey is continuing in an increasing manner. We decided to undertake work for the improvement of cooperation between the foreign ministries of two countries. Within this context, every three months, we will have bilateral meetings.¹⁰⁵⁴

Semih İdiz-colomnist in Milliyet Newspaper- concerning Davutoğlu’s visit to Georgia, wrote down Davutoğlu’s expressions. Drawing attention to the instability being experienced after the end of the Cold War, Davutoğlu indicated that still there is not even a semi-permanent statuquo in our surrounding.¹⁰⁵⁵

¹⁰⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁵¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁵² Interview done with Jonathan Kulick by Esra Kızılıbuğa, 17 November 2010 in Tblisi, Senior Advisor to the State Ministry for Reintegration (Title at the time of interview). Currently, Senior Project Director, Pepperdine University School of Public Policy.

¹⁰⁵³ “Ahmet Davutoğlu Gürcistan’da”, 07.09.2009,
<http://www.gdd.org.tr/haberdetay.asp?id=318>

¹⁰⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁵⁵ Semih İdiz, “Türkiye’den bu kez Abhazya Hamlesi”, 8 September 2009,
<http://siyaset.milliyet.com.tr/turkiye-den-bu-kez--font-color--darkblue---abhzaya-hamlesi---font-/semih-idiz/siyaset/siyasetyazardetay/08.09.2009/1136801/default.htm>

Furthermore, adding that it was not just two powers that would establish the new order, Davutoğlu continued as:

As it was experienced in the Iraq case, the US can not establish the order on its own. As seen in its war against Georgia, Russia also can not establish the order. We are saying that in the Middle East, in the Balkans and in Caucasus, a new order should be established. While this order is being established, we want to play an active role. This is not a imperial stimulus, but a necessity and this should be brought to the agenda. Other actors even accept this new role of Turkey.¹⁰⁵⁶

Saakashvili also after his meeting with Davutoğlu during this visit, indicated that Turkey had a very important regional role and for the establishment of peace and stability in the Caucasus, Turkey's support was compulsory.¹⁰⁵⁷

During this visit, the so called Turkish-Armenian rapprochement, Turkey's high level official visit to Abkhazia were also among the issues included in the agenda. Considering all, it was argued that through this visit, Turkey wanted to emphasize that all these developments would not give harm to its relations with Georgia and keeping relations with Georgia in good level was aimed.¹⁰⁵⁸

On 11-12 February 2011 Foreign Minister of Turkey Ahmet Davutoglu made a two days visit to Georgia.¹⁰⁵⁹ Ahmet Davutoglu started his visit in Batum and met with President of Acara Autonomous Region Levan Varsholomidze.¹⁰⁶⁰ Starting the visit in Batum carried a symbolic and psychologic meaning for Turkey's foreign

¹⁰⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁵⁷ "Kuralları Davutoğlu Hazırlıyor", 9 September 2009,
<http://www.aktifhaber.com/kurallari-davutoglu-hazirliyor-243902h.htm>

¹⁰⁵⁸ Semih İdiz, "Türkiye'den bu kez Abhazya Hamlesi", 8 September 2009,
<http://siyaset.milliyet.com.tr/turkiye-den-bu-kez--font-color--darkblue---abhazya-hamlesi---font-/semih-idiz/siyaset/siyasetyazardetay/08.09.2009/1136801/default.htm>

¹⁰⁵⁹ Davutoğlu'nun Gürcistan ziyareti: Büyük (Birleşik) Kafkasya için küçük bir adım mı?,
24.02.2011,
<http://www.1news.com.tr/yazarlar/20110224095641284.html>

¹⁰⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

policy.¹⁰⁶¹ Ahmet Davutoğlu met with local officials and businessmen in the autonomous region. In Tbilisi, Ahmet Davutoğlu met President Saakashvili and Foreign Minister Grigol Vashadze. Davutoglu said that there was agreement in certain issues between Turkey and Georgia.¹⁰⁶² First, passing the border just with the identity card would be ensured between Turkey and Georgia.¹⁰⁶³ Second, one window application will start in Sarp Border Gate and control in one of the customs will be enough.¹⁰⁶⁴ Third, The Cildir Aktas passage will be completed as soon as possible.¹⁰⁶⁵ Fourth, Camili and Muratli Border Gates will be opened and an increase in border trade is expected with the improvements in border crossing.¹⁰⁶⁶ Fifth, cultural and historical assets will be mutually protected.¹⁰⁶⁷ Turkey envisages the repairement of Georgian churchs in Turkey in return of re-building the Aziziye Mosque damaged in Batum.¹⁰⁶⁸ Although the Church in Georgia is against this, Davutoğlu expects concrete outcomes in issues agreed between Turkey and Georgia.¹⁰⁶⁹

Regarding bilateral relations, as well as positive developments emphasizing cooperation, there are also problems between Turkey and Georgia. The arrested Turkish citizens in Georgia has been a potential problem in relations between Turkey

¹⁰⁶¹ Davutoğlu'nun Gürcistan ziyareti: Büyük (Birleşik) Kafkasya için küçük bir adım mı?, 24.02.2011, <http://www.1news.com.tr/yazarlar/20110224095641284.html>

¹⁰⁶² Fehim Taştekin, "Batum'a İstanbul Rolü", 14.02.2011, <http://www.radikal.com.tr/Radikal.aspx?aType=RadikalYazar&ArticleID=1039940&CategoryID=100>

¹⁰⁶³ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

and Georgia. It is argued that in the last 2 years, approximately 100 Turkish people were arrested in Georgia and through the initiative of Prime Minister Erdogan 33 arrested Turkish people were liberated.¹⁰⁷⁰ It is argued that Turkish citizens who were visiting Georgia for touristic and/or trade reasons were being fell into trap by a gang consisting of police, judge officials and politicians and were arrested.¹⁰⁷¹ Futhermore, huge ammounts of money were demanded from families of the arrested people.¹⁰⁷² Specifically for the liberation of these arrested Turkish citizens, an Association of Families of Victims of Georgia was established and through their initiative to the Turkish Foreign Ministry, attempts and efforts for the liberation of arrested Turkish citizens took place.¹⁰⁷³ Nevertheless, there are still arrested people in Georgia waiting for any positive solution for their position. As well as efforts of the Association of Families of Victims of Georgia, there have been personel efforts of Prime Minister Erdogan and Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu for their liberation. Chairman of the Association of Families of Victims of Georgia, Kaputoğlu said that:

We do not want to pass over to citizens of any country who embezzle the good faith. We believe to the friendship and sincerity of Georgian officials. For that reason, we want the problem to be discussed and solved at state level.¹⁰⁷⁴

Furthermore, Kaputoglu added that:

Nevertheless, none of the Turkish citizens have been liberated due to lack of evidence in Georgia till today. Arrested Turkish citizens are shown as completely guilty. They are accepted as guilty and offers for any money agreements are being done. This worries us. At that time, we can not make seperation between the guilty and innocent. We expect justice from Georgian Justice. We want Georgian police not to produce guilty but to catch the guilty people.¹⁰⁷⁵

¹⁰⁷⁰ “Gürcüler’den Türk'lere Hain Tuzak”, 09.11.2011,
<http://www.sabah.com.tr/Gundem/2011/11/09/gurculerden-turklere-hain-tuzak>,

¹⁰⁷¹ “Gürcistan’dı tutuklu 12 vatandaş serbest”, 23 November 2011,
<http://www.lazhaber.com/rize-haberleri/gurcistanda-tutuklu-12-vatandas-serbest-h15777.html>

¹⁰⁷² *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁷³ “Gürcüler’den Türk'lere Hain Tuzak”, 09.11.2011,
<http://www.sabah.com.tr/Gundem/2011/11/09/gurculerden-turklere-hain-tuzak>,

¹⁰⁷⁴ Gürcistan’dı Tutuklu ve Hükümlü Bulunan Türk Vatandaşları”, 15 February 2012,
<http://www.haberler.com/gurcistan-da-tutuklu-ve-hukumlu-bulunan-turk-3363760-haberi/>

¹⁰⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

Considering all, while there is strong emphasis on the strategic partnership between Turkey and Georgia, as well as positive developments, there have also been negative outcomes and developments in relations between Turkey and Georgia which are not expected to be experienced between strategic partners.

6.4.2 Turkey's Abkhazia Policy and Georgia

After the August 2008 War, Turkey also noticed that it should re-evaluate its policy towards Abkhazia. The Abkhaz population in Turkey which is much more than the population in Abkhazia, started to constitute strong pressure on Turkey's foreign policy. Thus, Turkey's Abkhazia policy has become one of the critical issues that became a source of problem between Turkey and Georgia.

Ahmet Davutoglu has been the first minister that sent delegations to Abkhazia and established the first contacts in 2009 and 2010.¹⁰⁷⁶ Furthermore, it is stated that this visit will be the first visit to Abkhazia by a Western diplomat after the August 2008 War.¹⁰⁷⁷ Turkey wants to establish economic and cultural relations with Abkhazia by no more being commended by the embargo policy on Abkhazia.¹⁰⁷⁸ Fehim Taştekin argues that since the presidency of Demirel, Turkey's policy towards Abkhazia convicted Abkhazia to Russia.¹⁰⁷⁹

¹⁰⁷⁶ Fehim Taştekin, "Batum'a İstanbul Rolü", 14.02.2011,
<http://www.radikal.com.tr/Radikal.aspx?aType=RadikalYazar&ArticleID=1039940&CategoryID=100>

¹⁰⁷⁷ Semih İdiz, "Türkiye'den bu kez Abhazya Hamlesi", 8 September 2009,
<http://siyaset.milliyet.com.tr/turkiye-den-bu-kez--font-color--darkblue---abhazya-hamlesi---font-/semih-idiz/siyaset/siyasetyazardetay/08.09.2009/1136801/default.htm>

¹⁰⁷⁸ Fehim Taştekin, "Batum'a İstanbul Rolü", 14.02.2011,
<http://www.radikal.com.tr/Radikal.aspx?aType=RadikalYazar&ArticleID=1039940&CategoryID=100>

¹⁰⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

Furthermore, concerning Ünal Çeviköz's visit to Abkhazia, it was argued that:

Sources indicate that while keeping Georgia in the axis of Turkey, Europe and the US was a strategical choice for Ankara, one of the aims of sending a senior diplomat to Sukhum was the same. According to sources which indicate that there are about 400 thousand Turkish citizens of Abkhaz origin in Turkey, it is emphasized that these people may play the role of being “ a bridge” with Turkey-thus with the Western axis, and through this way, Abkhazia may be prevented to move to the Russian axis completely. Against all, observers indicate that as far as the tension continues in the region, Georgia will not be satisfactory of the development of relations between Turkey and Abkhazia.¹⁰⁸⁰

It was also stressed that this visit by Turkey would not mean the recognition of Abkhazia's independence by Turkey.¹⁰⁸¹ While this visit showed that Davutoğlu wanted to break the vicious logic of embargo which did not leave any other alternative to Abkhazia except Russia, Georgia seemed far to get in any consensus on that issue.¹⁰⁸² It is further argued by Irakli Khintba that:

Georgia also opposes Abkhazia's de-isolation on the basis that opening it up to the outside world would only distance it further from the former capital Tbilisi and perhaps even lead to the international recognition of the ‘breakaway’ republic's independence.¹⁰⁸³

Under this general framework, there have been specific problems between Turkey and Georgia. One of the major problem concerning Abkhazia is that Georgia seizes Turkish boats that goes to Abkhazia in the international waters. One of the most recent event was experienced in 15 August 2009 when the ship “Buket” which was carrying fuel to Abkhazia was seized by Georgia.¹⁰⁸⁴ Georgia seized the ship

¹⁰⁸⁰ Semih İdiz, “Türkiye'den bu kez Abhazya Hamlesi”, 8 September 2009, <http://siyaset.milliyet.com.tr/turkiye-den-bu-kez--font-color--darkblue---abhazya-hamlesi---font--/semih-idiz/siyaset/siyasetyazardetay/08.09.2009/1136801/default.htm>

¹⁰⁸¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁸² Fehim Taştekin, “Batum'a İstanbul Rolü”, 14.02.2011, <http://www.radikal.com.tr/Radikal.aspx?aType=RadikalYazar&ArticleID=1039940&CategoryID=100>

¹⁰⁸³ “ Irakli Khintba, “ Introduction”, *The De-Isolation of Abkhazia*, International Alert, April 2011. , p. 7. <http://www.international-alert.org/sites/default/files/publications/1107Abkhazia.pdf>

¹⁰⁸⁴ “Gürcistan'da Moda Türk Gemilerine El Koymak”, Radikal, 25.08.2009, <http://www.radikal.com.tr/Radikal.aspx?aType=RadikalDetayV3&Date=&ArticleID=951404&CategoryID=80>

claiming that the it navigated in Georgia's internal waters with its 13 Turkish and 4 Azeri personels.¹⁰⁸⁵ The captain of the ship was victimized to 24 years.¹⁰⁸⁶ Another event happened in 19 August 2009 when the ship "Afro Star" which was carrying junk from Abkhazia was seized by Georgia with its 7 personels.¹⁰⁸⁷ Ahmet Davutoglu in his visit to Georgia tried to convince the Georgian side for the release of the Turkish captain. Concerning the issue, Georgian Foreign Minister Grigol Vashadze said that they had found a solution satisfactory for all sides.¹⁰⁸⁸ Davutoglu, further, indicated that they had a benefitial meeting and added that:

Turkey and Georgia are strategic partners. Through mutual respect, it is necessary to take all precautions in order to not experience such events again.... As in previous years, Turkey will continue to make every effort for the solution of the Abkhazia problem.¹⁰⁸⁹

In the Black Sea, Georgia has seized many ships on the way to Abkhazia including also several Turkish ships.¹⁰⁹⁰ According to international maritime law, the seizure of ships is accepted only in a limited manner.¹⁰⁹¹ There are different rules and applications when the ships navigate in internal waters of the country, in international waters and in exclusive zone. Georgia in its internal waters and ports has the jurisdiction of stopping foreign ships in case Georgia notifies contradictions according to its local law.¹⁰⁹² Nevertheless, according to the United Nations Agreement on Maritime Law, no state may officially claim any part of international

¹⁰⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁸⁸ "Davutoğlu Türk Kaptanı Kurtarma Çabasında", 08.09.2009,
<http://www.radikal.com.tr/Radikal.aspx?aType=RadikalEklerDetayV3&ArticleID=953444&CategoryID=100&Rdkref=1>

¹⁰⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁹⁰ Dr. Nur Jale Ece, Av. Aslıhan Erbaş Açıkkel, "The Limits of Power Distraining on Ships by a Coast State on the International Maritime Law, Georgia's Distraining on the Ships Navigating Around the Black Sea", *Orta Doğu Stratejik Araştırmaları Merkezi*, Rapor No.28, February, 2011, p.23.

¹⁰⁹¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁹² *Ibid.*p.24.

waters as subject to its own sovereignty.¹⁰⁹³ According to the right of innocent passage referred in the United Nations Agreement on Maritime Law, Georgia may not stop and seize the ships that use the right of innocent passage unless they harm the peace, order and security in Georgia.¹⁰⁹⁴ On the other hand, Georgia according to the United Nations Agreement on Maritime Law, has the right of taking the necessary precautions and if required stop the ships that are not innocent.¹⁰⁹⁵ Furthermore, in case Georgia seize any foreign ship according to international maritime law, it has to inform the flag country about its seizure and give the necessary information with its reasons of seizure.¹⁰⁹⁶ In circumstances indicated in the UN Agreement on Maritime Law, in return of a certain amount of financial guarantee, the coastal state should give back the ship and its crew but in case the coastal state does not give back for any reason, the flag country has the right of applying for legal action.¹⁰⁹⁷

Considering the rules and principles in international maritime law, since 1995 it is argued that including the fishing boats, Georgia seized approximately 100 Turkish boats and that by August 2009, there were 21 arrested personnels and 10 ships seized by Georgia.¹⁰⁹⁸ Turkey since 1995 officially continues to impose embargo on Abkhazia, however, practically Turkey also continues its trade relations with Abkhazia.¹⁰⁹⁹ Eastern Black Sea Union Exporters Union Board Chairman Ahmet Hamdi Gürdoğan said that each year 100 Million Dolar export was being done to Abkhazia.¹¹⁰⁰ Nevertheless, it is argued that due to problems such as the seizure of

¹⁰⁹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁹⁸ “Türk Gemilerine Gürcistan Darbesi”, *Hurriyet*, 25 Ağustos 2009,
<http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/ekonomi/12345346.asp>

¹⁰⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁰⁰ “Gürcistan’da Moda Türk Gemilerine El Koymak”, *Radikal*, 25.08.2009,

ships, there is about %50 loss in export and Turkey had to pay almost 100 million dollar penalty for the return of ships and the crew.¹¹⁰¹

Considering all, it can be well argued that the current situation underlines well the nature and limits of Turkey-Georgia cooperation. Furthermore, how much and to what degree Turkey's Abkhazia policy will constitute problem between Turkey and Georgia will be better understood by time. Nevertheless, Georgia under existing conditions, does not seem eager against any such change in Turkey's foreign policy towards Abkhazia. On the other hand, in the light of the argument that Georgia is a buffer state for Turkey against Russia, there emerges two important questions which have answers beyond the scope of this thesis. First is: How will Turkey be able to shape and conduct its policy towards Abkhazia regarding also the increasing Russian dominance, influence and military presence there. Second is: How will Russia effect or react to Turkey's policy towards Abkhazia considering Turkey's aim of supporting the de-isolation of Abkhazia.

<http://www.radikal.com.tr/Radikal.aspx?aType=RadikalDetayV3&Date=&ArticleID=951404&CategoryID=80>

¹¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*

CHAPTER VII

7. TURKEY'S SECURITY RELATIONS WITH GEORGIA

After Georgia declared its independence, it experienced a complete state failure and a civil war. Additionally to state failure, ethnic and territorial conflicts in Georgia became the main sources of insecurity both in Georgia and in its neighbourhood.

During first years after independence, this chaotic situation of Georgia reinforced by the conflicts against Abkhazia and South Ossetia was also manipulated by the Russian Federation. Georgia was forced to enter to the Commonwealth of Independent States and as a result of the agreement signed with the Russian Federation had to accept the existence of Russian military bases and personnel within its borders.¹¹⁰² This situation started to change towards the end of the 1990's when relations between Georgia and Russia got a tense characteristic. After that period, Georgia started to conduct a more Western oriented security policy and wanted to get rid of the control and influence of Russia. Furthermore, Jonathan Kulick argued that for Georgia, "Turkey conducting a more independent policy as a regional peace maker is more important"¹¹⁰³. Within this context, Turkey's security relations with Georgia became important due to the fact that though the high level security cooperation between Turkey and Georgia, conflicting interests challenged the strategic partnership discourse.

7.1 Turkey's Security Relations with Georgia between 1991-1996

Turkey's security relations with Georgia between 1991 and 1996 was mainly influenced by the territorial conflicts Georgia had to deal against Abkhazia and South

¹¹⁰² Asbed Kotchikian, "The Perceived Roles of Russia and Turkey in Georgian Foreign Policy", *Insight Turkey*, No.2, Spring 2004, p.38.

¹¹⁰³ Interview done with Jonathan Kulick by Esra Kızılbuğa, 17 November 2010 in Tbilisi, Senior Advisor to the State Ministry for Reintegration (Title at the time of interview). Currently, Senior Project Director, Pepperdine University School of Public Policy.

Ossetia and by the Russian presence in the region. During these conflicts, Turkey conducted an ambiguous and somehow passive official policy by expressing its respect to the territorial integrity of Georgia and to the peaceful solution of the problem. Turkey officially refrained from conducting an active policy towards Georgia due to Russian presence and influence in the region. Russian military bases and personnel in the region constituted a direct challenge for the security of Turkey. Thus, the instability in the region when combined with Russian presence and role in the region had direct challenges for the security of Turkey as a neighbour of Georgia.

7.1.1 Turkish Foreign Policy towards the Abkhaz-Georgian Conflict

Before examining Turkish foreign policy towards the Abkhaz-Georgian conflict, a brief description of the conflict; how and in what degree Turkey became involved and dynamics that effected Turkish policy to the conflict will be explained.

The emergence of the Abkhaz-Georgian conflict was determined by the increase ethnic tension between Abkhazians and Georgians mostly derived from the emergence of the radical nationalist groups that in a very short time got a militarized character. After Georgia was defeated by the Bolshevik powers in March 1921, Abkhazia was recognized as a Soviet Republic within the Transcaucasian Federation with equal status to Georgia.¹¹⁰⁴ Though in the 1925 Soviet Constitution, Abkhazia was defined as a union republic, in April 1930, by Stalin, Abkhazia's union republic status was diminished and instead Abkhazia was granted the status of autonomous republic within Georgia.¹¹⁰⁵ During the Soviet era, specifically under the Stalin rule, Abkhazians suffered from Stalin's policies which led them to apply several times through petitions for secession from Georgian Union Republic. Though all appeals of Abkhazia were rejected by the Soviet Union, it will not be wrong to argue that

¹¹⁰⁴ Resul Yalçın, "Turkey's Primary Concerns in Georgia: An Analysis of Three Cases", *Insight Turkey*, Vol.6, No.2, April-June 2004, p. 107.

¹¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*,p.107.

Abkhazia's call for separation from Georgia was not a post-independence phenomenon.¹¹⁰⁶ After the collapse of the Soviet Union, as a result of the intensification of ethnic tension between Georgia and Abkhazia, in 1992, Abkhazia voted to restore the 1925 constitution in which Abkhazia was defined as a union republic.¹¹⁰⁷ While Georgia declared this move of Abkhazia as illegal, this was followed with Georgia's invasion of Abkhazia. Nevertheless, Russian role and policy towards the conflict directly affected the process and consequences of the war. Russia's policy is explained by Ghia-Tarkhan Mouravi as:

The Russians control their border with Abkhazia, its coastal zone and have military bases there. Russia is also the exclusive provider of peace-keeping forces, acting formally under the aegis of the CIS. It exercises significant control over the external and internal policies of the Sukhumi government. The economic blockade imposed by Russia under Georgian political pressure conforms to the traditional pattern of Russian politics: its aim is to weaken all the parties in conflict so that it can effectively continue to play the role of arbiter in the dispute.¹¹⁰⁸

One important practical implementation of Russia's policy was to compel Georgia to join to the Commonwealth of Independent States. Since Georgia was dealing with the threat of state collapse, Shevardnadze in order to ensure the territorial integrity of Georgia accepted to join the CIS.¹¹⁰⁹ Furthermore, Russia would become mediator in Abkhazia and was to get four military bases in Georgia.¹¹¹⁰

¹¹⁰⁶ Asbed Kotchikian, "The Perceived Roles of Russia and Turkey in Georgian Foreign Policy", *Insight Turkey*, Vol.6, No.2, April-June 2004, p.41.

¹¹⁰⁷ Resul Yalçın, *Op.cit*, p. 108.

¹¹⁰⁸ Gia Tarkhan-Mouravi, "The Georgian-Abkhazian Conflict in a Regional Context", Chapter 6 Part 2, Bruno Coppieeters (ed.), *Georgians&Abkhazians The Search for a Peaceful Settlement*, Chapter 2 Part 1, Brussel: Vrije Universiteit, August, 1998, <http://poli.vub.ac.be/publi/Georgians/chp0602.html>

¹¹⁰⁹ James Graham, "Russia's Policy towards Ethnic Conflict in Russia", http://www.historyorb.com/russia/georgian_bibliography.php

¹¹¹⁰ Ekedahl, C. M. & Good man, M. A. The Wars of Eduard Shevardnadze, 2nd ed. (Dulles: Bassey's 2001), p. 257f., cited in Robert L. Larsson, "The Enemy Within: Russia's military withdrawal from Georgia", *The Journal of Slavic Military Studies*, Vo.17, No.3, p. 406.

After Georgia's participation to CIS and establishment of Russian military bases in Georgian territory, an ambargo decision was taken against Abkhazia which resulted with the naval and land blockade of Abkhazia to the outside world in January 1996 by the CIS.¹¹¹¹

Turkey's policy during the first years of the conflict was an ambigious and passive policy but it was somehow affected by the Abkhaz and Circassian diaspora in Turkey. In August 1992, the Caucasian-Abkhaz Solideration Committee was established.¹¹¹² Furthermore, several took place in order to draw attention to the case of Abkhazia and against the passive foreign policy of Turkey.¹¹¹³ Furthermore by Mitat Çelikpala, it was stated that "A protest had even been organized outside the Foreign Ministry, demanding the recognition of Abkhazian independence and the resignation of then Foreign Minister Hikmet Çetin."¹¹¹⁴ As a result of the public pressure, then Prime Minister Süleyman Demirel felt himself obliged to receive a delegation.¹¹¹⁵ The Committee further tried to take place in regional peace initiatives and achieved to take place in the ceasefire talks between Abkhazia and Georgia in Moscow on 3 September 1992.¹¹¹⁶ Beyond all, by Mitat Çelikpala, considering Committee's activities, it was stated that: "The peak of these activities of Committee was the parliamentary debate on the Caucasus and Abkhazia in the Turkish Grand

¹¹¹¹ Resul Yalçın, *Op.cit.*, p. 108.

¹¹¹² "Karadeniz'in Bütünlemesi için Abhazya", *ORSAM, ORSAM Avrasya Stratejileri* Report No:8, December 2009, p. 12.

¹¹¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

¹¹¹⁴ See P. Robins, *Suits and Uniforms: Turkish Foreign Policy since the Cold War* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2003), p.182., cited in Mitat Çelikpala, "From Immigrants to Diaspora: Influence of the North Caucasian Diaspora in Turkey", *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol.42, No.3, 2006, p. 432.

¹¹¹⁵ See 'Çerkesler Başbakanla Görüştü' , Marje, No.5 (Oct. 1992), pp.8–14., cited in Mitat Çelikpala, "From Immigrants to Diaspora: Influence of the North Caucasian Diaspora in Turkey", *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol.42, No.3, 2006, p. 432.

¹¹¹⁶ Mitat Çelikpala, "From Immigrants to Diaspora: Influence of the North Caucasian Diaspora in Turkey", *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol.42, No.3, 2006, p. 433.

National Assembly (TGNA) on 13 October 1992”¹¹¹⁷. Furthermore, through these associations as well as providing financial aid to Abkhazia, 37 volunteers also went to fight during the war and four of them lost their lives.¹¹¹⁸ Additionally, a Turkish College in Gagra- a city of Abkhazia was opened and education in Turkish was started to be given there.¹¹¹⁹ During 1992-93, President of the Abkhaz Republic Vladislav Ardzinba visited Turkey for several times though he did not meet with any Turkish officials.¹¹²⁰

Beyond activities of the Abkhaz diaspora community, in the same way, Georgians in Turkey established similar organisations such as the Turkish-Georgian Culture and Solidarity Foundation, Turkish-Georgian Association of Friendship and Solidarity and Eduard Shevardnadze Friendship and Solidarity Association.¹¹²¹ However,

¹¹¹⁷ For the text of discussions of the cross party initiative meeting see Marje, No.6 (Nov. 1992), pp.14–18; No.7 (Dec. 1992), pp.20–3; and No.8 (Jan. 1993), pp.13–16., cited in Mitat Çelikpala, “From Immigrants to Diaspora: Influence of the North Caucasian Diaspora in Turkey”, *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol.42, No.3, 2006, p. 433

¹¹¹⁸ Mitat Çelikpala, “From Immigrants to Diaspora: Influence of the North Caucasian Diaspora in Turkey”, *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol.42, No.3, 2006, p. 432; Another problematic issue between the diaspora organizations and Turkish Foreign Ministry was the humanitarian aid to Abkhazia. KADK was critical on Turkish choice of giving aids via Georgia, despite the existence of air corridor within the Russian air space opened as a result of diaspora groups’ contacts with the Russian authorities. This was considered as a mis-conduct in relief activities. Additionally, the names of Turkish citizens died in Abkhazia are as follows: ‘Siba’ Efsan Çagli, ‘Kozba’ Vedat Akar, ‘Yegoj’ Hanefi Arslan and ‘Abağba Bahadır Özbağ’. See. Nart: İki Aylık Düşünce ve Sanat Dergisi, No.9 (Sep.–Oct. 1998), p.60., cited in ¹¹¹⁸ Mitat Çelikpala, “From Immigrants to Diaspora: Influence of the North Caucasian Diaspora in Turkey”, *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol.42, No.3, 2006, p. 433.

¹¹¹⁹ “Karadeniz’in Bütünlemesi için Abhazya”, ORSAM, ORSAM Avrasya Stratejileri Report No:8, December 2009., p. 13.

¹¹²⁰ Asbed Kotchikian, “The Perceived Roles of Russia and Turkey in Georgian Foreign Policy”, *Insight Turkey*, Vol.6, No.2, April-June 2004, p.42.

¹¹²¹ See Bilgilendirme Dosyası, p.54; Tuncay Özkan, Bir Gizli Servisin Tarihi: Milli İstihbarat Teşkilatı (İstanbul: Milliyet Yayınları), pp.260–61; A. Tekin, ‘Kafkasya Barışını Ankara Sağlar’, Türkiye, 10 Aug. 1999; Ali Murat Köknar, ‘Turkey and the Caucasus: Security and Military Challenges’, in M.S. Radu (ed.), Dangerous Neighborhood, pp.98–100., cited in Mitat Çelikpala, “From Immigrants to Diaspora: Influence of the North Caucasian Diaspora in Turkey”, *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol.42, No.3, 2006, pp.433-434.

compared with the Abkhaz diaspora community, it was argued that these associations were not that much effective.¹¹²²

Regarding all, against arguments that Turkey during this period conducted a ambiguous policy, it was argued that, thanks to the role of the Abkhaz Solidarity Committee during the war, Turkey followed a carefully measured sure-footedly steered policy.¹¹²³ By Mitat Çelikpala, this situation was explained as:

On the one hand while she continued with humanitarian aid to Abkhazia through Turkish Kızılay (Red Crescent), officials continuously urged that the parties come to a peaceful resolution of their problems, on the other. Hence Ankara expressed concern at the plight of the Abkhazian people but without giving weight to their political objectives.¹¹²⁴

In the light of all these developments, direct maritime connection between Sukhum and Trabzon was established in 1994.¹¹²⁵ This could be also counted as one of the important achievements of the Abkhaz Solidarity Committee, as well. This situation continued till 1996 when an embargo decision was taken against Abkhazia by CIS.¹¹²⁶ In 1996, regarding the decision of the CIS to imply embargo against Abkhazia, Turkey responded positively to CIS's call for imposing economic

¹¹²² Mitat Çelikpala, "From Immigrants to Diaspora: Influence of the North Caucasian Diaspora in Turkey", *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol.42, No.3, 2006, p.434.

¹¹²³ See P. Robins, Suits and Uniforms: Turkish Foreign Policy since the Cold War (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2003), p.183., cited in Mitat Çelikpala, "From Immigrants to Diaspora: Influence of the North Caucasian Diaspora in Turkey", *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol.42, No.3, 2006, p. 433.

¹¹²⁴ Mitat Çelikpala, "From Immigrants to Diaspora: Influence of the North Caucasian Diaspora in Turkey", *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol.42, No.3, 2006, p.433.

¹¹²⁵ Burcu Gültekin Punsmann, "Questioning the Embargo on Abkhazia: Turkey's Role in Entegrating into the Black Sea Region", *Turkish Policy Quarterly*, Vol.8, No.4,p. 78.

¹¹²⁶ On 19 January 1996 the Council of CIS Heads (CSH) adopted the resolution on "Measures for the settlement of Conflict in Abkhazia/Georgia" which imposed economic sanctions on Abkhazia, eventually leading to its political isolation. In the first paragraph, the resolution condemns "the destructive position of Abkhaz sides that creates obstacles to the political settlement of the issue and secure returning of refugees and IDPs" and in paragraph six states that the member states of CIS, without agreement of the Government of Georgia, "will not have economic, financial or transport transactions with Abkhazian Authority... [and] ...will not have official contacts with Abkhazian Authority.".,cited in Burcu Gültekin Punsmann, "Questioning the Embargo on Abkhazia: Turkey's Role in Entegrating into the Black Sea Region", *Turkish Policy Quarterly*, Vol.8, No.4,p.79.

sanctions.¹¹²⁷ Following that, in 1996 direct cruises between the ports of Trabzon and Sukhum was cancelled.¹¹²⁸ Turkey, though not a member of CIS, implemented those embargo sanctions and served to the economic and political isolation of Abkhazia. It is also worth to note that this embargo decision was not an internationally taken decision.¹¹²⁹ It was never endorsed by the United Nations Security Council Resolution.¹¹³⁰ Turkey, concerning its decision to participate to the embargo decision, stated its respect for the regional territorial integrity of Georgia.¹¹³¹

On 7-9 June 1999, Turkey also played an important role by hosting a meeting in order to find a solution to the disagreement between Abkhazia and Georgia with the participation of OSCE and UN in Istanbul.¹¹³² It is important to note that in this meeting also, the Abkhaz Solidarity Committee and Georgian diaspora communities played an important role.¹¹³³ Considering the outcome of the meeting, nevertheless, there was not any concrete result except the signing of Istanbul Declaration-declaration of mutual understanding- through which the sides emphasized to continue their efforts for the establishment of peace.¹¹³⁴

¹¹²⁷ Burcu Gültekin Punsmann, “Questioning the Embargo on Abkhazia: Turkey’s Role in Entegrating into the Black Sea Region”, *Turkish Policy Quarterly*, Vol.8, No.4, pp.78-79.

¹¹²⁸ *Ibid.* p.79.

¹¹²⁹ *Ibid.*,p.79.

¹¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, p.79.

¹¹³¹ “Karadeniz’in Bütünlemesi için Abhazya”, *ORSAM, ORSAM Avrasya Stratejileri* Report No:8, December 2009,p. 29.

¹¹³² The meetings were being held had attracted attention form variety of countries, such as the US, Germany, Great Britain, France and the Russian Federation, in addition to the UN and OSCE. From the Abkhaz side president Vladislav Ardzinba was also followed the meetings. See ‘Abhazya Masaya Yatırıldı’, Radikal, 8 June 1999; ‘Abhazya’ya _Istanbul Barışı’, Milliyet, 9 June 1999; ‘Abhazya İçin Yeni Umutlar’, Cumhuriyet, 10 June 1999., cited in Mitat Çelikpala, “From Immigrants to Diaspora: Influence of the North Caucasian Diaspora in Turkey”, *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol.42, No.3, 2006, p. 434.

¹¹³³ ‘Turkey Hosts Georgian–Abkhazian Problem Meeting’, Turkish Daily News, 9 June 1999, p.A2., cited in, Mitat Çelikpala, “From Immigrants to Diaspora: Influence of the North Caucasian Diaspora in Turkey”, *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol.42, No.3, 2006, p. 434.

¹¹³⁴ For a useful analysis and evaluation of the negotiations, see ‘Georgians, Abhazians Take Steps Forward’, Turkish Daily News, 10 June 1999, p.A2., cited in, Mitat Çelikpala, “From Immigrants to

Since 2000's, the embargo implemented against Abkhazia have started to be unilaterally lifted by Russia in a progressive way.¹¹³⁵ This situation step by step helped Abkhazia to recover from the harsh economic conditions, however, this situation also caused Abkhazia to be integrated to the Russian economic zone since it had no other choice or gate for opening to the outside world.¹¹³⁶ Between 2000-2008, Russia progressively lifted the economic sanctions and in March 2008, just months before the August 2008 War, Russia declared that it was no more part of the CIS agreement imposing embargo on Abkhazia.¹¹³⁷

Considering this controversial process about the embargo implementations on Abkhazia, Turkey's relations with Abkhazia also got affected. Though there was not an official maritime connection between Turkey and Abkhazia, the trade between Turkey and Abkhazia and ferryboat tours between Trabzon and Sukhum constituted problems in relations with Georgia. Considering first the trade between Abkhazia and Turkey, it is stated that:

%60 of the registered import materials come from Turkey and the rest from Russia. Considering registered export materials, Russia imports %54 of the materials and Turkey imports % 45. In 2007, the trade volume between Abkhazia and Turkey coincided with %30 of the budget of Abkhazia.¹¹³⁸

Considering the fact that, the limited communication and transportation between Turkey and Abkhazia negatively effected the trade relations, through the pressure from diaspora communities and from businessmen especially in Trabzon, a campaign started in November 2008 for the establishment of Trabzon- Sukhum ferryboat tours and Istanbul-Sukhum direct air transportation.¹¹³⁹ In January 2009, on the other hand,

Diaspora: Influence of the North Caucasian Diaspora in Turkey", *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol.42, No.3, 2006, p. 434.

¹¹³⁵ Burcu Gültekin Punsmann, "Questioning the Embargo on Abkhazia: Turkey's Role in Entegrating into the Black Sea Region", *Turkish Policy Quarterly*, Vol.8, No.4, p.81.

¹¹³⁶ *Ibid.*

¹¹³⁷ "Karadeniz'in Büttünlemesi için Abhazya", *ORSAM, ORSAM Avrasya Stratejileri Report No:8*, December 2009,p. 17.

¹¹³⁸ *Ibid.*, p.24.

a request was also made to President Abdullah Gül by the Abkhaz diaspora community.¹¹⁴⁰ Furthermore, after the August 2008 war, as an outcome of changing regional dynamics, Turkey without harming its relations with Georgia and with the Euro-Atlantic world, attempted to establish humanitarian and trade relations with Abkhazia.¹¹⁴¹ In that respect, several meetings also took place with Georgian officials. Though any consensus is not reached currently, Georgian Coastal Security Forces continue to seize Turkish boats.¹¹⁴²

As a general evaluation of Turkey's Abkhazia policy, it can be well argued that Turkey's foreign policy was far from being satisfactory for Abkhazians and Georgia at the same time. While Abkhazians were criticizing Turkey's pro-Georgian foreign policy, Georgia on the other hand was criticizing Turkey's informal relations with Abkhazia referring to support of diaspora associations during the war, the maritime connection and trade relations. In the light of that, it can be stated that Turkey had both an official and an unofficial policy. During that period, Turkey officially refrained from getting actively involved to the conflicts and internal affairs of Georgia. Turkey declared its respect to the peaceful solution of the conflict and to the preservation of Georgian territorial integrity. Beyond this official stance, Turkey during these first years let to the operation of diaspora associations on behalf of Abkhazia. Though activities of the diaspora organisations were effective in order to express out their case to the outside world, there were not that much effective in shaping Turkey's official policy towards Georgia.¹¹⁴³ Turkey's foreign policy gave

¹¹³⁹ *Ibid.*, p.29.

¹¹⁴⁰ "Talep Dilekçesi", *Federation of Caucasus Associations*, 5 January 2009., http://www.kafkasfederasyonu.org/haber/federasyon/2009/050109_talep_dilekcesi.htm; "KAFFED, Cumhurbaşkanı Abdullah Gül ile Görüştü", *Federation of Caucasus Associations*, 5 January 2009, http://www.kafkasfederasyonu.org/haber/fe-derasyon/2009/050109_kaffed_abdullah_gul.htm

¹¹⁴¹ "Karadeniz'in Bütünlemesi için Abhazya", *ORSAM, ORSAM Avrasya Stratejileri* Report No:8, December 2009, p. 29.

¹¹⁴² *Ibid.*, p30.

¹¹⁴³ "Karadeniz'in Bütünlemesi için Abhazya", *ORSAM, ORSAM Avrasya Stratejileri* Report No:8, December 2009, p. 13.

signals of change after the August 2008 War with the changing regional dynamics. Furthermore, this period also coincided with a period which the diaspora communities in Turkey started to become more politicized. Currently, Turkey is attempting to find a common way with Georgia in its policy towards Abkhazia. How much Turkey will be able to achieve this without giving harm to the existing dynamics in the region and relations with Georgia still remains as a question mark. Considering all, at the existing conjoncture with Russian military presence in Abkhazia, Turkey does not seem to have the chance to ignore the reality of Abkhazia.

7.1.2 Role of Russian Presence and Russian Military Bases in Georgia

Russian military presence and bases in Georgia constituted severe security concerns for Turkey. Nevertheless, the issue for long remained as a contested issue between Georgia and Russia which had implications on Turkey's policy in the region.

When Shevardnadze came to power in Georgia against Ghamsahurdia, in order to ensure the territorial integrity of Georgia, he was in need of foreign support. Russia which manipulated the conflict and the domestic chaos in Georgia offered support to Georgia in return of some conditions. As part of Russian policy towards Georgia, Georgia would accept to enter to CIS and Russia would become a mediator in the Abkhaz-Georgian conflict.¹¹⁴⁴ Furthermore, Russia would have four military bases in Georgia.¹¹⁴⁵

On 3 February 1996, Georgia and Russia signed a "Treaty of Friendship, Good Neighbourly Relations, and Cooperation".¹¹⁴⁶ This agreement was later ratified by

¹¹⁴⁴ Ekedahl, C. M. & Goodman, M. A. *The Wars of Eduard Shevardnadze*, 2nd ed. (Dulles: Bassey's 2001), p. 257., cited in Robert L. Larsson, "The Enemy Within: Russia's military withdrawal from Georgia", *The Journal of Slavic Military Studies*, Vo.17, No.3, p. 406.

¹¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁴⁶ Robert L. Larsson, "The Enemy Within: Russia's Military Withdrawal from Georgia", *Journal of Slavic Military Studies*, Vol.17, No.3, 2004, p. 406.

Georgian Parliament on 17 January 1997.¹¹⁴⁷ On September 15, 1995, Russia and Georgia signed the “Treaty on Russian Military Bases in the territory of Georgian Republic” and Russia got the right of access to four military bases in Georgia for the duration of at least 25 years.¹¹⁴⁸

The Akhalkalaki military base was located in a predominantly Armenian region where almost %80 of the local population was Armenian and which was close to Turkey’s border.¹¹⁴⁹ The Batumi base was located in Ajaria which was de facto out of the control of Tbilisi at that time.¹¹⁵⁰ The Vaziani military base was located just outside Tbilisi and Gudauta military base was located in Abkhazia.¹¹⁵¹ Though, it may be argued that Georgia was compelled to accept the existence of Russian military bases in its territories, this agreement between Georgia and Russia caused conflict of security interests between Turkey and Georgia.

Nevertheless, in the following period, Georgia after getting aware of the real intention behind Russia’s policy demanded Russia to get out of the military bases in its territory. On 17 November 1999 in OECD Summit in Istanbul, according to the common declaration between the Russian Federation and Georgia, Russia would decrease its military presence till 31 December 2000, close the Vaziani and Gudauta military bases till 1st July 2001 and the situation of Batum and Ahalkalaki military bases would be decided in 2000.¹¹⁵² Russia closed the Vaziani military base on the

¹¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁴⁹ Nikolai Sokov, “The Withdrawal of Russian Military Bases From Georgia: Not Solving Anything”, *Monterey Institute of International Affairs, PONARS Policy Memo 363*, June 2005, p.3.

¹¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁵¹ Asbed Kotchikian, “The Perceived Roles of Russia and Turkey in Georgian Foreign Policy”, *Insight Turkey*, April-June 2004, Vol.6, No.2, p. 42.

¹¹⁵² Hasan Kanbolat, “Rusya Federasyonu’nun Güney Kafkasya’daki Askeri Varlığı ve Gürcistan Boyutu”, *Stratejik Analiz*, Vol.1, No. 3, 2000., cited in., Badri Shantadze, “Gürcistan’ın Komşu ile İlişkileri ve Jeopolitik Etkinin İncelenmesi”, Unpublished M.S Thesis, 2006, p. 106.

promised date. On 29 June 2001, the Vaziani military base was handed over to Georgia by Russia.¹¹⁵³ Nevertheless, the closure of the Gudauta military base was a problematic issue since it was located in the de facto independent republic Abkhazia. The authorities in Abkhazia argued that this was an issue to be discussed with Abkhazia instead of Georgia.¹¹⁵⁴ The Batum and Ahalkalaki military bases were subject to talk since 2000. While Russian authorities argued that they need an extra 10 years for the closure of these bases, after Saakashvili came to power, talks for the closure of these military bases were hastened.¹¹⁵⁵ On 10 March 2005, the Georgian Parliament approved a resolution indicating that Russia should close the actively used military bases in Georgian territories till 1st January 2006.¹¹⁵⁶ Russia firstly argued that they need at least 4 years and 300 million dollar for the closure of the military bases.¹¹⁵⁷ Later on, Russia accepted to start to close the military bases in 2006.¹¹⁵⁸ The Sochi Agreement was signed between Georgia and Russia and according to the Agreement the Ahalkalaki military base would be closed till the end of 2006 and till 31 December 2007 the military base would be transferred to Georgia.¹¹⁵⁹ According to the agreement, though not a definite date is indicated, the Batum military base, is argued to be closed till the end of 2008.¹¹⁶⁰

¹¹⁵³ Asbed Kotchikian, “The Perceived Roles of Russia and Turkey in Georgian Foreign Policy”, *Insight Turkey*, April-June 2004, Vol.6, No.2, p. 42.

¹¹⁵⁴ Badri Shantadze, “Gürcistan’ın Komşu ile İlişkileri ve Jeopolitik Etkinin İncelenmesi”, Unpublished M.S Thesis, 2006, p. 106.

¹¹⁵⁵ Ibid.,p.107.

¹¹⁵⁶ Ibid.

¹¹⁵⁷ Ibid.,p.107.

¹¹⁵⁸ Araz Aslanlı, Makaleler, www.tusam.net/makaleler.asp?id=235&sayfa=0 , cited in, Badri Shantadze, “Gürcistan’ın Komşu ile İlişkileri ve Jeopolitik Etkinin İncelenmesi”,Unpublished M.S Thesis, 2006, pp. 107-108.

¹¹⁵⁹ Fikret Ertan, “Takvim Artık Belli”, 4 Nisan 2006, Zaman Gazetesi, http://www.zaman.com.tr/fikret-ertan/takvim-artik-belli_272819.html

¹¹⁶⁰ Ibid.

Concerning the Gudauta base, on the other hand, though stated that it was closed in 2001, since the base was in Abkhazia, by Georgia Defense Minister Irakli Okruashvili, it was indicated that Georgia was not sure of the closure of the base and that they wanted to see that it is closed by themselves.¹¹⁶¹ Irakli Okruashvili even accused Russia of telling lie to Georgia about the closure of the base and added that they were sure that the base was still active.¹¹⁶²

Considering all, all these developments had implications and effects on Turkey. The closure of Russian Military bases in Georgia would mean decrease of Russian military presence in Georgia. Russian military presence in Georgia caused Turkey to become cautious about Russia in the region. With the closure of the military bases in Ahalkalaki and Batum, the heavy weapons which were forbidden to exist in the region by the Treaty on Conventional Arm Forces in Europe signed in 1990 which Turkey was also one of the side, would no more exist in the region.¹¹⁶³ Nevertheless, another consequence effecting Turkey was that the military hardware in the military bases would be transferred to the Russian military base in Armenia which was close to our Kars-Iğdır border.¹¹⁶⁴ By Irakli Okruashvili, it was stated that two thirds of the military hardware would be trasferred to Russia and one third would be taken to the Russian military base in Armenia.¹¹⁶⁵

To sum up all, Russian military presence which was very close to Turkey's border in such an instable region became an important security concern for Turkey. Thus,

¹¹⁶¹ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁶² "Georgia Defense Chief Accuses Russia of lying about Abkhazia Base", *BBC Monitoring International Reports*, 31 March 2006,
<http://www.accessmylibrary.com/article-1G1-143939159/georgian-defence-chief-accuses.html>

¹¹⁶³ Fikret Ertan, "Takvim Artık Belli", 4 Nisan 2006, Zaman Gazetesi,
http://www.zaman.com.tr/fikret-ertan/takvim-artik-belli_272819.html

¹¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁶⁵ "Georgia Defense Chief Accuses Russia of lying about Abkhazia Base", *BBC Monitoring International Reports*, 31 March 2006,
<http://www.accessmylibrary.com/article-1G1-143939159/georgian-defence-chief-accuses.html>

while Georgia by permitting the Russian military presence in its territories caused conflict of security interests to emerge with Turkey, sure removal of the Russian military bases from Georgia would be evaluated as a positive development by Turkey.

7.2 Turkey's Security Relations with Georgia between 1996 - 2003

Turkey security relations with Georgia between 1996 and 2003 became primarily important. This was more the outcome of the development of relations in the energy sector.¹¹⁶⁶ Furthermore, Georgia's declared intention of joining NATO became also effective in Turkey's security relations with Georgia. Thus, during this period, as well as the development in bilateral security relations, security relations within NATO framework was promoted under the leadership of Turkey.

7.2.1 Turkey's Bilateral Security Relations with Georgia

From Turkey's perspective, the Turkey-Georgian bilateral security cooperation is part of a larger project to incorporate Georgia into the Western and Atlantic security network through NATO and the US.¹¹⁶⁷ Though Turkey's interest was to manage to balance the Russian influence against Georgia¹¹⁶⁸, it should be underlined that Turkish-Georgian military cooperation has never implied the establishment of Turkish military bases in Georgian territory.¹¹⁶⁹ Furthermore, Turkey also did not initiate or become part of any regional peace initiatives that excluded Russia in the region.

¹¹⁶⁶ Mitat Çelikpala, "From a Failed State to a Weak One", *Op.cit*, p.182.

¹¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p.188.

¹¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p.189.

¹¹⁶⁹ Mustafa Aydin, "Kafkasya ve Orta Asya ile İlişkiler", Baskın Oran (ed.), *Türk Dış Politikası, Kurtuluş Savaşından bugüne Olgular, belgeler, Yorumlar*, Vol.2, 6th Edition, İstanbul, İletişim Yayıncıları, 2002, p. 421.

According to the Security Cooperation Agreement on 18 February 1994, in order to use for the innovation of the Georgia military forces, in 1998, 5,5 million dollar, in 1999 3,8 million dollar and in 2000 4 million dollar were transferred to Georgia.¹¹⁷⁰ Considering the fact that, the share for security expenses within the Georgian annual budget is 20 million dollar; the importance of the financial aid from Turkey comes to surface.¹¹⁷¹ Furthermore, following the military cooperation agreement signed in June 1997 between Turkey and Georgia, Turkey started to give training to Georgian army officers and helped for the development of the gendarmerie system.¹¹⁷² Within this context, ten army officers from Georgian Internal Services Army came to Turkey and started their training.¹¹⁷³

The financial and military support of the Turkish Military forces in Georgia first included the training of the Georgian Coastal Guard units. During 1997-98, several agreements about the military facilities and training of Georgian forces were signed between Turkey and Georgia. Furthermore, two coast-guard ships, one in 2 December 1997 and one in 3 March 1998, were given to Georgia.¹¹⁷⁴ According to Turkey, in case Georgia does not have an effective naval force, it could need Russia for the protection of its own territorial waters.¹¹⁷⁵

¹¹⁷⁰ Mustafa Aydin, “Kafkasya ve Orta Asya ile İlişkiler”, Baskın Oran (ed.), *Türk Dış Politikası, Kurtuluş Savaşından bugüne Olgular, belgeler, Yorumlar*, Vol.2, 6th Edition, İstanbul, İletişim Yayınları, 2002, p. 420.

¹¹⁷¹ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁷² *Ibid.*

¹¹⁷³ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁷⁴ Bilge Buttanrı, *Bölgesel Güç Karadeniz*, İstanbul, IQ yay, 2004, p.160., cited in Mete Taşkın, *Op.cit*, p. 127.

¹¹⁷⁵ İlker Kiremitçi, *Thrace On The East: Georgia*, Bilkent Üniversitesi, (Yayınlanmamış Yüksek Lisans Tezi), Ankara, 2004, s.33., cited in Taşkın, *Op.cit.*, p. 127.

Furthermore, by Mitat Çelikpala, referring to the military agreement signed between Turkey and Georgia, it was argued that:

The most concrete result of this agreement was Georgian troops that have been serving under Turkish command in Kosovo since 1999. From then on, Turkey managed to balance Russian influence over Georgia by providing training for Georgian officers and, thereby, strengthened the hand of Shevardnadze in domestic politics. Turkey's actions had direct effects in Georgian domestic politics and in the regional balance as well.¹¹⁷⁶

In February 1999, Shevardnadze visited Turkey and defined Turkish-Georgian military cooperation as ‘strategic partnership’.¹¹⁷⁷ During this visit, Shevardnadze stated that since 2000, Turkish war planes could get use of the military base which Turkey has re-constructed and put into operation.¹¹⁷⁸ On 23 June 2000, during the visit of Turkish Chief of General Staff Hüseyin Kırıkoğlu, a new agreement between Georgia and Turkey on Military Assistance and Defense Cooperation was signed.¹¹⁷⁹ According to this agreement, “\$2.8 million aid for the construction of military training centres in Kodori and Gori and a shooting range outside Tbilisi, reconstruction of the Vaziani (Marneuli) military base, and the training of Georgian military personnel at the Turkish military bases which included the training of Georgian pilots in Turkish air space”¹¹⁸⁰ was anticipated. The Vaziani military base which was modernized and innovated by Turkey was opened on 28 January 2001 with the participation of Defence Minister of Turkey and Turkish General Staff of Air Forces.¹¹⁸¹ This military base carried a strategic importance for Turkey.

¹¹⁷⁶ Mitat Çelikpala, *Op.cit*, p. 189.

¹¹⁷⁷ Mustafa Aydin, “Kafkasya ve Orta Asya ile İlişkiler”, Baskın Oran (ed.), *Türk Dış Politikası, Kurtuluş Savaşından bugüne Olgular, belgeler, Yorumlar*, Vol.2, 6th Edition, İstanbul, İletişim Yayıncıları, 2002, p. 420.

¹¹⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, pp.420-421.

¹¹⁷⁹ Mitat Çelikpala, *Op.cit*, p. 190.

¹¹⁸⁰ S. Larrabee and I. O. Lesser, *Turkish Foreign Policy in an Age of Uncertainty*, Arlington, RAND, 2003, p.105-106., cited in, Mitat Çelikpala, *Op.cit*, p. 190.

¹¹⁸¹ Deniz Zeyrek, “Gürcistan ile Askeri Flört”, *Radikal*, 29 January 2001, <http://www.radikal.com.tr/2001/01/29/dis/03gur.shtml>; Lale Sarıibrahimoğlu, “Türkiye’nin Bölgesel Güç olmasında TSK’ni rolü”, *Diplomatik Gözlem*, 28 August 2002, <http://www.diplomatikgozlem.com/TR/belge/1-7657/turkiyenin-bolgesel-guc-olmasi-yolunda-tsknin-rolu.html>

Çelikpala argued that, “It was the first modern military base established without the direct control and impact of Russia”¹¹⁸². Furthermore, diplomatic resources indicated that, “it was important that in one of the millitary base where Russians served for 70 years, currently Turkish officers were serving”,¹¹⁸³.Furthermore, with the Marneuli military base, it was argued that Turkey had the chance of using the base as a logistic center outside its national borders and outside the realm of NATO.¹¹⁸⁴On the other hand, Shevardnadze needed to make a clarification that this situtation was not against any third country- referring to Russia- and it was not the case for Georgia to let for the establishment of Turkish military base in Georgia.¹¹⁸⁵

During 29-30 January 2001, Shevardnadze also made a visit to Turkey and an agreement on military and industrial cooperation between Turkey and Georgia was signed.¹¹⁸⁶ During his visit, then Prime Minister of Turkey Bülent Ecevit, emphasized the strategic nature of Turkey-Georgia relations and stated that “Georgia's problems are our problems. Georgia' s security is our security”¹¹⁸⁷. All these developments in Turkey’s security relations with Georgia were interpreted as if

¹¹⁸² Mitat Çelikpala, *Op.cit*, p. 191.

¹¹⁸³ Deniz Zeyrek, “Gürcistan ile Askeri Flört”, *Radikal*, 29 January 2001, <http://www.radikal.com.tr/2001/01/29/dis/03gur.shtml>

¹¹⁸⁴ Later, Marneuli Military Airbase was transferred to the Georgian Ministry of Defense after a military ceremony on 25 December 2004. In the end, Turkey spent approximately \$3 million, in order to upgrade a military airport that was established in 1940 by the Russians and have not been upgraded since then, and therefore was not in working order. After the renovations, Georgia gained a great military asset with capabilities and lighting structures for night flights, which is the first of its kind in the region. In this same period, the total military aid to Georgian Air Force from Turkey was \$7.515 million. For a detailed analysis, see "Gürcistan- Türkiye ilişkileri Örnek Alınacak Düzeyde", http://www.diplomatikgozlem.comlhaber_oku.asp?id=2082; "Türkiye- ABD ilişkilerinin Başka Bir Boyutu", http://www.diplomatikgozlem.comlhaber_oku.asp?id=567., cited in Mitat Çelikpala, *Op.cit*, p. 191

¹¹⁸⁵ Mustafa Aydin, “ Kafkyasya’da İstikrar Arayışları”, Baskin Oran (ed.), *Türk Dış Politikası, Kurtuluş Savaşından Bugüne Olgular, Belgeler, Yorumlar*, Vol.2, 6 Edition, İstanbul, İletişim Yayınları, 2002, p. 419.

¹¹⁸⁶ Mitat Çelikpala, *Op.cit*, p. 192.

¹¹⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

Turkey was trying to enhance its regional role in the Caucasus.¹¹⁸⁸ Furthermore, it was even argued that Turkey intended to create a Turkish-Georgian axis to counter the special relationship between Russia and Armenia.¹¹⁸⁹

Within this framework, the September 11, 2001 attacks to United States and the increasing US involvement in the Caucasus, specifically in Georgia, had also implications on Turkey's security relations with Georgia. Though a compromise was reached between the US, Turkey and Georgia for the formation of a tri-partite strategic alignment before the September 11 terrorist attacks, after the September 11 attacks, Turkey requested the US to include the political and military cooperation to the already existing tri-partite economic cooperation between the US-Georgia-Turkey.¹¹⁹⁰

Concerning the process after 11 September 2001, Mitat Çelikpala argued that, "The new US foreign policy priorities certainly complemented the Turkish foreign policy choices in the region as well"¹¹⁹¹. During 2002, another important development was that Turkey helped to restructuring the Georgian National Military Academy in order to bring it to NATO standards.¹¹⁹² It was argued that in 2002, Turkey spent 1,5

¹¹⁸⁸ "Is Turkey Seeking to Enhance its Role in the South Caucasus?", RFE/RL Caucasus Report, Vol. 4 (823), February 2001., cited in Mitat Çelikpala, *Op.cit*, p. 192.

¹¹⁸⁹ This is actually a very credible argument. For example, subsequent to this agreement, on 25 April 2001 Armenian Foreign Minister Vardan Oskanian said that "Turkish-Georgian military cooperation causes serious alarm in Yerevan because this may considerably upset the regional balance." He also added that Georgia's actions in this regard may effectively make it "a participant in the policy of isolating Armenia now being pursued by Turkey and Azerbaijan." See "Georgian-Turkish Military Ties Disturb Armenia", RFE/RL Newsline, 25 April 2001., cited in Mitat Çelikpala, *Op.cit*, p. 192.

¹¹⁹⁰ Lale Sarıibrahimoğlu, "Turkey's Search for Tri-nation Alignment in Caucasus awaits firm US Support", 18.10.2001,
<http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/default.aspx?pageid=438&n=turkeys-search-for-tri-nation-alignment-in-caucasus--awaits-firm-us-support-2001-10-18>

¹¹⁹¹ Mitat Çelikpala, *Op.cit*, p. 195.

¹¹⁹² "Gürcistan Askeri Akademisine Türk Yardımı", 1 August 2002,
<http://www.diplomatikgozlem.com/TR/belge/1-5723/gurcistan-askeri-akademisine-turk-yardimi.html>

million dollar for the Academy and the support of Turkey would continue for the next four years.¹¹⁹³

To sum up all, during this period, Turkey's security relations with Georgia were conducted in high level and relations was defined as strategic partnership. Turkey's security policy was mainly based on supporting Georgian military forces in order to meet NATO standards,. Several agreements and many projects were conducted within this context. Furthermore, all these developments in Turkey-Georgia relations were evaluated as Turkey was trying to balance the Russian influence over Georgia and promoting its integration to the Euro-Atlantic world. Concerning this period, it was further argued that Turkey in order to balance the Russian influence over Georgia looked for support from the United States and had a shared responsibility with the United States for shaping and strengthening the structure of Georgia.¹¹⁹⁴

Nevertheless, in the following periods, expanding Turkish-Georgian strategic ties rankled Russia.¹¹⁹⁵

7.2.2 Turkey's Security Relations with Georgia in Regional Platforms

As well as Turkey' bilateral security relations with Georgia, relations in regional platforms also had an importance place in security relations.

a. The Black Sea Naval Cooperation Task Force (BLACKSEAFOR)

This initiative was first brought to the agenda in 1998 during the second meeting of the General Staff of the Black Sea Naval Forces that took place in Bulgaria,

¹¹⁹³ *Ibid*.

¹¹⁹⁴ Mitat Çelikpala, *Op.cit*, pp.192-194.

¹¹⁹⁵ Igor Torbakov, "Expanding Turkish-Georgian strategic ties rankle Russia", *Eurasia Insight*, 23 April 2003,
<http://www.eurasianet.org/departments/insight/articles/eav042503.shtml>

Varna.¹¹⁹⁶ During this meeting, in order to keep the stability and peace in the Black Sea, enhance the regional cooperation initiatives and develop the good neighbourhood, the idea of forming a multi-national naval force from the coastal states was put forward by Turkey.¹¹⁹⁷

On the following times, efforts for the establishment of such as an organisation were carried out through meetings of Expert Groups leaded by Turkish admiral with the participation of diplomats, naval officers and experts. As a result of approximately 10 meetings, the founding agreement of BLACKSEAFOR and its attachments and the required instructions were prepared and the “Intention Letter” which was an important level of showing the intent, political will and determination of the partner states to the founding agreement was signed in Ankara on 28 June 2000.¹¹⁹⁸ After signing the Letter of Intent, the founding agreement was signed in Istanbul on 2 April 2001 with the participation of the foreign ministers and high level state officials of the coastal states in BLACKSEAFOR and the General Staffs of Black Sea Naval Forces.¹¹⁹⁹ This agreement was important as the first agreement and organization by which the coastal states to the Black Sea showed their determination to form a common structure with their naval forces for the aim of humanitarian aid, search-rescue and environment protection in the Black Sea region.¹²⁰⁰ Furthermore, after the 11 September 2001 attacks, a re-structuring of BLACKSEAFOR was needed in order to adapt to the newly emerging security threats in the region.¹²⁰¹

The signing states declared that the aim of the initiative was to develop the regional stability, friendship, good neighbourhood and mutual understanding among the

¹¹⁹⁶ Official Website of BLACKSEAFOR, <http://www.blackseafor.org/turkce/kurulus.php>

¹¹⁹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁹⁸ *Ibid..*

¹¹⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

¹²⁰⁰ *Ibid.*

¹²⁰¹ *Ibid.*

coastal states of Black Sea.¹²⁰² In the light of the main aims and objectives of BLACKSEAFOR, Georgia, the Russian Federation, Turkey, Bulgaria, Romania, Ukraine were all members of the organisation. Furthermore, it can be well argued that, BLACKSEAFOR was the reflection of Turkey's policy of forming a security organisation in the Black Sea through projects and initiatives under its leadership.¹²⁰³ Nevertheless, Turkey's policy was also the outcome of a more general discussion concerning the security of the Black Sea. While regional countries were perceiving Russia as a threat and in this respect attempted to internationalize the security in the Black Sea, the US also thought that there was a security vaccum in the Black Sea.¹²⁰⁴ Under this general framework, Turkey refrained from any direct US involvement in the Black Sea that would rattle Russia, thus thought that the security of the Black Sea could be protected with the participation of all states in the region.

b.Partnership for Peace (NATO)

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, Georgia became a country more closely allied with Russia than with NATO members. Since the early 1990's, Georgian leaders declared their intention for further cooperation with NATO and early in the 1990s, a series of conferences on the ministerial level, conventionally called the North Atlantic Cooperation Council, took place.¹²⁰⁵ On 1 April, 1992, a Georgian representative participated in one of such meetings for the first time; two months later, on 5 June 1992, in Oslo Georgia joined the Council as an equal member.¹²⁰⁶ Early in October 1992, in a letter to the NATO Secretary-General, the

¹²⁰² *Ibid.*

¹²⁰³ Kamer Kasım, *Soğuk Savaş Sonrası Kafkasya*, USAK Yayınları, 2. Edition, Ankara, 2011, p. 115.

¹²⁰⁴ *Ibid.*,p.114.

¹²⁰⁵ David Gudiashvili, "NATO membership as Georgia's Foreign Policy Priority", <http://www.ca-c.org/journal/eng-04-2003/03.gudprimen.shtml>

¹²⁰⁶ David Gudiashvili, "NATO membership as Georgia's Foreign Policy Priority", <http://www.ca-c.org/journal/eng-04-2003/03.gudprimen.shtml>

State Council of Georgia described the tragic events in Abkhazia and asked the Alliance to pay particular attention to the developments in that part of Georgia.¹²⁰⁷

After Georgia's participation to the North Atlantic Cooperation Council, the NATO leaders, also wanted to establish wider contacts with Georgia. In June 1993, a NATO delegation visited the republic and met Head of Staff of the Armed Forces A. Tskitishvili and the parliamentary Defense and Security Committee.¹²⁰⁸ Visits between NATO and Georgia were interpreted as "tactical moves designed to bring the republic closer to NATO".¹²⁰⁹

During that process, there happened also some changes in Georgia's foreign policy. Georgia has to join to the Commonwealth of Independent states and adopt a rapprochement policy with Russia in order to prevent the fragmentation of its territorial integrity and thus let to the existence of Russian military bases in its territories. After the end of the Cold War, NATO also needed to transform itself according the changing international system.

Partnership for Peace Initiative of NATO was formed as a step for ensuring the adjustment of the organisation to changing dynamics of the post-Cold War international system in January 1994.¹²¹⁰ Furthermore, Georgia participated to the Partnership for Peace, by signing their agreement on March 23, 1994.¹²¹¹ In 1995 Georgia signed the PfP Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) with NATO.¹²¹² After

¹²⁰⁷ *Ibid.*

¹²⁰⁸ *Ibid.*

¹²⁰⁹ *Ibid.*

¹²¹⁰ İlhan Uzgel, "ABD ve NATO ile İlişkiler", Baskın Oran (ed.), Türk Dış Politikası, Kurtuluş Savaşından Bugüne Olgular, Belgeler, Yorumlar, Vol.2, 6 Edition, İstanbul, İletişim Yayıncılık, 2002, P.309.

¹²¹¹ Official Website of North Atlantic Treaty Organization;
http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics_82584.htm

¹²¹² Official Website of North Atlantic Treaty Organization, Evolution of Relations,
http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics_38988.htm

the ratification of the agreement by the Georgian Parliament in 1997, in 1999, Georgia joined the PfP Planning and Review Process (PARP).¹²¹³ While the evolution of NATO-Georgia relations is out of the scope of this part, it can be well argued that after Georgia's participation to the NATO PfP program and intensification of relations with NATO, the role of Turkey within NATO in its relations with Georgia carried great importance.

During the second half 1990's, it was argued that Turkey became the most important state supporting reform and modernization of the Georgian army.¹²¹⁴ Beyond the military agreements signed between Turkey and Georgia through which the training of Georgian soldiers, military police and border patrols was realized by Turkey, within the Partnership for Peace (PfP) program, a new military school in Tbilisi and several training centers in different parts of Georgia was founded.¹²¹⁵ Since 2003, Georgian soldiers were stationed under Turkish command in Kosovo as part of the KFOR mission.¹²¹⁶ Further, "Ankara has also secured organisational and financial support for the Georgian mission at the NATO headquarters in Brussels."¹²¹⁷ Considering Turkey's military aid to Georgia, on the other hand, between 1998 and 2002, military aid worth of 30 million dollar was granted to Georgia.¹²¹⁸

After 11 September 2001, as well as it was the case in bilateral security relations, security relations under NATO framework got also affected. In April 2002, one of the important development was the Georgian Train and Equip Programme through which supporting Georgia by establishing an efficient army to fight against terrorism

¹²¹³ *Ibid.*

¹²¹⁴ Wojciech Konofczuk, "A Caucasian Ally: Turkish-Georgia Relations", CES Report, p. 37.

¹²¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹²¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹²¹⁷ Kamil Agacan, Soguk Savasi Sonrası Turkiye-Gurcistan ilişkileri, in: I. Bal (ed.), 21. Yuzyilda Türk Dış Politikası, Ankara 2004., cited in Wojciech Konofczuk, "A Caucasian Ally: Turkish-Georgia Relations", CES Report, p. 37.

¹²¹⁸ Wojciech Konofczuk, "A Caucasian Ally: Turkish-Georgia Relations", CES Report, p. 37.

was aimed.¹²¹⁹ Later on, when the programme was included within the framework NATO Partnership for Peace Program, Turkey also became actively involved in it. In the light of all, Turkey through the Turkish Partnership for Peace Training Center provided on-spot training with its mobile training teams in Georgia between 29 April-3 May 2002.¹²²⁰ Furthermore, Turkey also helped Georgia for the training of a maritime anti-terrorism unit in its Black Sea flotilla.¹²²¹

Evaluating all, it can be well argued that Turkey's security relations with Georgia either bilaterally or under NATO framework, all served to the aim of bringing Georgia to NATO standards. Turkey also carried the aim of balancing Russia in the region. However, while balancing Russia's influence and dominance over Georgia, Turkey always refrained from rankling Russia. After 11 September 2001, the increasing US presence in Georgia was not something that Turkey approved at all. Thus, as explained above, concerning the US role and involvement in the region, Turkey's security interests with Georgia conflicted. To sum up all, Turkey tried to conduct its security relations with Georgia, by trying to prevent any US-Russia confrontation which would constitute a challenge to the balance of power and her interests in the region and would antagonize Russia.

7.3 Turkey Security Relations with Georgia between 2003- 2009

After the Rose revolution, Turkey's security cooperation with Georgia continued bilaterally and through regional and international organisations. Following the Rose

¹²¹⁹ Mitat Çelikpala, *Op.cit*, p. 193.

¹²²⁰ In this context a mobile team composed of 4 military officers of Turkish Armed Forces and one personnel from each Red Cross and Red Crescent carried out a training program in Kirghizstan (15-19 April), Azerbaijan (22-26 April), Georgia (29 April-3 May), and Albania (6-10 May). In this program there were 40 personnel from each country. For the activities and training programs of TU PTC see the official web site: <http://www.bioem.tsk.mil.tr>. Related with the issue also see, "TSK 5 Ülkede Eğitim Verecek," 20 October 2005, http://www.diplomatikgozlem.com/haber_oku.asp?id=28., cited Mitat Çelikpala, *Op.cit*, p. 194.

¹²²¹ Mitat Çelikpala, *Op.cit*, p. 195.

Revolution and Saakashvili coming to power, in his visit to Turkey, the Georgian Interior Minister Giorgi Baramidze, indicated that:

This visit is of great importance to Georgia. Turkey is not only our neighbor; it is also our partner in a great number of fields which are very important to Georgia, from defence, security, and law enforcement to agriculture and energy We will naturally hold concrete discussions along these lines. Talks will also include Georgia's accession bid to NATO and the EU. Ankara provides equipment and training for Georgian armed forces. Turkey has also contributed to renovating military facilities on Georgian territory that have been vacated by Russian troops in recent years. Georgia and Turkey have traditionally conducted joint military exercises along their common border and, on 9 February 2004, they agreed to boost naval cooperation in the Black Sea waterways.¹²²²

Considering Turkey's role, it was stated that, "the most important aspect of Turkish involvement that challenges the balance of power in the Caucasus is its military cooperation with Georgia and extensive role it plays in the reconstruction of the Georgian military"¹²²³. Furthermore, the main motivation behind Turkey's military support to Georgia was to help to the re-structuring of the Georgian state, and considering the overall aim of Georgia for NATO membership, was to bring Georgian military to the NATO standards.¹²²⁴ Saakashvili, during one of his interviews, considering Georgia's NATO membership, indicated that Turkey played important role in the modernization of Georgian military and that support of Turkey has been as important as the role the US has played.¹²²⁵ On the other hand, David Smith argues that Georgia already behaves as an ally with major contributions to NATO operations.¹²²⁶ A company plus a platoon of Georgian peacekeepers serve under Turkish command in Kosovo. Georgia also contributed to the surge in NATO

¹²²² "Georgia: Hopeful President Pays First Official Visit to Turkey", *RFE/RL News*, 20 May 2004, <http://www.rferl.org/content/article/1052878.html>

¹²²³ For information on armed organization in Georgia, military structure and its impacts before and during this restructuring process, see: D. Darchishvili, "Georgian Defense Policy and Military Reform", in Coppieters/Legvold, Statehood and Security, pp. 117-151., cited in Mitat Çelikpala, *Op.cit*, p.188.

¹²²⁴ Celikpala, *Op.cit*, p. 188.

¹²²⁵ "Georgia: Hopeful President Pays First Official Visit to Turkey", *RFE/RL News*, 20 May 2004, <http://www.rferl.org/content/article/1052878.html>

¹²²⁶ David J. Smith, "Georgia's Railway to NATO passes through Turkey", *Turkish Policy Quarterly*, Vol.6, No.3, p.67

troops required for the 2004 presidential election in Afghanistan and recently announced that about 100 to 200 Georgian soldiers will soon deploy in the *Mazar-i-Sharif* area.¹²²⁷ Further, though Iraq is not a NATO operation, and Ankara and Washington have disagreed over this conflict, Georgia's contribution of 2.000 soldiers to the coalition demonstrated that it is willing and able to participate in collective security operations.¹²²⁸ Furthermore, David Smith argues that:

Turkey was quick to grasp the importance of a security relationship with Georgia. Anyone familiar with the Georgian Armed Forces has seen the discrete little plaques marking the many buildings refurbished with Turkish help. Of particular importance is the upgrade of Marneuli military airport to NATO standards. Turkey supports the Georgian National Defense Academy and has trained the Kojori Special Forces Brigade. Nearly 1.000 Georgian military personnel have attended courses in Turkey. Turkey provides pre-deployment training to the Georgian soldiers bound for KFOR, NATO's force in Kosovo. In theater, Georgia's military contingent is part of the Multi-national Task Force-South, which is now under Turkish command.¹²²⁹

Nevertheless, it should be noted that the August 2008 War had serious implications on Turkey's security relations with Georgia. Considering the fact that the August war damaged the Georgian army and military infrastructure crucially, the military support Georgia gets especially from the U.S and Turkey became important.

Since the August 2008 War, there was growing discontent within the Georgian defense ministry against the government. Considering this, after one year since the August 2008 war, in August 2009, Sakaashvili assigned Bacho Akhalaia as the new Defense Minister replacing Vasil Sikharulidze.

¹²²⁷ *Ibid.*

¹²²⁸ *Ibid.*

¹²²⁹ *Ibid.*

Johannes Wetzinger explains this situation as:

Akhalaia is said to be a close ally of the President and a protégé of the influential Interior Minister, Vano Merabishvili. Akhalaia's appointment can thus be seen as an attempt to strengthen the power vertical in Georgia. Since the August war last year, experts repeatedly reported power struggles within the Ministry of Defense. After the defeat in the August war,¹²³⁰ a growth in discontent with the government could be observed within the army.

Aiming to put the Georgian military under control with Akhalaia, following the August War, increase in military spending continued under Saakashvili rule. While since the Rose Revolution, reforms against an under-financed army and mistreatment and malnutrition of soldiers took place with increase in the defence budget from 31 million U.S. dollars in 2003 to a maximum of 922 million U.S. dollars in 2007, the August 2008 War showed a different picture.¹²³¹ Wetzinger argues that:

A Pentagon report at the end of 2008 offered a bleak assessment of the state of the Georgian armed forces. "Widespread mismanagement", "unqualified leadership", and "need of extensive reforms" the New York Times summarized the report, thus tarnishing the former prestigious project of Saakashvili.¹²³²

Furthermore, all these developments in Georgian military had political implications as well. Wetzinger explained this situation as:

Firstly, the radical increase in defense expenditures combined with an offensive rhetoric and repeated military operations has led to a clear deterioration in relations between Georgia and its two breakaway regions Abkhazia and South Ossetia. This severely undermined the chances for constructive negotiations between the separatist regimes and the Georgian government. Secondly, the one-sided orientation towards the United States and NATO in Georgia's security and defense policy has damaged relations with neighboring Russia and undermined the possibility for a needed restart in bilateral relations with Moscow. Furthermore, Georgian hopes for protection by the North Atlantic Alliance have proven ill-fated in the course of the August war.¹²³³

The August 2008 War showed that any conflict in South Caucasus had important implications for the surrounding and neighbouring countries. Georgia's offensive attitude when combined with all factors indicated above showed that, Turkey's and

¹²³⁰ Johannes Wetzinger, "Georgia: Saakashvili increases control over the army", 02.12.2009, http://www.caucaz.com/home_eng/breve_contenu.php?id=361

¹²³¹ *Ibid.*

¹²³² *Ibid.*

¹²³³ *Ibid.*

Georgia's security orientations were not in harmony unlike it is expected to be in a strategic partnership. While Turkey in her security orientation does not have the luxury to ignore Russia in the region, for Georgia, there was more a one sided security orientation towards NATO membership. Thus, divergence of security orientations challenged Turkey's interests.

To conclude all, Turkey's security policy aimed to keep the balance of power in the region. Turkey's policy was to keep the conflict surrounded within the region. The regional initiative of Turkey was in a great extent formed for this aim. Turkey's policy of not permitting the US ships to enter to the Black Sea at the preliminary stage was in a way to prevent the direct confrontation of the US and Russia. Through this policy, Turkey had been able to prevent a hot war in the Black Sea between Russia and the US. Nevertheless, it can be well argued that Georgia would be much satisfied from any US involvement to the August War.

7.4 Turkey's Security Relations with Georgia Between 2009-2012

The August 2008 War between Russia and Georgia showed how the stability and security in the region were vulnerable to change and that Turkey's and Georgia's security interests did not overlap.. As indicated in the Workshop Report on Turkey-Georgian Relations organized by SETA (Politics, Economic and Society Research Foundation), the frozen conflicts of the past were each a threat and challenge for the regional security and the August 2008 War was a proof of that.¹²³⁴

In the post-August 2008 war era, how and in what way Turkey's security relations with Georgia have continued are examined. Within this context, Turkey's bilateral security relations with Georgia and Turkey's role in Georgia's so called NATO membership plans are examined.

¹²³⁴ "Türkiye Gürcistan İlişkileri Çalışayı Raporu", SETA, July 2009, p.10.

7.4.1 Turkey's Bilateral Security Relations with Georgia

Turkey's bilateral security relations with Georgia developed in the post-2008 period. In December 2011, within the framework of the defense agreement between Turkey and Georgia, Turkey donated military materials to Georgia at the value of 1 million 700 thousand dollar.¹²³⁵ According to the Georgian Defense Minister, the donation to Georgia by Turkey was done in order to ensure Georgia to reach NATO standards as soon as possible.¹²³⁶ Including the recent support to Georgia, the total military support to Georgia from Turkey exceeded 50 million Dollar.¹²³⁷ While this donation of military material to Georgia was given in a ceremony in the Kircanisi Military Training Center, Turkey's Military Atache of Tbilisi -General Staff Colonel- Adem Yuksel said that Turkey was pleased from the logistic support they gave to Georgia for the restructuring and entegration of Georgian Military Forces to NATO, development of the command control ability of the Border Police Presidency.¹²³⁸ General Staff Colonel Adem Yüksel added that: "Turkey believes that Georgia's strong and modern Military Force will make a significant contribution to the peace and security of the region."¹²³⁹

Concerning Turkey's support to Georgia, Deputy Minister of Defense of Georgia Nodar Karshiladze said that Turkey was one of the first countries that supported Georgia in the defense sector and this support of military material was an example of this.¹²⁴⁰ Furthermore, Karshiladze said that, though the world economic crisis,

¹²³⁵ "Türkiye'den Gürcistan'a Askeri Destek", 13 December 2011,
<http://istanbul.indymedia.org/haber/t%C3%BCrkiyeden-g%C3%BCrcistana-askeri-destek>

¹²³⁶ "TSK'dan Gürcistan'a Yardım", 9 December 2011,
<http://askerhaber.com/haber/5689/tskdan-gurcistana-yardim.html>

¹²³⁷ *Ibid.*

¹²³⁸ *Ibid.*

¹²³⁹ *Ibid.*

¹²⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

Turkey has continued to support Georgian army and that support of Turkey would never been forgotten by Georgia.¹²⁴¹

Considering all, there have been some criticisms to Turkey's military support to Georgia. Most of these criticisms came from the Circassian diaspora. Erol Taymaz argued that: "Turkey should stop military support to Georgia and conduct a neutral policy in the region."¹²⁴² Furthermore, Erol Taymaz added that: "Turkey not only sold weapons to Turkey but also increased the aggression capacity of Georgia."¹²⁴³

One of the effective Caucasus civil society initiative in Turkey- Caucasus Forum also showed reaction to Turkey's military support to Georgia through an open letter to Foreign Minister of Turkey Ahmet Davutoglu. Through the letter, they indicated that Turkey's military support to Georgia was controversial with the Caucasus Stability and Cooperation Initiative of Turkey and foreign policy principle of zero problems with neighbours.¹²⁴⁴ Furthermore, they invited Turkey to stop the military support given to Georgia and instead to support policies promoting the peaceful dynamics of the region.¹²⁴⁵

Concluding all, Turkey's bilateral security relations with Georgia was showing both the conflicting and complementary interests of Turkey and Georgia. While Turkey's security orientation was not in harmony with Georgia's security orientation, Turkey's

¹²⁴¹ *Ibid.*

¹²⁴² Tolga Korkut "Arada Kalan Türkiye'yi Silahlandırmaktan Uzak Durmali", 27 August 2008, <http://bianet.org/bianet/dunya/109325-arada-kalan-turkiye-kafkasyayi-silahlandirmaktan-uzak-durmali>

¹²⁴³ Tolga Korkut, "Türkiye Sadece silah satmadı, Gürcistan'ın saldırısı kapasitesini geliştirdi", 12 Ağustos, 2008, <http://bianet.org/bianet/bianet/108951-turkiye-sadece-silah-satmadı-gurcistanın-saldırı-kapasitesini-gelistirdi>

¹²⁴⁴ T.C Dışişleri Bakanı Ahmet Davutoglu'na Açık Mektup", 2 December 2010, http://www.kafkasyaforumu.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=327:tc-dileri-bakan-ahmet-davutoluna-ack-mektup&catid=4:duyuru&Itemid=170

¹²⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

military support to Georgia continued due to the fact that a stable and secure Georgia was the guarantee of stability and security in the region for Turkey. Beyond all, criticisms against Turkey's support policy was more expressed in the public opinion and these criticisms by time had the potential to influence Turkey's foreign policy.

7.4.2 Turkey's Security Relations with Georgia in the Regional Context

Georgia's integration to NATO has always been explained as one of the major objective of Turkey's security policy towards Georgia. After the August 2008 War, while Georgia left the Commonwealth of Independent States, its strong intention to become a NATO member has been more emphasized.¹²⁴⁶

In the aftermath of the Georgian-Russian war, at the December 2008 Summit of NATO foreign ministerial meeting, Georgia was offered an Annual National Program which referred to a stepped-up assistance for preparing Georgia for an eventual NATO membership.¹²⁴⁷ Based on that Annual National Program, Georgia envisaged a new defense plan- Minister's Vision 2009.¹²⁴⁸ Furthermore, in the February 2009 NATO-Georgia Commission Meeting, the US indicated that the US would have a continuing security relationship with Georgia bilaterally and in regional framework with NATO allies.¹²⁴⁹ In the NATO Foreign Minister's Meeting in March 2009, on the other hand, the US indicated that the renewal of dialogue in the NATO-Russian Council would not have meant any less commitment for the eventual membership of Georgia to NATO.¹²⁵⁰

¹²⁴⁶ "NATO'dan Gürcistan'a Sarı Kart", 26.10.2011,
<http://www.1news.com.tr/guneykafkasya/gurcistan/2011026025612414.html>

¹²⁴⁷ Jim Nichol, " Georgia(Republic) and NATO Enlargement: Issues and Implications, *CRS Report for Congress*, March, 2009, p.4.

¹²⁴⁸ *Ibid.*,p.5.

¹²⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, pp.7-8.

¹²⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p.8.

In the Lisbon Summit of NATO in 2010, Allied leaders recalled their agreement in the Bucharest Summit in 2008 that Georgia would become a member of NATO.¹²⁵¹ Nevertheless, though this positive declaration, Georgia was not invited to participate in Membership Action Plan.¹²⁵² Vice General Secretary of NATO James Appathurai indicated that it was necessary to meet NATO standards in terms of political precautions and practical implementations and added that it was not anticipated for Georgia to become included to the Membership Action Plan in the Chicago Summit in 2012.¹²⁵³

Considering all, it is further argued by Marec Mardej in his article “NATO after the Georgian Conflict: A New Course or Business at Usual?” that:

In the next few years, the Alliance will most probably avoid making unequivocal declarations on the subject of Georgia’s integration with NATO. At the same time, it will continue to express its symbolic support for Tbilisi and to reiterate the obligations NATO has undertaken in this respect.¹²⁵⁴

Russia’s reaction to the process of Georgia’s so called membership to NATO is critical. After the Meeting of Russia- NATO Council Foreign Ministers in the press briefing, Foreign Minister of Russia Sergei Lavrov said that:“Do not promote the political regime in Georgia for the repetition of the war in August 2008.”¹²⁵⁵ Furthermore, Mr. Lavrov added that NATO was more responsible for not

¹²⁵¹“NATO’s Relations with Georgia”, 12 October 2011,
http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics_38988.htm

¹²⁵² Gökhan Özkan, “Georgia’s NATO membership within the context of the Black Sea Dimension of “the New Great Game”, *Karadeniz Araştırmaları*, Güz, 2010, No.27, p.9.
http://www.karam.org.tr/Makaleler/375739109_002.pdf

¹²⁵³ “NATO’dan Gürcistan’a Sarı Kart”, 25 Ekim 2011,
<http://haberrus.com/politics/2011/10/25/natodan-gurcistan-sari-kart.html>

¹²⁵⁴ Marek Mardej, “NATO after the Georgian Conflict: A New Course or Business at Usual?”, The Polish Institute of International Affairs, January 2009, p.3.

¹²⁵⁵ “Rusya’dan 2008 Gürcistan Savaşı Tekrarlanabilir Uyarısı”, 9 Aralık 2011,
<http://www.haberturk.com/dunya/haber/695524-rusyadan-2008-gurcistan-savasi-tekrarlanabilir-uyarisi>

experiencing the repetition of the August 2008 War in the strategic region of the Caucasus.¹²⁵⁶

Considering Russia's reaction, Turkey in each platform declares its support for Georgia's membership to NATO. In January 2012, Chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee in Turkish Grand National Assembly Volkan Bozkır visited Georgia with a delegation. Mr. Bozkır said that:

Our wish is to see Georgia as member of NATO and EU. By this way, through strengthening its own security and future in the region, it is our wish that Georgia would use its own means for its own people. Turkey pays attention to the territorial integrity of Georgia. From this perspective, Turkey supports the policies of Georgia. We wish Georgia to re-get the picture in its former map.¹²⁵⁷

Furthermore, Vice Chairman of Georgian Parliament Giorgi Tseretelli said that Turkey has paid attention to Georgia's political and foreign policy priorities and they were getting strong support from Turkey in important issues such as Georgia's independence and territorial integrity and process of NATO integration.¹²⁵⁸

Though Turkey supports Georgia's membership to NATO, concerning the maritime cooperation in the Black Sea, Turkey regards the Black Sea as a Turkish Lake and strongly opposes any NATO or US presence there.¹²⁵⁹ According to Turkey, the security of the Black Sea should be provided by the littoral states and fears that any US or NATO presence in the Black Sea will exacerbate tensions with Russia.¹²⁶⁰ Thus, instead of increasing the US and NATO presence, Turkey has proposed expanding the Black Sea Naval Cooperation Task Force (known as Blackseafor), a

¹²⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

¹²⁵⁷ TBMM Dışişleri Heyeti Komisyonu Gürcistan'da”, 17.01.2012,
<http://www.sondakika.com/haber-tbmm-disisleri-komisyonu-heyetti-gurcistan-da-3276817/>

¹²⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

¹²⁵⁹ F. Stephen Laranbee, *Troubled Partnership US-Turkey Relations in an Era of Global Geopolitical Change*, RAND Corporation, p.84.

¹²⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

multinational naval task force that includes Russia, Ukraine, Georgia, Romania, and Bulgaria.¹²⁶¹

After the August 2008 War, Turkey's security cooperation with Georgia, both in bilateral and regional context continued. Turkey in rhetoric continued its support for Georgia's NATO membership, though reactions came from Russia. Nevertheless, Turkey always stated her reservation that Georgia should first meet all required criteria of membership. Thus, it seemed more like Turkey's support to Georgia was symbolic. In the regional aspect, on the other hand,, concerning direct US and NATO involvement in the Black Sea, Turkey has always paid attention to prevent any tension to arouse with Russia. Thus, unlike Georgia, Turkey did not supported any direct US and NATO involvement in the Black Sea. Considering all, Turkey's security relations with Georgia during this period more brought to surface the conflicting security orientations and interests between the two states which was in a great extent related with their different Russia perception.

¹²⁶¹ Serkan Demirtas, "Blackseafor to Be Expanded," *Turkish Daily News* (Istanbul), September 19, 2008., cited in F. Stephen Laranbee, *Troubled Partnership US-Turkey Relations in an Era of Global Geopolitical Change*, RAND Corporation, p.84.

CHAPTER VIII

8. TURKEY'S ECONOMIC RELATIONS WITH GEORGIA

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the central economic system in the Soviet Union also collapsed. The newly independent states of South Caucasus faced with a situation which they were able to do nothing on their own. Georgia, since trade routes were passing through Abkhazia and South Ossetia, was in a hard economic situation. In this conjonkture, the Sarp border gate which was opened in 1989 was providing access to Turkey and this provided significant opportunities for Georgia. In such a regional conjonkture, Turkey economic relations with Georgia became strategically important in order to ensure Georgia to stand on its own feet.

8.1 Turkey's Economic Relations with Georgia between 1991 and 1996

Evolution of Turkey's economic relations with Georgia is important both for the bilateral aspect of relations and Georgia's integration to world markets. The establishment of bilateral economic relations played an important role for the rapprochement of Turkey and Georgia. Turkey, furthermore, played a crucial role in regional initiatives for the economic well being of Georgia, increase of regional economic cooperation and integration of Georgia to world markets.

8.1.1 Turkey's Bilateral Trade Relations with Georgia

Just after the beginning of Turkey's diplomatic relations with Georgia, 50 million dollar credit and 50.000 ton food aid provided to Georgia by Turkey was perceived as a "light for their survival".¹²⁶² This act of Turkey contributed to rapprochement

¹²⁶² Cumhuriyet, 1 Ağustos 1992., cited in Kamil Ağacan, "Soğuk Savaş Sonrası Türkiye-Gürcistan ilişkileri", 21. Yüzyılda Türk Dış Politikası (Ed.İris Bal), Nobel Yayın Dağıtım., Ankara, 2004, p.429.

between Turkey and Georgia.¹²⁶³ After Georgia got its independence, Turkey became the biggest trade partner of Georgia. In 1992, the trade volume which was 17.9 million dolar, increased to 239.4 million dolar in 1997 and to 251.8 million dolar in 1998.¹²⁶⁴

Turkey's trade and economic relations with Georgia were established based on the Trade and Economic Cooperation Agreement signed between Turkey and Georgia in 30 July 1992.¹²⁶⁵ According to this agreement, both sides would behave each other as the privileged country in customs taxes and other proceedings in import and export procedures of both countries. For the further improvement of trade and economic relations, a Turkish-Georgian Economic Commission was established.¹²⁶⁶ Related with the significance of land transportation between the countries, another agreement was signed by which both sides would grant the right of transit passage to each other on agreed routes.¹²⁶⁷ Foreign Ministries and delegations in both countries signed a memorandum of understanding in 10 December 1992 including the improvement and development of bilateral trade, common investments and Turkish investments in Georgia. Then, both delegations agreed on providing Eximbank credit to Turkey in order to increase the trade volume between Turkey and Georgia.¹²⁶⁸

¹²⁶³ Kamil Ağacan, "Soğuk Savaş Sonrası Türkiye-Gürcistan ilişkileri", *21. Yüzyılda Türk Dış Politikası* (Ed. İdris Bal), Nobel Yayın Dağıtım., 2. Baskı, Ankara, 2004, p.429.

¹²⁶⁴ Mustafa Aydin, "Kafkasya ve Orta Asya ile İlişkiler", Baskın Oran (Ed.), *Türk Dış Politikası, Kurtuluş Savaşı'ndan Bugüne Olgula, Belgeler Yorumlar*, cilt. II, 6. Baskı, İletişim Yayıncılık, İstanbul, 2002, p. 418.

¹²⁶⁵ Okan Mert, *Türkiye'nin Kafkasya Politikası ve Gürcistan*, IQ Kültür Sanat Yayıncılık, Eylül 2004, İstanbul, p. 254.

¹²⁶⁶ *Official Journal*, 14 April 1993, No.21552, p.2-5., cited in Tuğba Çelebioğlu, "1990 Sonrası Türkiye-Gürcistan İlişkileri", Yüksek Lisans Tezi, Marmara Üniversitesi, İstanbul, 2005, p. 74.

¹²⁶⁷ *Official Journal*, 7 June 1993, No. 22306, p.3., cited in Tuğba Çelebioğlu, *Op.cit.*, p.74.

¹²⁶⁸ *Official Journal*, 2 July 1993, No.21625, p.2., cited in Tuğba Çelebioğlu, *Op.cit*, p.75.

On 13 January 1994, agreement on Cooperation in Agriculture, Technical, Scientific and Economic Issues was signed between Turkey and Georgia.¹²⁶⁹ With this agreement, Turkey and Georgia agreed on cooperation in agricultural issues, exchange of scientific and technical knowledge, exchange of materials and experts, organisation of trainings and seminars in both countries and cooperation between private sectors and promotion of common investments. At the same date, a protocol on Cooperation in Trade, Economic, Technical and Scientific Issues was signed and this was later followed by the Agreement signed on Cooperation and Mutual Assistance on Customs Relations.¹²⁷⁰ Additional to the opening of Sarp Border Gate, the Turkozu Border Gate was opened on 31 July 1995 by Suleyman Demirel and Shevardnadze.¹²⁷¹

Table 11. Turkey-Georgia Foreign Trade for 1993-1995 (Million Dolar)

Years	Export	Import	Balance	Volume
1993	34,4	21,8	12,6	56,3
1994	67,1	25,6	41,5	92,8
1995	68,1	50,1	17,9	118,2
1996	110,3	32,5	77,8	142,8

Source: Turkey-Georgia Foreign Trade for 1993-1995 (Million Dolar)¹²⁷²

¹²⁶⁹ *Official Journal*, 27 April 1994, No. 21917, pp.6-7., cited in Tuğba Çelebioğlu, *Op.cit*, p. 75.

¹²⁷⁰ *Official Journal*, 27 April 1994, No. 21917,p.11.,cited in Tuğba Çelebioğlu, *Op.cit*, p.76.

¹²⁷¹ Türk Gözü Sosyal Yardımlaşma ve Dayanışma Derneği,
http://www.turkgozuder.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=58&Itemid=63

¹²⁷² T.R.Ministry of Economy, Foreign Trade by countries,
<http://www.ekonomi.gov.tr/index.cfm?sayfa=7155BE01-D8D3-8566-45208351967592CF>

Considering all, beginning with Georgia's independence and till the mid 1990's, trade and economic relation between Turkey and Georgia showed a continuously increasing and developing character. However, due to the internal instabilities and ethnic and territorial conflicts Georgia was dealing, economic relations were not much on the expected level till 1996.

8.1.2 Role of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organisation (BSEC)

The role of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organisation was significant in Turkey-Georgia economic relations in order to show the regional aspect of the relations. The idea of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation project was first presented by Mr. Sukru Elekdag during a panel on 9 January 1990. Later on the project was supported by Turgut Ozal and began to be an important part of the political agenda in Turkey.¹²⁷³ As a result of the process conducted under the leadership of Turkey, BSEC was established on 25 July 1992 with the Heads of State and Government of eleven countries: Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Georgia, Greece, Moldova, Romania, Russia, Turkey and Ukraine signing in Istanbul the Summit Declaration and the Bosphorus Statement giving birth to the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC).¹²⁷⁴ The formation of BSEC was based on the idea that peace and stability would be achieved through an economic system that would foster prosperity for all its participating states, on the basis of good neighbourly and friendly relations in the Black Sea.¹²⁷⁵ Shevardnadze which participated to the meeting defined this regional initiative of cooperation as the "successful plan of Turgut Ozal".¹²⁷⁶

¹²⁷³ Okan Mert, *Türkiye'nin Kafkasya Politikası ve Gürcistan*, İstanbul, IQ Kültür ve Sanat Yayıncılık, 2004 p. 230.

¹²⁷⁴ Okan Mert, *Türkiye'nin Kafkasya Politikası ve Gürcistan*, IQ Kültür Sanat Yayıncılık, Eylül 2004, İstanbul, p. 230; Official Website of Organization of Black Sea Economic Cooperation, <http://www.bsec-organization.org/Information/Pages/bsec.aspx>

¹²⁷⁵ Official Website of Organization of Black Sea Economic Cooperation, <http://www.bsec-organization.org/Information/Pages/bsec.aspx>

¹²⁷⁶ Cumhuriyet, 26 June 1992, p.1., cited in Tuğba Çelebioğlu, *Op.cit*, p.44.

Both Turkey and Georgia showed great importance to BSEC. For Georgia, BSEC was an important instrument for getting international support and integrate with the Western world. For Turkey, on the other hand, it was an important initiative in order to prevent the Russian influence and domination on these newly independent states. Turkey leaded the BSEC initiative in order to contribute to regional cooperation and peace in the Black Sea region through the development of economic relations. As a foreign policy initiative, this would also contribute Turkey's role in the region as a leading regional power. Turkey's efforts of trying to make BSEC an active and effective organisation was evaluated by some scholars as if Turkey was trying to create initiatives alternative to the West.¹²⁷⁷ Nevertheless, it was stated that Turkey's aim in these active regional initiatives was not creating alternatives to the West but rather to emphasize its strategic role as a regional power.¹²⁷⁸

Considering all, though BSEC created great expectations, it remained as an initiative which could not reach its objectives.¹²⁷⁹ Furthermore, regarding the settlement of the regional conflicts, BSEC could not be effective in any way.¹²⁸⁰ There were many challenges against the proper operation of BSEC. Countries that were included to the regional cooperation carried clear-cut differences in their socio-economic level and political status. Members of BSEC had also different conditions and foreign policy priorities.¹²⁸¹ Furthermore, members started to perceive the organisation as a reactional structure to meet their conjonktural needs and interests. Furthermore, the political, ethnic and territorial problems among the member states overweighted the

¹²⁷⁷ Kamer Kasim, “*Soğuk Savaş Sonrası Kafkasya*, Usak Yayınları, Ankara 2011, p. 93.

¹²⁷⁸ Oral Sander, “Turkey and the Organisation for Black Sea Economic Cooperation”, Kemal Karpat (Ed.), *Turkish Foreign Policy: Recent Developments*, Wisconsin: Madison, 1996, p. 64., cited in Kamer Kasim, *Op.cit*, p. 93.

¹²⁷⁹ Okan Mert, *Op.cit*, p. 235.

¹²⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, p.235.

¹²⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p.236.

economic interests and when combined with the lack of political will among members, BSEC failed to be an effective organization.¹²⁸²

8.2 Turkey's Economic Relations with Georgia between 1996 - 2003

Between 1996 and 2003 Along with development of trade relations between Turkey and Georgia, cooperation in the energy sector, oil and gas pipelines politics consisted the core of the economic relations. Nevertheless, as Karagiannis argued: "Turkey failed to recognize the importance of a special relationship with Tbilisi until it became clear in 1994 that the only available non-Russian route for Azerbaijan oil was through Georgia."¹²⁸³

Considering all, energy cooperation constituted an important aspect Turkey-Georgia relations that caused both countries to ignore their potential problematic areas.

8.2.1 The Baku-Tiblisi-Ceyhan Oil Pipeline

Concerning the importance of the the Baku-Tiblisi-Ceyhan Oil Pipeline Project, Zeyno Baran argued that the project was promoted by Turkey mainly for geopolitical reasons with economic arguments largely absent from the decision making process.¹²⁸⁴

First, following the Gulf War, the Kirkuk-Yumurtalık pipeline that had been transporting Iraqi oil to the Turkish Mediterranean port of Ceyhan was closed with

¹²⁸² For further information. See: Okan Mert, *Op.cit*, pp.235-236.

¹²⁸³ Emmanuel Karagiannis, " The Turkish-Georgian Partnership and the Pipeline Factor", *Journal of Southern Europe and the Balkans*, Vol.6, No.1, 2004, p.20.

¹²⁸⁴ Zeyno Baran, " The Baku-Tiflis Ceyhan Pipeline: Implications for Turkey", p. 108. www.silkroadstudies.org/BTC_6.pdf

the UN Resolution Number 661.¹²⁸⁵ Turkey suffered from huge economic losses and as a foreign policy option thought that Ceyhan port could be turned to an international oil hub.¹²⁸⁶ In brief, as an energy dependent country, this project would be an alternative to the dependency to Middle Eastern oil. Second, through the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan Oil Pipeline project with a secure route terminating in Ceyhan, Turkey would gain a strong leverage in the South Caucasus.¹²⁸⁷ Third, Turkey as a NATO ally and strategic partner of the US, would be able to prevent Russian domination in the region as a potential energy supplier and thus would promote the integration of the countries in the region to the international institutions.¹²⁸⁸ Further, it was stated by a Turkish official that, in the light of the conditions at that time, the project carried the aim of breaking up the Russian monopoly on energy projects in the region and by this way, Turkey was increased to the position of “significant actor” in the region.¹²⁸⁹

The first concrete attempt in Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline project was the Ankara Declaration signed in October 1998.¹²⁹⁰ Turkey, Georgia, Azerbaijan, Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan were the countries that signed the declaration which assumed the Baku-Ceyhan pipeline to be the main route transporting the Caspian oil to world markets.¹²⁹¹

¹²⁸⁵ The Iraq-Turkey pipeline was only partially reopened in 1996, and returned to full capacity only in 2000. It has been shut down since 2003 due to regular attacks on the pipeline., cited in, Zeyno Baran, " The Baku-Tiflis Ceyhan Pipeline: Implications for Turkey", p. 104. www.silkroadstudies.org/BTC_6.pdf

¹²⁸⁶ Zeyno Baran, " The Baku-Tiflis Ceyhan Pipeline: Implications for Turkey", p. 104. www.silkroadstudies.org/BTC_6.pdf

¹²⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

¹²⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

¹²⁸⁹ Personal Interview done with a Turkish official on 7 May 2013 in Ankara.

¹²⁹⁰ İlhan Uzgel, “ ABD ve NATO ile İlişkiler”, Baskın Oran (Ed.), *Op.cit*, p. 281.

¹²⁹¹ *Ibid.*, p.281.

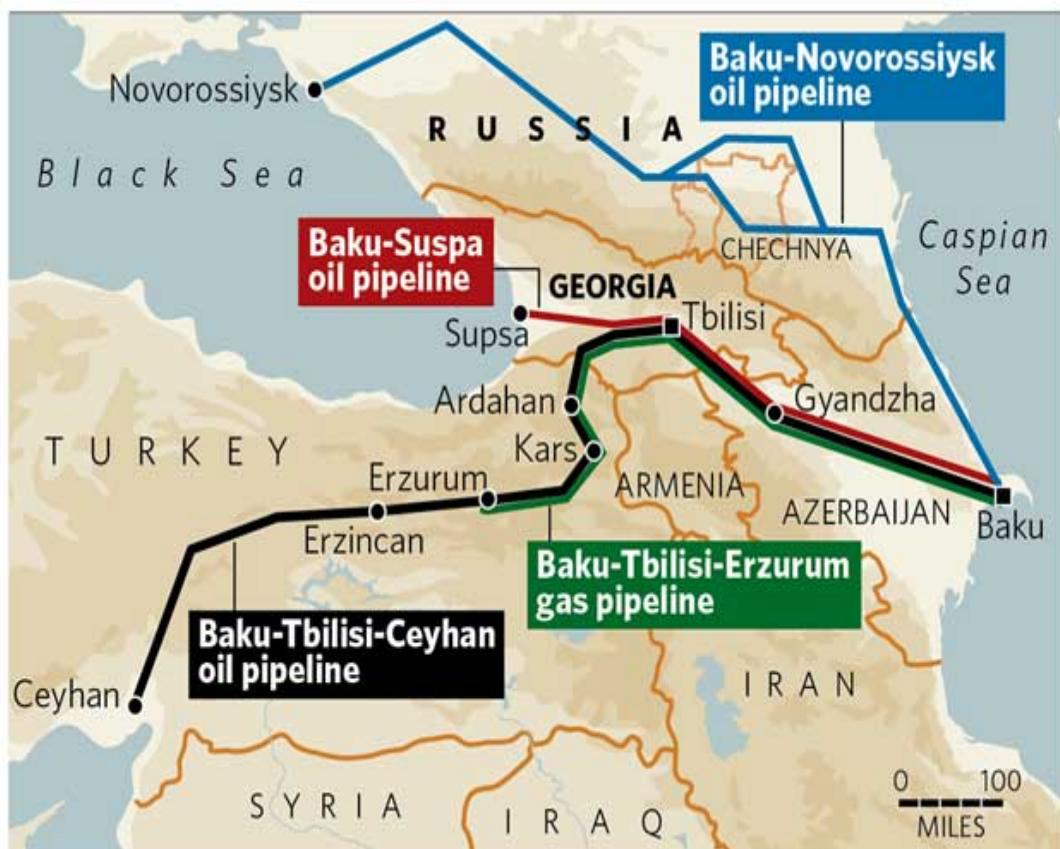


Figure 3. The Baku Tbilisi Ceyhan Pipeline Project¹²⁹²

As well as the fact that to ensure its energy supply security was of vital importance for Turkey, to prevent the monopoly of Russia in the energy transportation and to become a major energy transit country in the 21th century was the strategic priorities of Turkey in the energy sector. Though there were criticisms that this project was too costly and uneconomical, Bill Richardson, the US Energy Minister stated that the declaration was an important step for the realization of the East-West Energy Corridor.¹²⁹³.

¹²⁹² Claire Soares, " Battle for Oil: EU's hope to bypass Russian energy may be a pipe dream", 12 August 2008, *The Independent*, <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/battle-for-oil-eursquos-hope-to-bypass-russian-energy-may-be-a-pipe-dream-891499.html>

¹²⁹³ "Baku-Ceyhan and World Politics", *Turkish Daily News*, 31 Ekim 1998., cited in Mete Taşkın, *Op.cit*, p.112.

Zeyno Baran argues that the direct revenue Turkey will receive from the project is considerably small and adds that Turkey is expected to receive between 140 and 200 million dollar annually from transit and operation fees.¹²⁹⁴

Table 12. Transit and operating fees payable to Turkey

"Years 1 – 16:	Years 17-40:
35 MTA \$140 million	35 MTA \$204 million
40 MTA \$160 million	40 MTA \$234 million
45 MTA \$180 million	45 MTA \$263 million
50 MTA \$200 million	50 MTA \$292 million

Source: Transit and Operating fees payable to Turkey"¹²⁹⁵

Beyond the considerably small economic gains Turkey would get, implications of the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan Oil Pipeline project on Turkey relations with Georgia were considerably important. Georgia was considered as a strategically important key buffer zone against Russia. Considered as the weak link in the East-West energy corridor, Georgia's stability and security became crucial for the success of the BTC Oil pipeline project. Furthermore, Karagiannis argued that since any solution of the Nagorno-Karabakh dispute between Armenia –Azerbaijan was far from being real and the US-Iranian relations were tense, Georgia appeared as the strategically important country for the transportation of the Azerbaijani oil through Turkey.¹²⁹⁶ In this framework, relations between Turkey and Georgia started to become vitally important since the mid 1990's. Karagiannis explains this situation as: "It is surprising; therefore that the Turkish government has so far showed no willingness to

¹²⁹⁴ Baran, *Op.cit*, p. 108.

¹²⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, p.108.

¹²⁹⁶ Karagiannis, *Op.cit*,p. p. 21.

interfere in Georgia's domestic affairs and it has consistently expressed its support for the country's territorial integrity.”¹²⁹⁷

Furthermore, it was a questionable development that after a few days from Georgia's declaration of support to the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan Pipeline, on 9 February 1998, Shevardnadze experienced a second assassination attempt.¹²⁹⁸ Shevardnadze, furthermore, declared that there were outside powers against the passage of pipelines through its country.¹²⁹⁹ This project would give an important opportunity to Georgia in order to strengthen its independence and get out of Russian influence. Furthermore, transit revenues would be important financial resources to overcome the economic difficulties and also to provide national unity and diffuse the ethnic problems in the country.¹³⁰⁰ Being aware of this potential, Georgia was very eager for this project. Nevertheless, there was always the risk for Russia to manipulate the region for instability. On the other hand, it was expected that once it had been constructed successfully, Georgia would be much less vulnerable to Russian influence.¹³⁰¹

Within this conjuncture, the second step for the project was taken in the 1999 OECD Summit in November 1999 where the agreement for the construction of the BTC Pipeline was signed.¹³⁰² Though the Russian Federation opposed the BTC pipeline, on 18 November 2002, the construction started thanks to the energy policies of the US and Turkey.¹³⁰³ Furthermore, importance given to the BTC pipeline project by

¹²⁹⁷ Karagiannis, *Op.cit*, p. 21.

¹²⁹⁸ *New York Times*, 22 October 1998, cited in, Okan Mert, *Op.cit*, p. 284.

¹²⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

¹³⁰⁰ Karagiannis, *Op.cit*, p. 21.

¹³⁰¹ *Ibid.*, p.21.

¹³⁰² İlhan Uzgel, “ABD ve NATO ile İlişkiler”, Baskın Oran (Ed.), *Op.cit*, p. 281.

¹³⁰³ Richard Allen Greene, “Work Begins on Oil Pipeline Bypassing Russia and Iran”, *New York Times*, September 19, 2002., cited in., Oktay.F. Tanrisever,, “Turkey and Russia in Eurasia”, Lenore G.

Georgia was emphasized by Shevardnadze at the BTC pipeline opening ceremony. It was stated as:

At BTC's inaugural ceremony, Georgian President Eduard Shevardnadze credited the United States as the "world leader" and Turkey as "regional leader" for promoting the East-West energy corridor, of which this oil pipeline and the planned, twin gas pipeline are centerpieces. Mr. Shevardnadze described these projects as vital to "integrating Georgia and Azerbaijan into the Euro-Atlantic space" -- a vision that Mr. Ivanov was publicly opposing that same day.¹³⁰⁴

Furthermore, By Shevardnadze, it was also stressed that, through the Baku Tblisi Ceyhan Pipeline, Georgia "will gain an absolutely new geopolitical function and strengthen its independence"¹³⁰⁵.

Following that, the Rose Revolution in Georgia and Saakashvili coming to power combined with the instabilities and chaos in the country caused related countries to get anxious about the attitude of the current government towards the Baku-Tblisi-Ceyhan project and thus about the future of the project.¹³⁰⁶ Soon, the new government in Georgia announced that they were aware of the importance of the project and they would continue to give their full support to the project.¹³⁰⁷ It was on 25 May 2005 that the first oil was pumped from Baku.¹³⁰⁸

The Baku-Tblisi-Ceyhan Pipeline project was an important success for Turkey in terms of showing regional cooperation and contribute to the integration of the partner

Martin, Dimitris, Koridis (eds), *The Future of Turkish Foreign Policy*, London: The MITPRESS, 2004.,p.153.

¹³⁰⁴ Vladimir Socor, "You can't call this a pipeline a pipedream now", 27 September 2002, <http://www.iasps.org/strategic/socor5.htm>

¹³⁰⁵ "Construction of the Baku-Tblisi-Ceyhan Pipeline in Georgia to Start Tomorrow", 22 May 2003, <http://english.pravda.ru/news/world/22-05-2003/49882-0/>

¹³⁰⁶ Mete Taşkın, *Op.cit*, p.114.

¹³⁰⁷ Cumhuriyet, 26 Kasım 2003., cited in Mete Taşkın, *Op.cit*,p.114.

¹³⁰⁸ Sina Kısacık, "Alternatif Petrol ve Doğalgaz Boru Hatları Çerçeveinde Türk-Amerikan İlişkileri", *BİLGESAM*, 23 Ağustos 2010, http://www.bilgesam.org/tr/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=786:alternatif-petrol-ve-doalgaz-boru-hatlar-cercevesinde-tuerk-amerikan-likileri&catid=131:enerji&Itemid=146

countries in the project with the West. In general, this project was important to ensure regional countries to transport their natural resources to the world market without being under the domination and control of Russia. Further, it was important within the context of contributing to the economic independence of the countries in the region and their financial well being. More specifically, for Turkey as well as consolidating the energy diversification and thus energy supply security, this project would directly help Turkey to become a major energy transit country for the energy consumers in Europe. For Georgia, on the other hand, this project meant strategic benefits and gains as well as economic ones. As well as being an opportunity to create additional important economic resources, Georgia showed that it was no more under the domination of Russia and instead was closer to the West, the U.S, Turkey and NATO.

Considering all, through the Baku-Tiblisi Ceyhan pipeline project, Turkey would decrease its dependence to the oil in the Middle Eastern region, and increase its influence in the Caucasus region. Turkey as well as getting economic benefits from this projects, will serve as an energy corridor between Europe and Caucasus and Central Asia. Emmanuel Karagiannis argues that: “Cooperation in the field of oil transportation has been the driving force behind the Georgian-Turkish partnership, leading in turn to a remarkable improvement in the security sphere.”¹³⁰⁹

To sum up all, it is clear and simply understood that the Baku Tiblisi Ceyhan pipeline project has been a cornerstone in the development and deepening of the Turkey-Georgian relations. As well as bringing great strategic opportunities and economic benefits to the participant countries, through this project, to ensure energy security became an important motivation of Turkey’s policy towards Georgia. However, recent developments in the Baku- Tiblisi-Ceyhan pipeline project caused questions to emerge about the strategic role of the project. During Medvedev’s visit to Turkey on 11 May 2010, among several agreements and protocols signed between

¹³⁰⁹ Karagiannis, *Op.cit*, p. 14.

Turkey and Russia, it was indicated by Necdet Pamir that, Turkey and Russia agreed on the construction of a refinery in Ceyhan by a Russian company.¹³¹⁰ Thus, in the light of all, the Baku-Tiblisi-Ceyhan pipeline, seems to have turned from a project that challenges Russia's energy monopoly to a project that reinforced more Turkey's energy dependency to Russia.

8.2.2 The Baku-Tiblisi-Erzurum Natural Gas project (Sahdeniz Project)

The transportation of natural gas in the Sahdeniz region in Azerbaijan which has the potential to meet a great extent of the need of natural gas Turkey needs is another strategically and economically important project. Through this project, the natural gas in the Sahdeniz region of Azerbaijan was planned to be transported to Turkey through Georgia and since 2007 it is in operation.

As you may see in the graphic below, between 1987 and 2007 Turkey's natural gas import increased much. While in 1987 the amount was 433 million cm³, in 2008 the amount became 37.793 million cm³.

¹³¹⁰ Necdet Pamir, "Rusya ile Anlaşma: 'Dostlar 'Alış VERİŞ' te Görsün'", 24 May 2010, http://www.enerjienergy.com/artikel.php?artikel_id=124

Table 13. Turkey's import amount of natural gas by 1987- 2011

Year	Ammount (million cm3)
1987	433,00
1988	1.136,00
1989	2.986,00
1990	3.246,00
1991	4.031,00
1992	4.430,00
1993	4.952,00
1994	5.375,00
1995	6.858,00
1996	8.040,00
1997	9.874,00
1998	10.233,00
1999	12.358,00
2000	14.822,00
2001	16.368,00
2002	17.624,00
2003	21.188,00
2004	22.174,00
2005	27.028,00
2006	30.741,00
2007	36.450,00
2008	37.793,00
2009	33.619,00
2010	32.466,00
2011 (*) It is the ammounts by september 2011.	27.900,00

Source: BOTAS- Natural Gas Transpotations by Years¹³¹¹

¹³¹¹ "Trade Figures", <http://www.botas.gov.tr/index.asp>

Considering Turkey's high amount of natural gas import and strong dependency to the Russian Federation, this project emerges as an important project developed independent from the Russian Federation in the region.

As a result of the negotiations in 2000, on 12 March 2001 Turkey and Azerbaijan signed the “Agreement between Governments” and at the same date, the Natural Gas Sales Agreement between BOTAS and SOCAR the responsible companies in both countries was signed.¹³¹² According to the agreement, the construction of the pipeline within the borders of Turkey belongs to BOTAS and the construction of the pipeline till the Turkey-Georgian border from Azerbaijan would belong to SOCAR.¹³¹³ Furthermore, the natural gas was planned to get connected to Erzurum-Horosan with an additional 225 km pipeline to the East Anatolia Pipeline.¹³¹⁴ According to the agreement, Turkey would buy 6,6 billion m³ per year for a period of 15 years.¹³¹⁵ The first natural gas was given on 13 March 2007.¹³¹⁶ As of December 2007, Turkey bought 1,279 billion m³ natural gas through BTE natural gas pipeline from Azerbaijan.¹³¹⁷ Furthermore in 2008, the amount of natural gas production was expected to reach 8 billion m³ and in 2020 it is expected to reach 20-22 billion m³.¹³¹⁸

¹³¹² Zafer Ateş, “Doğu Batı Enerji Kordoru 2 Tamam 1 Eksik”, http://www.mfa.gov.tr/dogu-bati-enerji-koridoru_-2-tamam-1-eksik.tr.mfa

¹³¹³ *Ibid.*

¹³¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹³¹⁵ Doğal Gaz Alım Anlaşmaları, <http://www.botas.gov.tr/index.asp>

¹³¹⁶ Meliha Öner, Orhan Ahmedov, “Türkiye Azerbaycan Petrol-Doğalgaz Boru Hattı projelerinin Ülke Ekonomileri ve Avrupa Birliği Açısından Önemi”, *Araştırma Makaleleri, 2. Ulusal İktisat Kongresi*, Dokuz Eylül Üniversitesi, İzmir, 20-22 Şubat 2008, p.126. <http://girisim.comu.edu.tr/dergiall/eskisyilr/2in2/ener.pdf>

¹³¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹³¹⁸ *Ibid.*

An important development related with Baku-Tiblisi-Erzurum natural gas pipeline was stated by Wojciech Konofczuk as:

In October 2006, Gazprom announced that from 1 January 2007 it was planning to increase its gas prices for Georgia to US\$230/1000m³. In response the Georgian authorities, which believed that the decision was politically motivated, started negotiations with Ankara about the possibility of buying the Turkish part of the gas transported by the BTE pipeline. In December 2006, Tbilisi managed to persuade Ankara to sell off 0.8 billion cubic meters of gas, which enabled Georgia to prevent a looming energy crisis.¹³¹⁹

To sum up all, as well as the economic importance of the Baku-Tiblisi-Erzurum natural gas pipeline, it carried strategic importance for the energy security of Turkey and Georgia as an independent project from the Russian Federation which enabled both country to reduce their dependence on Russian energy supplies.

8.2.3 The Project of Europe-Caucasus-Asia Transportation Corridor (TRACECA)

This project as “The New Silk Road”¹³²⁰ project was an initiative of the EU and came out as the outcome of EU’s increasing strategic interest to Central Asia and Caucasus region. Thus, the European Union aimed to connect these regions with rich resources to Europe through a transportation corridor.¹³²¹ In this respect, the Transport Corridor Europe-Caucasus-Asia (TRACECA) is an international programme which aims to strengthen economic relations, trade and transport communication between Europe and Asia, across the Black Sea, the countries of the South Caucasus, the Caspian Sea and the Central Asian countries.¹³²²

¹³¹⁹ V. Novikov, D. Butrin, Mikhail Saakashvili dobyl gaz w Turcii, Kommersant , 21 December 2006., cited in., Wojciech Konofczuk, *Op.cit*, p.36.

¹³²⁰ Murat Erdal, Yeni İpek Yolu: Avrupa Kafkasya Asya Taşıma Koridoru (Traceca) projesi, p.1. <http://www.meslekiyeterlilik.com/lojistik/18 TRACECA%20Projesi.pdf>

¹³²¹ “Demirden İpek Yolu: TRACECA Projesi”, <http://www.siyasaliletisim.org/index.php/news/hot-topic/187-demrden-pek-yolu-traceca-projes.html>

¹³²² “International transport agreements: TRACECA, SEETO and NDPTL”, http://europa.eu/legislation_summaries/transport/international_dimension_enlargement/tr0055_en.htm

The first initiative of this project took place in May 1993 in Brussel when the EU brought together the three states in the Caucasus region and the five Central Asian countries.¹³²³ In 1998, the multilateral Fundamental Agreement was signed in Azerbaijan in the TRACECA Summit- Restoration of Historical Silk Road and in 2000, in Georgia, the Intergovernmental Committee was established.¹³²⁴ While, in 1996, Mongolia and Ukraine participated to the project, in 1998 Moldova and in March 2000, during the first annual meeting of the project, Bulgaria, Romania and Turkey participated to project.¹³²⁵

After Turkey's participation to the project, the map of TRACECA was re-designed to include Turkey, also. With the participation of Turkey to TRACECA, it was expected that bilateral relations would improve, problems in transit passages would be solved and relations with third countries would improve.¹³²⁶

Turkey plays an important central role in the project by providing alternatives for the transport of Europe to the Caucasus and Central Asia. Within this context, the Baku-Tbilisi-Kars railway project carries a great importance. Turkey which is placed on the international transport and energy corridors will become an important logistic base provided that it adapts and re-structure its logistic and transport structure

¹³²³ Teimuraz Gorshkov;George Bagaturia, "TRACECA: Restoration of Silk Route", Japan Railway&Transport Review, September 2001, p.52.
http://www.jrtr.net/jrtr28/pdf/f50_gor.pdf

¹³²⁴ Süleyman Şensoy, "Demirden İpek Yolu: TRACECA Projesi",
<http://www.siyasaliletisim.org/index.php/news/hot-topic/187-demrden-pek-yolu-traceca-projes.html>

¹³²⁵ Murat Erdal, "TRACECA Projesi ve Türkiye'nin Vizyonu", *Dünya Gazetesi*, Persembe Rotası Deniz Ticareti ve Lojistik Gazetesi, Sayı:7446, 11 Kasım 2004, p.2., cited in Murat Erdal, Yeni İpek Yolu: Avrupa Kafkasya Asya Taşıma Koridoru (Traceca) projesi, p.3.
<http://www.meslekiyeterlilik.com/lojistik/18 TRACECA%20Projesi.pdf>

¹³²⁶ Prof. Dr. Erdinç Tutar, Yrd. Doç.Dr. Filiz Tutar, Mehmet Vahit Eren, "Uluslararası Ulaşım Koridorunda Yeni Bir Açılım: Traceca Projesi ve Türkiye", Mevzuat Dergisi, Yıl.12, Sayı.139, Temmuz 2009,
<http://www.mevzuatdergisi.com/2009/07a/01.htm>

according to its strategic international location.¹³²⁷ Also, Turkey helps to the development of the Caucasus and Central Asian states with this project. It is expected that with this project, the Caucasus and Central Asian states which do not have access to the sea, will have the opportunity to integrate to the world markets, the regional economic development and growth will increase and economic and political sovereignty of these states would strengthen.¹³²⁸

Considering all, with Turkey playing an active role in this project, it is believed that great contribution to the peace and stability in the region will be provided. Turkey will play a key role in connecting the Caucasus and Central Asian countries to the ports in Mediterranean and Black Sea and European and world markets. Furthermore, Turkey will have a strategic role for the secure transport of energy resources to the consumer countries.

Regarding all, agreement on the construction of the Baku-Tbilisi-Kars railway which was assumed to provide the connection between Europe and Asia and constituted part of the TRACECA project, was signed between Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, Georgian President Mikhail Saakashvili and President of Azerbaijan İlham Aliyev in February 2007 in Tbilisi.¹³²⁹ During the signing of the agreement Sakashvili defined the Baku-Tbilisi-Kars railway as a “geopolitical revolution”.¹³³⁰

¹³²⁷ *Ibid.*

¹³²⁸ *Ibid.*

¹³²⁹ Süleyman Şensoy, “Demirden İpek Yolu: TRACECA Projesi”, <http://www.siyasaliletisim.org/index.php/news/hot-topic/187-demirden-pek-yolu-traceca-projes.html>

¹³³⁰ Akhalzashvili, Malkhaz, “Turkey Announces Start Date for Baku-Tbilisi-Kars Railroad Construction”, Georgian Daily Independent Voice, July 09, 2008, Economy section., cited in, Samuel Lussac, “The Baku-Tbilisi-Kars Railroad and its geopolitical implications for the South Caucasus”, *Caucasian Review of International Affairs*, Vol.2, No.4, Autumn 2008, p.213.

After signing the tripartite agreement, in November 2007, the construction of the railroad started in Georgian part and in July 2008, it started in Turkish part.¹³³¹

An important issue concerning the construction of the railroad was its finance. While the project was estimated to be finished in 2011 and expected to cost about 600 million dollar, how it would be financed constituted a problem in the beginning. While the US was eager to support the project, later on with the influence and pressure of the Armenian diaspora in the US Congress, through the “South Caucasian and Open Railroads Act”¹³³² introduced to the Congress and voted, the US prohibited to finance the BTC railroad.¹³³³ Nevertheless, Turkey-Georgia and Azerbaijan continued to the project and decided that they would finance the project by themselves.¹³³⁴ Currently, though the project is not fully completed yet, it is stated that %99 of the project has been completed and the Baku-Tiblisi-Kars Railroad would be operational in 2013.¹³³⁵

The Baku-Tiblisi-Kars railroad as well as having great economic importance for the partner countries, carried strategic importance as well. For Georgia, it is stated that “the BTK railroad is a huge necessity to access Europe more or less

¹³³¹ Samuel Lussac, “The Baku-Tiblisi-Kars Railroad and its geopolitical implications for the South Caucasus”, *Caucasian Review of International Affairs*, Vol.2, No.4, Autumn 2008, p.213.

¹³³² Ziyadov, Taleh, “Officials Meet to Discuss South Caucasus Rail System”, in: Eurasia Daily Monitor, vol. 2:232, December 14, 2005, The Jamestown Foundation, (http://www.jamestown.org/edm/article.php?article_id=2370599), cited in, Samuel Lussac, “The Baku-Tiblisi-Kars Railroad and its geopolitical implications for the South Caucasus”, *Caucasian Review of International Affairs*, Vol.2, No.4, Autumn 2008, p.216.

¹³³³ Samuel Lussac, “The Baku-Tiblisi-Kars Railroad and its geopolitical implications for the South Caucasus”, *Caucasian Review of International Affairs*, Vol.2, No.4, Autumn 2008, p.216.

¹³³⁴ Süleyman Şensoy, “Demirden İpek Yolu: TRACECA Projesi”, <http://www.siyasaliletisim.org/index.php/news/hot-topic/187-demirden-pek-yolu-traceca-projes.html>

¹³³⁵ “Kars- Bakü-Tiflis Demiryolu Projesinin %99’u Bitti”, 11 January 2013, <http://www.dunya.com/kars-baku-tiflis-demiryolu-projesinin-yuzde-99u-bitti-177863h.htm>; “Bakü-Tiflis-Kars Demiryolu 2013’tे açılıyor”, 10 July 2012, <http://www.demiryolu.net/haber-235-Baku-Tiflis-Kars-demiryolu-2013-de-aciliyor.html>.

independently”¹³³⁶. In fact, since “the only railroad that exists going from Tbilisi to Europe crosses Abkhazia and then Russia”¹³³⁷, considering the post-August 2008 war and recognition of Abkhazia’s independence by Russia, the BTK railroad represents the only rail link between Europe and Georgia.¹³³⁸ For Turkey, on the other hand, it was stated that: “The BTK railroad constitutes a new step in the definition of the country as a hub between Europe and Asia. Turkey also seeks to gain access more easily to Central Asia, in order to increase the Turkish balance of trade.”¹³³⁹

Considering all, though the BTK railroad referred to a regionalization between the Georgia, Azerbaijan and Turkey, this regionalization was mostly based on the opportunistic interests of the countries.¹³⁴⁰ Nevertheless, it was argued that: “in spite of this opportunistic behaviour, AGT states know that the only way to achieve their goals passes through the deepening of the AGT regionalization.”¹³⁴¹ Furthermore, it was stated that:

Despite the recent political developments in the South Caucasus and despite the particularity of the AGT regionalization, the BTK is highly contributing to the development of an informally integrated AGT region. It also increases the independence of this region vis-à-vis both Iran and Russia.¹³⁴²

¹³³⁶ Samuel Lussac, “The Baku-Tbilisi-Kars Railroad and its geopolitical implications for the South Caucasus”, *Caucasian Review of International Affairs*, Vol.2, No.4, Autumn 2008, p.221.

¹³³⁷ Ibrahimov, Rovshan, “Baku-Tbilisi-Kars: Geopolitical Effect on the South Caucasian Region”, Journal of Turkish Weekly, November 23, 2007, Opinion section (<http://www.turkishweekly.net/comments.php?id=2763>), cited in Samuel Lussac, *Op.cit*, p. 221.

¹³³⁸ Samuel Lussac, *Op.cit*, p. 221.

¹³³⁹ *Ibid.*

¹³⁴⁰ Interviews with Azerbaijani, Georgian and Turkish officials in Tbilisi in March 2008 and in Baku in June 2008., cited in, Samuel Lussac, *Op.cit*, p.220.

¹³⁴¹ Interview with officials from the Georgian Oil and Gas Corporation (GOGC) in Tbilisi in March 2008 and from TPAO in Baku in June 2008., cited in Samuel Lussac, *Op.cit*, p.221.

¹³⁴² Samuel Lussac, *Op.cit*, p.221.

8.2.4 Bilateral Trade Relations

The trade volume between Turkey and Georgia since the mid 1990's till 2003 showed an increasing trade. The basis of trade relations between the two countries was formed with agreements and protocols signed during the beginning of the 1990's. Based on these agreements, the main purpose of Turkey was to increase the trade relations with its neighbour Georgia but more important than all was to promote and contribute to the economic integration of Georgia to the world economic market. Nevertheless, an important point in trade relations was that, unlike the level reached in military and political relations, the level in trade relations was not that much satisfactory due to the economic and political instability in Georgia. Dicle Kopuz- the Ambassador of Turkey in Georgia- explained this situation in his address during a symposium on 23-26 October 2002:

I would like to inform you that Turkey pays special attention to its bilateral relations with Georgia. Turkey wish to see a Georgia that reinforces its political and economic sovereignty in its eastern part solves all its border problems with its neighbours and which is integrated with the West. Turkey always actively helps Georgia in these issues..... We believe that Georgia will strengthen its economic ties with its neighbours and will reach its aim of being integrated to the West. Efforts of Georgia are satisfactory. It is time for international organisations to help and direct Georgia. It is well known that, political, social and military relations between Turkey and Georgia reached to a satisfactory level. Whereas, there are still many things to do for strengthening economic relations.¹³⁴³

¹³⁴³ “İkinci Teknoloji ve Proje Finans Sempozyumu”, *Türk Dünyası Bülteni*, No:3, October 2002, p.5., cited in Mete Taşkin, “ Bağımsızlıktan sonra Türkiye-Gürcistan İlişkileri”, *Yüksek Lisans Tezi*, Dokuz Eylül Üniversitesi, İzmir, 2006, p.108.

**Table 14. Turkey-Georgian Foreign Trade Amounts between 1996–2003
(Million Dollar)**

	Export	Import	Volume	Balance
1996	110	32	142	78
1997	174	66	240	108
1998	164	91	255	73
1999	114	93	207	21
2000	132	155	287	-23
2001	144	127	270	17
2002	103	138	241	-36
2003	155	274	429	-119

Source: Turkey-Georgian Foreign Trade between 1996–2003 ¹³⁴⁴

As it is seen in the table, the export of Turkey to Georgia during 1996 and 1997 increased. The 1998 economic crisis negatively affected the export of Turkey and it decreased to 164 million dollar. This decrease continued in 1999. In 2000 the export rate increased but the balance in the trade relation between Turkey and Georgia was for the first time against Turkey. In 2001, the export level increased again the balance in trade relations again turned on behalf of Turkey. Nevertheless, in 2002 the export level decreased again and the balance changed again against Turkey. In 2003, the export level increased again but the balance remained against Turkey. The main reason for that is the increase in the demand of iron-steel products that is imported from Georgia.

The main export products of Turkey to Georgia are textile, food, cleaning materials, paper and carton paper. Turkey, on the other hand, imports iron-steel, mineral fuels, and metal substances. Almost all the iron alloys and waster metals including iron are

¹³⁴⁴ Import &Export Ammounts by countries, *Turkish Statistical Institute*, http://www.tuik.gov.tr/VeriBilgi.do?alt_id=12

being imported by Turkey. Considering all, Turkey is the first country Georgia makes its export and the second country it makes its imports.¹³⁴⁵ Nevertheless, for Turkey, by 2011, Georgia is the 41ST country in export and import.¹³⁴⁶

Beyond the import and export rates, an important component in trade relations is the Turkish investments in Georgia. By April 2009, it is assumed that there were about over 300 Turkish investors in Georgia either as a company or individual.¹³⁴⁷ Furthermore, while between 1997- 2009, the total amount of direct Turkish investments in Georgia was 636,4 million dollar, in 2010, it was about 92 million dollar and in the first nine months of 2011, it was about 68 million dollar.¹³⁴⁸ The major sectors of operation for Turkish firms are telecommunication and production. Furthermore, port operation, textile, water bottling and banking are the other sectors of Turkish firms.

In the telecommunication sector, Turkcell formed a partnership with Georgian firms in 1996 and formed Geocell Telecom. In 2001, Geocell bought the third biggest telecommunication firm in Georgia GT Mobile and currently, Geocell serves to %85 of the Georgian population and has agreements from 411 countries with 61 operators.¹³⁴⁹ In the production sector, Şişecam bought %76 of the Georgian factory Mina Ksani and in 1999 it bought it completely.¹³⁵⁰ After a strong innovation process, the factory started production with the capacity of 20.000 ton through a year and in 2002, the capacity of the factory was increased again and it reached to 50.000

¹³⁴⁵ Dış Ekonomik İlişkiler Kurulu, *Gürcistan Ülke Raporu*, September 2005, p.14.

¹³⁴⁶ Turkish Statistical Institute, cited in, Dış Ekonomik İlişkiler Kurulu, *Gürcistan Ülke Raporu*, 2012, p.11.

¹³⁴⁷ Dış Ekonomik İlişkiler Kurulu, *Gürcistan Ülke Raporu*, 2012, p.20.

¹³⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p.20.

¹³⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

¹³⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

tons through a year.¹³⁵¹ It was further argued that by 2002, the total amount of investment was about 20,8 million dollar.¹³⁵²

In the port operation sector, Delta petrol operating under Transteknik Holding established an oil storage facility in Poti Port. This company continues to establish its storage facility and transport networks and reinforces its trade activities with sea transportation under its control.¹³⁵³

In the transport sector, Tepe Akfen Ventures had the right of innovation and operation of the Tbilisi Airport. According to the agreement signed in 2005, TAV would make a 90,5 million dollar investment for the airport.¹³⁵⁴ TAV would also start to the construction of a new airport in Batum with Urban Construction with its own financial resources and in return to all, TAV would get the right of operation of the Tbilisi airport for 20 years.¹³⁵⁵ Agreement on the Common Usage of the Batum airport was signed on 14-15 March 2006 between Turkey and Georgia and on 25 May 2007 the opening ceremony of the Batum airport took place with the participation of then Foreign Minister of Turkey Abdullah Gül and Georgian President Saakashvili.¹³⁵⁶

¹³⁵¹ *Ibid.*

¹³⁵² “Şişecam Gürcistan’da”, *Aksam*, 8 Kasım 2002.
<http://arsiv.aksam.com.tr/arsiv/aksam/2002/11/08/ekonomi/ekonomiprn15.html>

¹³⁵³ Dış Ekonomik İlişkiler Kurulu, *Gürcistan Ülke Raporu*, 2012, p.20.

¹³⁵⁴ *Ibid.*,20.

¹³⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 20; “Tiflis Havaalanı için Çelebi yerine TAV”, *Hürriyet*, 7 Eylül 2005.
<http://webarsiv.hurriyet.com.tr/2005/09/07/698247.asp>

¹³⁵⁶ Dış Ekonomik İlişkiler Kurulu, *Gürcistan Ülke Raporu*, 2012, p.20.

Considering all, there are about 25 Turkish investments in Georgia each with over 1 million dollar capital.¹³⁵⁷ Furthermore, any increase in Turkish investments is related with the internal bureaucratic procedures in Georgia but more with the provision of stability in Georgia.

8.3 Turkey's Economic Relations with Georgia between 2003- 2009

After the Rose revolution, bilateral relations between Turkey and Georgia grew in a considerable degree. Large Turkish firms made investments in Georgia, furthermore, the Baku-Tiflis-Ceyhan pipeline and the Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum pipeline became operational and in addition to all, an agreement for the railway construction Kars to Tbilisi was concluded. The nature of Turkish-Georgian relations during this period had an asymmetric characteristic.¹³⁵⁸ While it is argued that Georgia was of little economic importance for Turkey, for Georgia Turkey is a key economic partner in the region along with Russia.¹³⁵⁹

During 2004 and 2005, though there is increase in the amount of Turkey's export to Georgia, it is observed that the trade deficit continued with a lesser deficit. In 2006, while the export amount increased, the trade deficit also turned on behalf of Turkey. In 2006, it was further argued that, Turkey overtook Russia as the main trading partner of Georgia, nevertheless, for Turkey, Georgia's share in its external trade amounted to % 1.¹³⁶⁰ Furthermore, as it may be seen from the table below, in 2008, the biggest amount of the export was realized in the period between January and August. In 2009, due to the August War, the export amount diminished to 766 million dollar compared with the amount of 997,844 million dollar in 2008.

¹³⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 20.

¹³⁵⁸ Wojciech Konofczuk, "A Caucasian Ally? Turkey-Georgian Relations", *CES Report*, p. 36.

¹³⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

¹³⁶⁰ *Ibid.*,

**Table 15. Turkey-Georgia Export-Import Amounts for 2004- 2009
(Thousand Dolar)**

Years	Export	Import	Balance	Volume
2004	199 699	306 669	-106 970	506 368
2005	271 828	302 902	-31 074	574 370
2006	407 962	344 813	63 149	752 775
2007	646 082	289 568	356 514	935 650
2008	997 844	525 041	472 803	1 522 885
2008 (January-August)	625 612	383 017	242 595	1 008 629
2009 (January-August)	496 540	206 508	290 032	703 048
2009	766	285	481	1051

**Source: Turkey-Georgia Export-Import Amounts for 2004- 2009
(Thousand Dolar)¹³⁶¹**

During this period, Turkey was also one of the biggest foreign investors in Georgia.¹³⁶² At the beginning of 2006, the Turkish investment in Georgia was amounted to 165 million Dolar in the fifth level with a share of %7.¹³⁶³ Especially after the Rose Revolution, Turkish companies became active participants in the privatisation programme of Georgia. Nevertheless, still Turkish entrepreneurs are cautious in making investments due to the lack of infrastructure, the undeveloped banking sector, corruption and insufficient legal protection.¹³⁶⁴

Considering all these, the August 2008 War had also major economic implications on Turkish-Georgian economic relations with a major focus on the energy aspect of the

¹³⁶¹T.R. Ministry of Economy, Ülkelere Göre Dış Ticaret,
<http://www.ekonomi.gov.tr/upload/AB3A4280-D8D3-8566-45206F45BBCC409C/eko06.xls>

¹³⁶² A. Atli, Turkey and Georgia: opening the roads for trade, EurasiaNet.org, 8 April 2006., cited in Wojciech Konofczuk, "A Caucasian Ally? Turkey-Georgian Relations", *CES Report*, p.37.

¹³⁶³ *Ibid.*

¹³⁶⁴ Konofczuk, *op.cit.*, p.37.

relations. Furthermore, it becomes obvious that the secure and proper functioning of the economic relations between Turkey and Georgia depends heavily on the stability in Georgia and in the region. Mamuka Tsereteli considering the impact of the August War on the transportation corridor in the region argues that, the initial damage that the war inflicted upon the political reliability of the transit corridor is gradually diminishing and that new opportunities are emerging.¹³⁶⁵ It was argued that:

It is important to remember that when the initial decision to revitalize the energy corridor through Georgia and Azerbaijan was made in the mid 1990s, the security environment was extremely difficult and there was no infrastructure to support shipment of oil through the corridor, yet leadership of the United States and Turkey supported that decision and helped to implement it. Today's environment is much more favorable considering the functioning infrastructure and greater demand for Caspian energy.¹³⁶⁶

Considering all, even if the damage of the war can be reversed completely, this strongly depends on the security and stability in the region which are determined by the policies of Russia, the U.S, Turkey and Georgia itself and also by other regional countries. Thus, without a proper functioning stable security system in the region, the level and volume of economic relations will always be subject to the changes in the region and this will strongly and directly effect trade or energy relations with Georgia.

8.4 Turkey's Economic Relations with Georgia between 2009- 2012

After the August 2008 War, how economic relations between Turkey and Georgia would be affected was a matter of question. The decreasing stability in the region and specifically in Georgia would have negative outcomes for Turkey's economic relations with its neighbour country. Considering both bilateral trade and economic relations and energy projects both states are included, how much the negative outcomes of the August 2008 War have been brought down will be discussed.

¹³⁶⁵ Mamuka Tsereteli, "The Impact of the Russian-Georgian War on the South Caucasus the Transportation Corridor", 13 March, 2009.

<http://georgia2008.net/2009/03/13/the-impact-of-the-russia-georgia-war-on-the-south-caucasus-transportation-corridor/>

¹³⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

8.4.1 Turkey's Bilateral Trade Relations with Georgia

Considering bilateral trade relations with Georgia after the August 2008 War, the negative outcomes of the war may be directly seen in the export and import rates of the following year.

**Table 16. Turkey-Georgia Export-Import Amounts for 2008-2011
(Million Dolar)**

Years	Export	Import
2008	998	525
2009	766	285
2010	769	291
2011	1.092	314

Source: Ülkelere göre Dış Ticaret¹³⁶⁷

As it is seen above, following the August 2008 War, in 2009, the export amount to Georgia decreases from 998 Million Dolar to 766 Million Dolar. On the other hand, the import amount also decreased from 525 Million Dolar to 285 Million Dolar. Furthermore, during 2010, it is also seen that the decreased situation continued. During 2010, the export amount to Georgia was 769 Million Dolar and this amount was just 3 Million Dolar more than it was in 2009. During 2010, the import amount from Georgia was 291 Million Dolar and this was just 6 Million Dolar more than it was in 2009. As you may see in the table below, in 2011 the export and import relations with Georgia seemed to be normalized by reaching to an amount of 1.092 Million dollar in export and 314 Million Dolar in import.

¹³⁶⁷ “Ülkelere Göre Dış Ticaret”, T.C Ekonomi Bakanlığı,
<http://www.ekonomi.gov.tr/index.cfm?sayfa=7155BE01-D8D3-8566-45208351967592CF>

Considering the fact that, the instable and unsecure situation in Georgia negatively affected the trade and economic relations of Turkey, concerning the era after 2008 August War, it is argued that Turkey and Georgia are trying to strengthen their economic ties.¹³⁶⁸

8.4.2 Cooperation in Energy Projects

After the August 2008 War, it was expected that cooperation between Turkey and Georgia in energy projects may be negatively effected. Nevertheless, energy cooperation between Turkey and Georgia continued in energy projects such as NABUCCO energy project as well as cooperation in the construction of hidroelectric power plants in Georgia.

In June 2009, Supporting Agreements of the NABUCCO project which envisages to transport the natural gas in Caspian Region and Middle East to Europe were signed.¹³⁶⁹ In the signing ceremony, Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan said that through the agreement, the Nabucco project turned into practice and added that when the project was completed and the natural gas transport started, the whole geography would increase to a different level in all aspects.¹³⁷⁰ Concerning energy security, Recep Tayyip Erdogan said that:

Our country stands as a natural bridge and transit point between source countries and consumer markets. In recent periods, we have completed great projects for the transportation energy resources in Caspian Base and Middle East to world markets. All projects completed and which still continue increased Turkey to a significant position in terms of energy security.¹³⁷¹

¹³⁶⁸ Joost Lajendijk, “Aklımdaki Gürcistan”, 15 May 2011,
<http://www.zaman.com.tr/yazar.do?yazino=1134527>

¹³⁶⁹ “Nabucco’da Proje Destek Anlaşması İmzalandı”, 8 June 2011,
<http://ekonomi.haberturk.com/makro-ekonomi/haber/638115-nabuccoda-proje-destek-anlasmasi-imzalandi>

¹³⁷⁰ “Nabucco Doğalgaz Hattı projesi İmzalandı”, 21.07.2009,
<http://www.chveneburi.net/tr/default.asp?bpgid=1857&pg=1>

¹³⁷¹ *Ibid.*

Recep Tayyip Erdoğan also indicated that the Nabucco Project should not be perceived just as an energy project and said that:

This project will not contribute only to the rapprochement of our countries to each other and to the prosperity in our countries but will prepare a strong ground for the whole region to reach peace, prosperity and stability. Some people continue to call the Nabucco project as a dream. We should not forget that in the past the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan Pipeline was also named as a dream. However, currently the pipeline as well as operating with success, works for increasing the capacity of the pipeline are being held. I believe that the Nabucco project will disappoint these negative comments and as a success story will be presented to the service of our country in the planned time.¹³⁷²

President of Georgia Saakashvili indicated that the Nabucco project was not just an energy project but was an agreement for the improvement of cooperation and thanked Turkey for its efforts.¹³⁷³ Furthermore, Saakashvili added that currently energy was seen as a significant mean of development, diversity of resources was important and so that the Nabucco project was also important and unique.¹³⁷⁴

As well as calling the Nabucco project as a great and unique project, there were some challenges for the realization of the project. Foreign Minister of Energy and Natural Resources in Turkey Taner Yıldız said that opportunities and challenges of great projects never end.¹³⁷⁵ One of the major challenges of the project was to find the required natural gas for its operation. Russia, on the other hand, intensified its attempts in order to stop the Nabucco project which it defined as imaginary and non-economical.¹³⁷⁶ As well as making natural gas agreements with Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan, Russia also made bilateral agreements with European

¹³⁷² *Ibid.*

¹³⁷³ *Ibid.*

¹³⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

¹³⁷⁵ “Nabucco’da Proje Destek Anlaşması İmzalandı”, 8 June 2011,
<http://ekonomi.haberturk.com/makro-ekonomi/haber/638115-nabuccoda-proje-destek-anlasmasi-imzalandi>

¹³⁷⁶ Fehmi Gürdallı, “NABUCCO Projesi Nedir? Ne Değildir”, 13 July 2009,
<http://www.ntvmsnbc.com/id/24983042/>

countries in order to prevent them to form and conduct a common energy policy.¹³⁷⁷ Vladimir Putin argued that it is not possible to find the necessary natural gas for the Nabucco project and added that: “If some people want to dig the soil and build pipelines, they may continue, it is not a problem for us”¹³⁷⁸

Considering all, the Nabucco project though seemed as a great step in energy cooperation that exclude Russia and try to balance the dependency to Russia in natural gas import, it well reflected the struggle between Russia and the U.S and Europe. Whether the Nabucco Project would be successful or Russia would be able to prevent it by promoting the South Stream Project as an alternative was a question during this period.. Furthermore, recent developments concerning the South Stream Project caused criticisms to emerge about the fate of the NABUCCO project. On 28 December 2011, Turkey gave a critically important permission to Russia for the South Stream Project line to pass under the Black Sea and through Turkey’s exclusive economic zone.¹³⁷⁹ After such a critical decision on Turkey’s side, it has been strongly argued by Necdet Pamir that the primary and original form of the NABUCCO project does not exist any more and instead there is a project called NABUCCO-West or NABUCCO junior.¹³⁸⁰ Further, Necdet Pamir indicated that, “the final project determined to transport the natural gas through Turkey has been TANAP. Through this project, while Turkey would get 6 billion m³ natural gas, 10 billion m³ natural gas would (for now) be transported to Europe. TANAP after exiting from Turkey will be connected to NABUCCO-West or Trans Adriatic Pipeline (TAP)”¹³⁸¹. Though, Turkey’s Minister of Energy and Natural Resources Taner Yıldız stated that, he did not agree with arguments that possibility of realizing

¹³⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

¹³⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

¹³⁷⁹ Necdet Pamir, “Güney Akım, Nabucco ve Kıyamet”, 18 December 2012, http://www.enerjienergy.com/artikel.php?artikel_id=411

¹³⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

¹³⁸¹ *Ibid.*

the Nabucco project was dissappeared, there was an opposite view that the NABUCCO project has no more chance to be realized against the South Stream Project.¹³⁸²

Another important energy cooperation between Turkey and Georgia has been about the construction of hidroelectric power plants in Georgia by Turkey. One of the recent agreements has been done between the Construction and Energy Company ATAC and Georgian Energy and Natural Resources Ministry on 26 October 2011.¹³⁸³ According to the Protocol signed between the sides, the construction of two hidroelectric power plants in the Guria region of Georgia was decided to start in May 2013 and finish in January 2016.¹³⁸⁴ Beyond the construction of these two hidroelectric power plants, another agreement between Turkey and Georgia was done for the construction of a hidroelectric power plant on the Kura river. Counselor of Georgia's Minister of Energy and Board Chairman of Karca Electricity A.Ş Hakan Şimşek said that this project would be an alternative for the security of energy supply.¹³⁸⁵ The cost of the project is argued to be about 600 Million Dolar and start to operate in 2013.¹³⁸⁶

A very recent development about the energy cooperation between Turkey and Georgia was the Turkey-Georgia Energy- Investment Arena Conference organized in Tibilisi on 20 January 2012 by the STEAM (Strategic Technic Economic Research Center).¹³⁸⁷ Minister of Energy and Natural Resources of Turkey Taner Yıldız

¹³⁸² *Ibid.*

¹³⁸³ “ATAÇ Gürcistan'a iki Hidroelektrik santrali kuruyor”, 27 Ekim 2011,
<http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/ekonomi/19101219.asp>

¹³⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

¹³⁸⁵ “Gürcistanla Enerjide Dev Ortaklığa İlk Adım”, 04.02.2012,
<http://www.eud.org.tr/TR/Genel/BelgeGoster.aspx?F6E10F8892433CFFA79D6F5E6C1B43FF828C9C863A6BC10B>

¹³⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

¹³⁸⁷ “Gürcistan-Türkiye Enerji ve Yatırım Arenası Konferansı”, 20.01.2012,

participated to this conference and drew attention to renewable energy resources and indicated that:

Within the framework with our cooperation with Georgia, there are the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline, Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum natural gas pipeline, Kars-Ahilkelek Railway and hydroelectric power plants. It is necessary to develop alternatives to natural gas and oil as much as possible. Georgia is tending towards renewable energy resources and it is making the true. We are also tending towards renewable energy resources. The world crisis causes climate changes and also distressed the precautions for the energy supply security. Works are not going well. In the world, for energy supply security 40 trillion dollar investment is planned till 2035. Economies are globalized and politics become nationalized. In this respect, two countries hand by hand go far away from risks.¹³⁸⁸

Furthermore, Taner Yıldız indicated that Turkey in the last 10 years have made 86 billion dollar investment to the energy sector and added that:

We will strengthen the growth investments and transmission lines of Turkey and Georgia. We will put this under signature today. The 220 kilowatt Batum-Hopa energy power line was transferring 75 megawatt energy power. The 400 kilowatt Borçka-Ahiska line will increase to 750 megawatt step by step. At the end of this year, it will be taken to operation. The Batum-Murat line will end in 2015. We will mutually strengthen and empower the energy supply security of both countries which change, grow and improve.¹³⁸⁹

Minister of Energy of Georgia, Alexander Khateguri in his speech at the conference indicated that:

During the conference, we will focus on electricity trade and issues of bilateral cooperation. Currently, with the Turkish side, we are building the high tension line. This line, will constitute a strong substructure for the electricity trade between the two countries. At present, there are many companies operating in the construction sector in Georgia. In the near future, we will also start to the construction of power station.¹³⁹⁰

First Deputy Minister of Energy and Natural Resources of Georgia Marian Valishvili in his speech at the conference said that Georgia was in an important position in terms of electricity resources and promoted the coming of Turkish businessmen to

<http://www.haber3.com/gurcistan-turkiye-enerji-ve-yatirim-arenasi-konferansi-1158871h.htm?interstitial=true&interstitial=true>

¹³⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

¹³⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

¹³⁹⁰ *Ibid.*

Georgia for investments.¹³⁹¹ Valishvili also argued that Georgia would help for the solution of the problems concerning investments.¹³⁹² Minister of Energy and Natural Resources of Turkey Taner Yıldız indicated that the trade volume between Turkey and Georgia reached to 1,5 billion dolar and that the development fo relations was important both for investors and trade and also energy sector which is a common denominator.¹³⁹³

Considering all, just after the August 2008 War, though there was a steady decrease in the export and import ammounts between Turkey and Georgia, in the following years, bilateral trade relations were normalized. Nevertheless, the August 2008 War once more showed that, instability and insecurity in the region had direct and negative implications on the well being of economic relations. Concerning energy cooperation, due to the fact that both Turkey and Georgia are transit countries in the region, both states have parallel interests concerning Russia's manipulation of energy supply. As well as energy projects on natural gas and oil transportation, energy cooperation on projects on renewable energy resources also gained importance between Turkey and Georgia. Thus, Turkey's economic relations with Georgia were based and conducted on a cooperative ground.

¹³⁹¹ *Ibid.*

¹³⁹² *Ibid.*

¹³⁹³ "Bakan Yıldız STEAM Tarafından Düzenlenen Türkiye-Gürcistan Enerji ve Yatırım Arenası Toplantısına Katıldı.", 20.02.2012,
<http://www.enerji.gov.tr/BysWEB/faces/genel/icerik/belgeveResminiGoster.jsp;jsessionid=c0a8010630d6b1abaab9bd234f42a2189d60c2647c33.e3mPbheTb3j0chiRaO0?file=218285>

CHAPTER IX

CONCLUSION

Throughout the thesis, the question of “Why does Turkey have significant tensions with Georgia over certain issues when both countries have deepened their cooperation and labelled it strategic partnership?” has been discussed. Against the view that Turkey’s cooperation with Georgia are based on strategic partnership or on exclusively cooperative behaviour, the main hypothesis of this thesis is that:

Turkey’s cooperation with Georgia rather than reflecting the characteristics of a strategic partnership around a common value, is more a pragmatic cooperation including both competing and overlapping interests and aiming to maintain the balance of power in the region. The main motivation behind Turkey’s relations with Georgia is Georgia’s geo-strategic role as a buffer state against the Russian Federation. This motivation carried the characteristics of both cooperation and conflict in Turkey’s relations with Georgia. For Georgia, Turkey has been an important country for its integration to Euro-Atlantic organisations and balance Russia’s domination in the region. Nevertheless, since the establishment of diplomatic relations, there have been several critical issues where Turkey’s and Georgia’s interests conflicted and challenged the strategic partnership discourse. Though Turkey’s relations with Georgia may be called as strategic cooperation, there are not unchangeable common interests between the two states but rather there exist differently interpreted interests by Turkey and Georgia which refers to the fact that interests may change by time and this may change the nature of their relations. Turkey’s relations with Georgia is not guided by liberal cooperation ideas but by security orientated political realist understanding. Thus, as two countries that have different foreign policy visions and orientations, indeed, Turkey and Georgia conduct their foreign policy according to their own national interests.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, emerged as a regional state, Turkey also had to redefine its role and policies in the South Caucasus region where during the Cold

War, it had almost no relation with. In such a framework, the beginning of Turkey's relations with Georgia in early 1990's and the evolution it has gone through till today, in fact, showed that, regional dynamics including ethnic and territorial conflicts as sources of instabilities, internal dynamics in Turkey such as the politicization of the Circassian diaspora, the Russian involvement and military presence in the region, US policy and involvement in the region and Georgia's approach towards it, increasing importance of the secure transfer of the Caspian energy resources, Georgia's and Turkey's different foreign and security policy objectives and domestic dynamics all caused indeed a fragile relation to emerge between Turkey and Georgia.

In the post-Soviet era, though the Soviet threat was over, for Turkey any Russian existence on its northern neighbourhood was a security threat. Though by time, Turkey's relations with Russia relations developed specifically in energy field, it was not possible to mention of a balanced relationship between Turkey and Russia. Turkey always carried the tendency and sensitivity of not annoying Russia in its policy in the region. Though Georgia's geostrategic location for the secure transfer of energy was important in order to balance Russia's monopoly in energy transfer, Bülent Aras argued that, Turkey was not strong enough to enter a regional rivalry against Russia.¹³⁹⁴ Thus, though Turkey and Georgia have cooperated in several fields, Turkey's relations with Georgia was primarily motivated by balancing Russia's influence and domination in the region. While Georgia also attempted to balance Russian influence in the region, Georgia's position, attitude and approach to Russia differed much than Turkey in context. Furthermore, Turkey's relations with the US concerning the Black Sea region constituted a conflictual area in Turkey's relations with Georgia which reflected their different security orientations. Turkey's and Georgia's conflicting approaches towards the US' attempt for NATO existence in the Black Sea was most concretely experienced when the US attempted to extend NATO's Operation Active Endeavor to the Black Sea and during the August 2008

¹³⁹⁴ Bülent Aras, "Turkey's Policy in the former Soviet South: Assets and Options", *Turkish Studies*, Vol.1, No.1, 2000, p. 52.

War when the US wanted to send large naval vessels to the Black Sea. Against Turkey's reservations, Georgia did support these US attempts.

This hypothesis is supported in several parts of the thesis. First of all, a theoretical discussion on the concept of cooperation was made between liberalism and political realism. In the light of the question "why do states conflict when they cooperate?", it was stated that political realism's perception and analysis of the term "cooperation", international system and state behavior makes cooperation strongly linked with conflict. The anarchical international system based on self help and uncertainty about states' policies towards each other, though has place for cooperation, is mostly motivated by the national interests of states. Political realists believe that international cooperation "is hard to achieve, difficult to maintain and dependent on state power"¹³⁹⁵. Further, the lack of trust between states combined with the lack of a common value makes cooperation between states fragile and open to change. Thus, unlike it is argued by liberals, it is most of the time impossible to guarantee a future perspective of cooperation among states through political realism due to the fact that there are not common values and institutions that collectively shape the behaviour of states.

Considering the term strategic partnership, both the liberal and political realist perspectives were outlined. From a real-politic perspective, strategic partnership was defined as "a contemporary spin on traditional *realpolitik*"¹³⁹⁶ and it was argued that "a strategic partnership may be window-dressing to justify bilateral alliances arising out of pragmatic necessity and the balance of power security dynamics of an-hoc world system".¹³⁹⁷ In the light of this definition, Turkey's strategic partnership with

¹³⁹⁵ Bladwin, D. (Ed.), *Neorealism and Neoliberalism: The Contemporary Debate* (NewYork: Columbia University Press, 1993., cited in., Steven L. Lamy, " Neo-Realism and Neo-Liberalism", John Baylis and Steve Smith (Eds.), *The Globalization of World Politics*, Oxford University Press, 2001, p.190.

¹³⁹⁶ Sean Kay, *Op.cit*, p.16.

¹³⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 16.

Georgia, more reflects the characteristics of an alliance emerged of pragmatic necessity and the balance of power dynamics of the anarchical international system.

In the fourth chapter, considering Turkey's relations with Russia, whether the historical animosity between Turkey and Russia have really been overcomed was discussed. In the light of this question, it is identified that for Turkey, Russia is a country that still constitutes a threat, nevertheless, this does not prevent the existence of cooperation between the two states. However, though the current level of relations between Turkey and Russia are named as "multidimentional partnership and mutifaceted cooperation"¹³⁹⁸, the general characteristics of relations between Turkey and Russia and existing problems proved that there is not a relation between equals but rather a dependency of Turkey to Russia in terms of energy supply which has direct implications on the political and security aspects of relations. Furthermore, the geopolitical reality in the region caused Turkey to act always in caution against Russia which was the latest tested with the August 2008 War, and this showed that Turkey's mistrust and feeling of threat though changed its form, did not dissappear at all. After the August War, though there has been a rapproachment in Turkey's security relations with Russia, Turkey always carried a concern of not annoying Russia in the region. Supporting the hypothesis of the thesis, Turkey's concern and perception of Russia differs much than Georgia's concern of Russia. While after the August 2008 War, Georgia's relations with Russia decreased to the lowest level, Turkey considers Russia as important actor in the region and manages her relations with Russia accordingly. This difference in both states' perceptions caused conflict of interest to emerge between Turkey and Georgia which was the latest experienced in the August 2008 War when the US attempted to send larga naval vessels to the Black Sea.

¹³⁹⁸ "Press Statements Following the Russian-Turkish Talks," 13 February 2009, www.kremlin.ru/eng/speeches/2009/02/13/2131_type82914type82915_212893.shtml, cited in., Richard Weitz, *Op.cit*, p. 64.

Considering Turkey's relations with the US, whether Turkey's relations with Georgia was in full harmony with the US' interests and how this reflected to Turkey's relations with Georgia were questioned. It is identified that, since the collapse of Soviet Union, there have been many ups and downs in Turkey's relations with the US. These ups and downs in some cases, resulted with crisis challenging the nature of relations as experienced in 2003 in the Iraq case and the August War in 2008. To say in other words, Turkey's security relations with the US experienced several litmus tests which had some negative impacts on the nature of relations. Though Turkey's relations with the US is defined as a strategic partnership, the practical reality and some key events showed that interests of both Turkey and the US have not always overlapped concerning Georgia. As experienced during the August 2008, War, while Turkey in its relations with the US concerning Georgia, always had to take Russia into consideration, the US did not usually carried such a sensitivity especially during the Bush Presidency due to the personal type of relations with Saakashvili. Concerning South Caucasus, Turkey in its security relations with the US, did not want to permit any direct confrontation between the US and Russia and preferred to prevent any direct US and NATO involvement in the region which could danger its relations with Russia. Nevertheless, with Obama coming to power, as well as a shift in the nature of Turkey's relations with US, the US policy towards Russia- in the light of the reset policy- also seemed to be more in line with Turkey's policy of considering Russia's sensitivities in the region. Supporting the hypothesis of the thesis, Turkey's and Georgia's expectation of the US role in the region differed much in context and this caused conflict of interests to emerge between Turkey and Georgia. While Turkey to some degree supported US presence in the region in order to balance Russia's influence in the region, Turkey did not support any direct US or NATO involvement in the Black Sea that would definitely cause confrontation between Russia and the US. Nevertheless, Georgia as it was experienced during the August 2008 War and concerning the extansion of NATO's Operation Active Endeavor to the Black Sea, prefered much the US existence and involvement in the region which it thought it would provide a security guarantee.

In the sixth chapter, Turkey's diplomatic relations with Georgia between 1991 and 1996 showed that, though the existence of some lack of trust between Turkey and Georgia, Turkey's official respect and support for the territorial integrity of Georgia was a good beginning in relations. Nevertheless, ethnic-territorial conflicts in Georgia, Turkey's unofficial policy emerged as a result of the activities of diaspora groups and organisations, Shevardnadze permitting Russian presence and military bases in the region were all factors that caused conflict of interests between Turkey and Georgia. The period between 1996 and 2003, on the other hand, was important in order to show both the conflicting and overlapping interests of Turkey and Georgia. During this period, Turkey's relations with Georgia was called as a strategic partnership and Georgia has become an important country for Turkey's security and regional security, as well. Furthermore, cooperation in the transportation of energy resources had a determining effect on the level and depth of relations. During this period, Turkey's changing policy towards the Abkhaz-Georgian conflict and how it got a more pro-Georgian stance compared with the early years of the relations were analysed. It is identified that, during this period, the rapprochement between Russia and Georgia reflected to Turkey's pro-Georgian stance in the Abkhaz-Georgia conflict. Regarding Turkey's policy towards the Ajaria issue also, Turkey regarding her defined interests in Georgia but more due to her concern of any Russian involvement, did not take the risk of having tension with Georgia and Russia. Considering the return of Ahiska Turks, on the other hand, it is stated that Turkey does not currently have an official policy towards the Ahiska Turks. Considering the strategic importance of energy in relations with Georgia and the geo-strategic importance of the Meskheti-Javakheti region since it is on the Baku-Tblisi-Ceyhan pipeline route, it is indicated that Ahiska Turks have not stood practically in the foreign policy agenda of Turkey.

For the period between 2003 and 2008, effects of the Rose Revolution on Turkey's relations with Georgia, some threatening and challenging implementations and sayings of Saakashvili, the August 2008 War and its implications on Turkey's relations with Georgia and the regional initiative of Turkey -the Platform of Cooperation and Stability in the Caucasus- were examined. Considering first, the

effects of the Rose Revolution, it is identified that Saakashvili coming power as a Western oriented leader though at the first sight could be perceived as a positive development for Georgia's integration to the Euro-Atlantic organisations, Saakashvili's declarations emphasising the territorial integrity of Georgia constituted indirect challenges for Turkey. Though Turkey also supported the territorial integrity of Georgia, Saakashvili's offensive attitude was a challenge to the balance of power and stability in the region. For Turkey, on the other hand, a stable and secure Georgia was more important than a Georgia in territorial integrity. Furthermore, during this period, some declarations and sayings of Saakashvili and implementations such as the Christianization of Turkey's neighbourhood, promotion of radical nationalist feelings in Georgian community in Turkey, arguments claiming Turkish territories from Kars ,Ardahan till Trabzon to be Georgian territories and so on, well showed the different visions of the states and that Turkey's relations with Georgia was not based on common values and interests but instead on differently interpreted interests.

The security dilemma between Russia, the US and Turkey which was definitely experienced during the August 2008 War, showed the main conflicting security interests of Turkey and Georgia. This conflicting security interests among Turkey,Russia versus the US and Georgia were most recently expressed during the August 2008 War. Turkey, based on the 1932 Montreux Convention, prevented the US from sending large naval ships to the Black Sea.¹³⁹⁹ According to the Montreux Convention Article 18(1), "a limit of 45,000 tons is imposed on the aggregate tonnage of warships belonging to non-Black Sea states that can be present in the Black Sea at any time. Out of that 45,000 ton limit, each individual non-Black Sea state is restricted to 30,000 tons"¹⁴⁰⁰. Furthermore, according to Article 18(2), "Vessels of war belonging to non-Black Sea Powers shall not remain in the Black

¹³⁹⁹ David Morrison, " Turkey Restricts US Access to the Black Sea", 18 October 2008, <http://www.david-morrison.org.uk/us/turkey-restricts-us-access.htm>

¹⁴⁰⁰ untreaty.un.org/unts/60001_120000/19/2/00036056.pdf, cited in., David Morrison, *Op.cit.*, <http://www.david-morrison.org.uk/us/turkey-restricts-us-access.htm>

Sea more than twenty-one days, whatever be the object of their presence there”¹⁴⁰¹. Turkey agreed to the passage of smaller cruisers and beginning on 22 August 2008, three US ships went through the Turkish Straits and on to Georgia with an aggregate tonnage of a little over the 30,000 ton limit allowed under the Convention for a single non-Black Sea State to have in the Black Sea at one time.¹⁴⁰² While Russia’s respond was harsh to the US military presence in the Black Sea, General Anatoli Nogovitsyn, deputy chief of the Russian General Staff, accused NATO of “ratcheting up tension” in the Black Sea.¹⁴⁰³ Dmitri Peskov, a spokesman for Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin, said: “It’s not a common practice to deliver humanitarian aid using battleships.”¹⁴⁰⁴

Evaluating all, it can be well argued that Turkey in the August 2008 War did not come down on Georgia’s side against Russia.¹⁴⁰⁵ While NATO condemned Russia’s actions in Georgia, Turkey did not condemn Russia’s actions in Georgia but merely expressed concern about events there.¹⁴⁰⁶ After the August 2008 War, Abdullah Gül Turkish President in *Guardian* stated that: “The conflict in Georgia, showed that the United States could no longer shape global politics on its own, and should begin sharing power with other countries.”¹⁴⁰⁷

The August War constituted a litmus test in Turkey’s relations with Georgia and showed that along with the stability and security in the region, Turkey’s interests in the region were vulnerable. The August 2008 War showed that in cases when Turkey’s interests are threatened and due to Turkey’s reservation from Russia,

¹⁴⁰¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁰² “Tension on the Rise in the Black Sea, Turkey Stuck in the Middle”, *Hürriyet*, 2008., <http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/english/home/9774236.asp>

¹⁴⁰³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁰⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁰⁵ David Morrison, *Op.cit.*

¹⁴⁰⁶ David Morrison, *Op.cit.*

¹⁴⁰⁷ www.guardian.co.uk/world/2008/aug/16/turkey.usforeignpolicy., cited in David Morrison, *Op.cit.*

Turkey did not accurately stand back Georgia. The August War, thus brought the conflict of interest between Turkey and Georgia to the surface. The fact that US was not included to Turkey's initiative of the Caucasus platform, showed that Turkey tried to prevent a direct US involvement in the region which could cause to the polarization of relations between the US and Russia. As it may be understood from the discourses on the August 2008 War, Turkey though tried to find a middle way, was closer to Russia in the light of the fact that it was an important partner for Turkey in the region. To sum up, Turkey has realized that Russia is potentially both a threat and a main partner in keeping the balance of power in the Caucasus.

After the August 2008 War, Turkey in its relations with Georgia faced with a different practical reality which reflected the divergence of interests. After Russia's recognition of Abkhazia as an independent state, how Turkey's policy towards Abkhazia would be shaped was a problematic. Due to increasing Russian (military) presence in the region and pressure of diaspora groups and organisations in Turkey, it becomes harder for Turkey to ignore the practical reality of Abkhazia. Turkey for now looks for official ways of communication with Abkhazia. Whether there will be concrete outcomes will depend on the level of compromise reached with Georgia. Nevertheless, considering Georgia's reaction, it can be even stated that, Turkey acts as if challenging Georgia's reservations on territorial integrity.

In the seventh chapter, considering Turkey's security relations with Georgia between 1991 and 1996, it is argued that Turkey's security relations during this period was greatly influenced from the ethnic and territorial conflicts in Georgia and Russian military bases and presence in the region. The Abkhaz-Georgian conflict, Russian military bases and personnel in the region constituted a direct challenge for the security of Turkey. For the period between 1996-2003, it is argued that Turkey's bilateral security cooperation with Georgia is part of a larger project to incorporate Georgia into the Western and Atlantic security network through NATO. Concerning regional initiatives on the other hand, though it is true that Turkey's interest was to balance Russia's dominance against Georgia and keep the balance of power in the region, it was stated that Turkey has not led any peace initiative excluding Russia or

did not join anti-Russian regional organisations. Thus, Turkey in its bilateral and regional relations with Georgia, has always carried the concern of not annoying Russia in the region. For the period between 2003 and 2008, Turkey's security relations was conducted by trying to keep a balance between Russia and Georgia and Russia and the US. Through this policy, Turkey aimed to prevent a direct confrontation in the Black Sea between Russia and the US and NATO. Turkey tried to find a free space for manoeuvre with its relations with Russia. For the period between 2009 and 2012, considering Russia's reaction against any possible membership of Georgia to NATO, Turkey continued its support for Georgia's NATO membership in rhetoric, nevertheless, practically due to its Russia concern, took it slowly and emphasized the point that Georgia should first meet the required criteria of membership. Thus, all these reflected the different security orientations of Turkey and Georgia. While Turkey's security orientation was based on the provision of a balance between the US and Russia, Georgia has more a one sided security orientation excluding Russia. Supporting the hypothesis of the thesis, due to the importance of stability and security in Georgia, Turkey's bilateral security cooperation with Georgia continued in high level. Nevertheless, Turkey's security relations with Georgia more brought to surface the conflicting security orientations and interests between the two states which was in a great extent related with their different perceptions of Russia and the US in the region.

The US's attempts to extend the role of NATO's Operation Active Endeavor to the Black Sea after the September 11 terrorist attacks, was strongly opposed by Turkey since this would be a violation of the Montreux Convention and cause confrontation among the US, NATO and Russia in the region. Turkey, though a NATO member, due to its own security considerations against Russia, wants to ensure the security of the Black Sea under her leadership through regional and international organisations of which one of them is Operation Black Sea Harmony. According to Turkey, Operation Black Sea Harmony is in accordance with the aim and purpose of NATO's

Operation Active Endeavor in the Mediterranean.¹⁴⁰⁸ When all of the other littoral states except Turkey proposed conducting NATO's Operation Active Endeavor in the Black Sea, Moscow refused to support it.¹⁴⁰⁹ Turkey, on the other hand, insisted that the Montreux Treaty forbade the use of naval ships in moving through the straits for such exercises even in peacetime and Russia supported Turkey's attitude.¹⁴¹⁰ Stephen Blank argues that, "the struggle over the Montreux Treaty's provisions brings Russia and Turkey together against Washington, as both of them resist further US presence in the Black Sea".¹⁴¹¹ Turkey's rejection derived from its attitude to the provisions of the Montreux Convention as sacrosanct and that if warships were allowed to enter the Black Sea in peacetime, its sovereignty could be at stake.¹⁴¹² Russia, on the other hand, perceived NATO and the US military in the Black Sea as a security threat and also as an opportunity for the US and/or NATO to meddle further in CIS affairs.¹⁴¹³

Considering Georgia's security policy, on the other hand, by Gela Bezhuashvili, the Secretary of the National Security Council at the time in September 2004 stated that, Georgia was inseparable part of the Black Sea region and plays an important role in

¹⁴⁰⁸ "Turkey's International Security Initiatives and Contributions to NATO and EU Operations", http://www.mfa.gov.tr/iv_-european-security-and-defence-identity_policy_esdi_p_.en.mfa

¹⁴⁰⁹ "Russia Objects to NATO Plans for Patrolling Black Sea," www.mosnews.com, June 10, 2005., cited in, Stephen Blank, "Black Sea Rivalry", *Perceptions*, Vol.17, No.2, March-April 2007, <http://www.bu.edu/iscip/vol17/blank.html>

¹⁴¹⁰ "NATO, Russia To Hold Terrorism-at-Sea War Game," www.Russiajournal.com, June 10, 2004; David J. Smith, "Opinion: Turkey Needs to Let NATO Safeguard the Black Sea," *Jane's Defence Weekly*, October 12, 2005, p. 21, cited in, Stephen Blank, "Black Sea Rivalry", *Perceptions*, Vol.17, No.2, March-April 2007, <http://www.bu.edu/iscip/vol17/blank.html>

¹⁴¹¹ Stephen Blank, "Black Sea Rivalry", *Perceptions*, Vol.17, No.2, March-April 2007, <http://www.bu.edu/iscip/vol17/blank.html>

¹⁴¹² Conversations with American diplomats, Ankara, June, 2003; Sinan Ogan, "The Black Sea: A New Arena for Global Competition," *Turkish Policy Quarterly*, Summer, 2006, www.turkishpolicy.com/default.asp?show=summer_2006_ogan., cited in, Stephen Blank, "Black Sea Rivalry", *Perceptions*, Vol.17, No.2, March-April 2007, <http://www.bu.edu/iscip/vol17/blank.html>

¹⁴¹³ *Ibid.*

enhancing the security of this region.¹⁴¹⁴ Further, in the light of the fact Georgia strives for NATO membership, Georgia also favors NATO presence in the Black Sea. David Morrison argues that “If Georgia and Ukraine were to become full members of NATO (like Bulgaria and Rumania, and Turkey itself), pressure for revision of the Convention to allow NATO free access to the Black Sea would increase”¹⁴¹⁵.

To conclude all, when looked profoundly to the overall dynamics in Turkey’s relations with Georgia, it is clearly seen that there have been both conflicting and cooperative interests. Going back to the research question, the reason of this divergence and conflict in Turkey’s and Georgia’s interests is the conflicting security orientations of Turkey and Georgia which is in a great extent the result of the security dilemma among Turkey, Russia, the US and Georgia in the region. Though Turkey supports Georgia’s NATO membership and has high level security cooperation with Georgia bilaterally, due to the lack of common security visions and orientations in the region derived from divergent security orientated political realist understandings, Turkey’s relations with Georgia though named as strategic partnership, indeed is not based on exclusively cooperative behaviour but conflicting interests, as well.

¹⁴¹⁴ Gela Bezshuashvili, Speech at Batumi Seminar, September 11, 2004, Harvard Black Sea Program., cited in., Jan Arveds Trapans, “Georgia, The Black Sea and the Approaching West”, p.298. http://www.bmlv.gv.at/pdf_pool/publikationen/10_wg11_concl_150.pdf

¹⁴¹⁵ David Morrison, “Turkey Restricts US Access to the Black Sea”, 18 October 2008, <http://www.david-morrison.org.uk/us/turkey-restricts-us-access.htm>

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: CURRICULUM VITAE

PERSONAL INFORMATION

Surname, Name: Kızılbuğa, Esra
Nationality: Turkish (TC)
Date and Place of Birth: 26 April 1982 , Montereau/France
Marital Status: Married
Phone: +90 535 628 31 84
email: esra_duha@yahoo.com

EDUCATION

Degree	Institution	Year of Graduation
MS	METU Eurasian Studies	2006
BS	Hacettepe University, International Relations	2004
High School	Atatürk High School, Adapazarı	2000

WORK EXPERIENCE

Year	Place	Enrollment
2010-		
2011	Fethiye Chamber of Trade and Industry- 10 October 2010- 10 February 2011	Press and Public Relations Expert
2007-	Scouting and Guiding Federation of Turkey	International Secretary
2010		
2005-2007	The Black Sea and Central Asian Countries Research Center in METU	Project Assistant

FOREIGN LANGUAGES

Fluent English, Average French, Beginning level Russian

ACHIEVEMENT AND INTERNSHIPS

1. Doctorate Scholorship from TÜBİTAK in 2009

2. OECD Short Term Observant Mission (8 days)

Ministry of Foreign Relations

Azerbaijan 2005 elections

3. Internship in Strategic Research Center (SAM),

Ministry of Foreign Relations, Ankara

July – August 2003- Championship in the Research Paper

“ Turkey-Russia Relations, Overlapping and Diverging Conflicts in Eurasia”

HOBBIES

Mountaineering, Swimming, Taking Photography, Neurolinguistic Programming

APPENDIX B: TURKISH SUMMARY

Sovyetler Birliği dağıldıktan sonraki dönemde, Türkiye, değişen uluslararası konjonktürle birlikte, kuzeyinde yeni ve istikrarsız bağımsız devletlerin ortaya çıkması sonucu, farklı bölgesel dinamiklerle karşı karşıya kalmıştır. Bu çerçevede, Türkiye'nin Güney Kafkasya'da yürüteceği dış politika açısından Gürcistan ile ilişkileri birçok açıdan önemli hale gelmiştir.

Türkiye'nin Sovyet Sonrası dönemde Gürcistan ile ilişkileri tezin konusunu oluştururken, bu çalışmaya Türkiye'nin Gürcistan ile olan ilişkilerinde hem işbirliği oluşturan alanlar hem de ilişkilerin niteliğini etkileyen temel çalışma alanlarını incelemek amaçlanmıştır. Bu çerçevede, ilişkilerin tarihsel arka planını da incelemek, günümüz ilişkilerinin niteliğini ve kısıtlarını ortaya koymak açısından önemli olmuştur. Türkiye'nin Gürcistan olan ilişkilerini doğru incelemek açısından Türkiye'nin ve Gürcistan'ın Amerika Birleşik Devletleri ve Rusya ile ilişkileri de incelenmiştir. Ayrıca, Türkiye'nin Gürcistan ile ilişkileri incelenirken, ilişkilerin diplomatik, güvenlik ve ekonomik boyutları incelenmiştir.

Bu kapsamında, tezin temel sorusu şu şekildedir: "Her iki ülke işbirliğini derinleştirdikleri ve stratejik ortaklık olarak isimlendirdikleri halde, neden Türkiye belli konularda Gürcistan ile önemli gerilimler yaşamaktadır?". Bu temel soruyu cevaplandırırken, politik realizm yaklaşımı benimsenmiştir. Türkiye ve Gürcistan'nın stratejik ortak oldukları ve/ ya da ilişkilerin tamamen işbirliği temelinde şekillendiği görüşüne karşılık, bu çalışma, Türkiye'nin Gürcistan ile ilişkilerinin hem çalışma hem işbirliği içerdigini, çünkü Türkiye'nin yaklaşımının liberal işbirliği fikriyle değil güvenliğe dayalı politik realizm anlayışı ile güdüldüğünü savunmaktadır.

Tez çalışması boyunca yapılan literatür taramasında ise Türkiye'nin Gürcistan ile olan ilişkileri incelenirken temel olarak iki farklı yaklaşım göze çarpmaktadır. Birinci yaklaşım, Türkiye'nin Gürcistan ile olan ilişkilerinin tamamen işbirliğine ve Türkiye ve Gürcistan'ın stratejik ortak oldukları görüşüdür. İkinci yaklaşım ise, Türkiye'nin

Gürcistan ile olan ilişkilerinin hem işbirliğine ve hem de çıkar çatışmasına dayandığı görüşündür.

Tez çalışması boyunca konu ile ilgili kitaplar ve çeşitli veritabanlarından elde edilen makaleler, belirli internet sitelerinden elde edilen makale, haber ve istatistikler ve gazeteler ikincil kaynakları oluştururken, 2010 yılında Gürcistan'da Tiflis ve Batum'daki gözlemlerim ve Tiflis'te gerçekleştirdiğim mülakat ile Türkiye'deki resmi görevliler ve çeşitli kurumlardan uzmanlarla gerçekleştirilen mülakatlar birincil kaynakları oluşturmaktadır. Mülakatlarda, tezin kapsamı ve konusu dikkate alınarak hem işbirliği hem de çıkar çatışması oluşturan alanlar üzerinde sorular sorulmuştur. Ayrıca, Türkiye'nin Gürcistan ile ilişkilerinde dönüm noktası sayılabilenek, Ağustos 2008 Savaşı ile ilgili politikası hakkında sorular yöneltilmiştir. Ayrıca, her iki ülkenin Amerika Birleşik Devletleri ve Rusya ile olan ilişkileri hakkında sorular yöneltilmiştir. Bununla beraber, ilişkilerde önemli bir işbirliği alanı oluşturan Bakü-Tiflis-Ceyhan Hattı ve Türkiye'nin bölgedeki enerji politikası hakkında sorular yöneltilmiştir. Tez çalışmam boyunca karşılaştığım önemli sorunlardan biri, genellikle, Gürcistan politikası ile ilgili olarak bilgilerin belli bir derinlikten uzak yüzeysel kalmış olmasıdır.

Bu genel çerçeve ışığında, tezin ilk bölümünde ilişkilerin tarihsel geçmişi kısaca incelenmiştir. Gürcistan, tarih boyunca, Osmanlı Devleti, İran ve Rusya arasındaki güç mücadeleşine sahne olmuştur. 16.yüzyılda Osmanlı Devleti bölgede etkinliğini artırırken¹⁴¹⁶, Osmanlı Devleti ile İran arasındakiihadların yerini, 18.yüzyılda başlayan, Rusya ve Osmanlı Devleti arasındaki güç mücadelesi almıştır. Şüphesiz ki, bu süreçlerin günümüz ilişkilerine de yansımaları olmuştur. Özellikle 19.yüzyılda artan Rus etkisi, Gürcistan'ın siyasi dönüşüm sürecinde ve Gürcü milliyetçiliğinin şekillenmesinde önemli rol oynamıştır.

Sovyet dönemi boyunca ise, Türkiye'nin Gürcistan ile ilişkileri Sovyetler Birliği üzerinden şekillenmiştir. 1925 yılında Türkiye ve Sovyetler Birliği arasında

¹⁴¹⁶ Muhittin Gül, "Türk-Gürcü İlişkileri ve Türkiye Gürcüler", *SAU Fen Edebiyat Dergisi*, Vol.1, 2009, p. 88.

imzalanan Tarafsızlık ve Saldırımsızlık Paktı¹⁴¹⁷, Stalin tarafından bozulmuş ve Stalin Kars ve Ardahan’ı geri alma niyetini bildirmiştir.¹⁴¹⁸ İlişkilerde gerginlik yaratan bu durum Türkiye tarafından toprak bütünlüğüne tehdit olarak algılanmıştır.¹⁴¹⁹ Stalin’ın ölümünden sonra ise, 1953’te Sovyetler Birliği Türkiye’den toprak talebinden vazgeçtiğini bildirmiştir.¹⁴²⁰ Türkiye ise 1952 yılında NATO’ya katıldıktan sonra Sovyetler Birliği ile olan Anlaşmazlık Paktını yinelememiştir.¹⁴²¹ 1964 yılında Türkiye’nin Amerika Birleşik Devletleri ile yaşadığı Johnson Mektubu krizi sonrasında, Türkiye Sovyetler Birliği ile ilişkilerini karşılıklılık esasına göre yürütmeye başlamıştır.¹⁴²² 1980 sonrası dönemde ise Türkiye Sovyetler Birliği’ne karşı çok boyutlu bir politika izlemeyi tercih etmiştir.¹⁴²³

Sovyetler Birliği döneminde Gürcistan’ın geçirdiği siyasi dönüşüm süreci de günümüz ilişkilerinin nitelğini anlamak açısından oldukça önemlidir. Gürcistan Sovyetler Birliği döneminde diğer Sovyet cumhuriyetleri gibi ağır bir sosyo-politik dönüşüm sürecinden geçmiştir.¹⁴²⁴ Ne var ki, uygulanan korenizatsiya (

¹⁴¹⁷ Adı geçen antlaşma Sovyet literatüründe “Sovyet-Türk Dostluk ve Tarafsızlık Antlaşması” olarak anılmaktadır. M.A. Gasratyan – P.P. Moyseyev, SSSR i Turtsiya 1917-1979, p.65., cited in., Çağatay Benhür, “ Turkish Soviet Relations in 1920s: A Chronological Study, *Türkiyat Araştırmaları Dergisi*, p. 298.

<http://www.turkiyat.selcuk.edu.tr/pdfdergi/s24/benhur.pdf>

¹⁴¹⁸İsmail Soysal, *Türk Dış Politikası İncelemeleri İçin Klavuz*, İstanbul: 1993, pp. 13- 15., cited in., Tuğba Çelebioğlu , “1990 Sonrası Türkiye-Gürcistan İlişkileri”, *Yüksek Lisans Tezi*, Marmara Üniversitesi, İstanbul, 2005, p.27.

¹⁴¹⁹S. Canaşa- N. Berdzenișvili, “ Türkiye’den Haklı İstemlerimiz”, *Tarih ve Toplum*, C. 8, Sayı 46, Ekim 1987, pp. 49-52., cited in, Çelebioğlu, *Op.cit.*, p.28.

¹⁴²⁰ Ayhan Kamel, “ İkinci Dünya Savaşı Bitiminden Günümüze Kadar Türk-Rus İlişkileri”, Makale Arşivi., http://www.dispolitika.org.tr/dosyalar/akamel_p.htm

¹⁴²¹ Soysal, *Tarihçeleri ve Açıklamaları ile Birlikte Türkiye'nin Siyasal Anlaşmaları I. Cilt (1920-1945)*, TTK, Ankara: 1989, s. 267., cited in, Çelebioğlu, *Op.cit.*, p.29.

¹⁴²² Fahir Armaoğlu, *20. Yüzyıl Siyasi Tarihi (1914-1995)*, C.1-2, 13. Basım, İstanbul: Alkım Yayınları, s. 827-829., cited in Çelebioğlu, *Op.cit.*, p.29.

¹⁴²³ Fahir Armaoğlu, *20. Yüzyıl Siyasi Tarihi (1914-1995)*, C.1-2, 13. Basım, İstanbul: Alkım Yayınları, s. 831-832., cited in Çelebioğlu, *Op.cit.*, p.29.

¹⁴²⁴ Glenn E. Curtis, *Georgia, A country Study*, Federal Research Division, Library of Congress, 1995, p. 94.

yerelleştirme) politikası Gürcülerin diğer etnik azınlıklar karşısında baskın olmasına yol açmıştır.¹⁴²⁵ Bu durum, Sovyetler Birliği genelinde artan Rus milliyetçiliği ile beraber, ileriki zamanlarda şovenizm seviyesine ulaşan Gürcü Milliyetçiliğinin de temelini atmıştır.¹⁴²⁶ Shevardnadze'nin Gürcistan Komünist Parti genel sekreteri olarak atanmasının ardından uyguladığı politikaları, Gürcistan'da Gürcü milliyetçiliğinin daha da politize olmasına ve güç kazanmasına yol açmıştır.¹⁴²⁷ Gamsakhurdia Gürcü milliyetçiliği savunan önemli liderlerden biri haline gelmiştir. Rusyalık politikası Gürcü milliyetçileri tarafından ulusal kimliklerine bir saldırı olarak algılanmıştır.¹⁴²⁸ Moskova'nın uyguladığı baskı yöntemleri, gerginliğin daha da artmasına yol açarken, hem Gürcistan ile Moskova arasındaki ilişkiler, hem de Gürcüler ile Gürcü olmayan etnik gruplar arasındaki ilişkiler gerginleşmiştir.

Bu durumun, Sovyetler Birliği dağıldıktan sonraki sürece de etkileri olmuştur. Gürcistan Sovyetler Birliği'nden ayrılp bağımsız bir devlet olmak isterken, Abhazlar ve Güney Osetyalılar da, Gürcistan'dan ayrılmak istemişlerdir. Bu durumun, birçok ekonomik sorun ile uğraşırken, Gürcistan'ın devlet ve millet inşa sürecinde önemli etkileri olmuştur.

Gürcistan'ın Sovyet döneminde geçirdiği sosyo-politik dönüşüm sürecinin, Gürcü milliyetçiliğinin güç kazanmasında ve şekillenmesinde önemli etkileri olmuştur. Bununla birlikte, Gürcistan ile Rusya ilişkilerinin niteliğini ve yapısını anlamak için ise bu süreç mutlaka göz önünde bulundurulmalıdır. Ayrıca, belirtmek gerekir ki, Gürcistan'ın geçirdiği bu sosyo-politik dönüşüm sürecinin, Gürcistan'ın Türkiye algısına da yansımaları olmuştur.¹⁴²⁹ Gürcistan'ın Osmanlı yönetiminde geçirdiği

¹⁴²⁵ Ronald Grigor Suny, *The Making of the Georgian Nation*, Second Edition, Indiana University Press, 1994, p. 281.

¹⁴²⁶ Ronald Grigor Suny, *The Making of the Georgian Nation*, Second Edition, Indiana University Press, 1994, p. 282.

¹⁴²⁷ Curtis, *Op.cit.*, p. 96.

¹⁴²⁸ Curtis, *Op.cit.*, p.96.

¹⁴²⁹ Kamil Ağacan, "Soğuk Savaş Sonrası Türkiye-Gürcistan ilişkileri", 21. Yüzyılda Türk Dış Politikası (Ed.İris Bal), Nobel Yayın Dağıtım., Ankara, 2004, p.429.

yılların bugünkü algının oluşmasına etkisi olmuştur.¹⁴³⁰ Bu durumun, Rus ve Sovyet eğitim sistemleri tarafından abartılması ve Türklerin düşman ve kötü olarak isimlendirilmeleri, Sovyetler Birliği dağıldıktan sonraki süreçte bile Gürcistan'ın Türkiye algısını oluşturmaya devam etmiştir.¹⁴³¹

Bununla beraber, “Gürcistan’ın bağımsızlığını kazanması halinde Türkiye tarafından işgal edileceğini” iddia eden Sovyet tezi, Sovyetler Birliği’nin dağılma sürecinde etkisini göstermiştir.¹⁴³² Gamsakhurdia 1990 yılında, Türkiye'den, Gürcistan'a karşı güç kullanmayacağıını bildirmesini istemiştir.¹⁴³³ Türkiye'ye karşı olan korkunun diğer bir önemli tarafı Müslüman nüfusun yoğun olduğu Acara bölgesidir.¹⁴³⁴ Kars Anlaşmasıyla, Türkiye'nin garantör ülke konumunda olması sebebiyle, 1989 yılında Sarp sınır kapısının açılması, Gürcistan tarafından endişe ile karşılanmıştır.¹⁴³⁵ Gürcistan'ın bağımsızlığını ilan etmesinin ardından, 1992 yılında Türkiye ile imzalanan diplomatik ilişkilerin başlangıcı sayılan Dostluk ve İşbirliği Anlaşması, Gürcistan Parlamentosu'nda oylanması, bazı milliyetçi çevreler, anlaşmanın Türkiye ile Gürcistan'ın sınırını belirleyen Kars Anlaşmasına atıfta bulunduğu ileri sürrerek oylamaya katılmayı reddetmişlerdir.¹⁴³⁶ Bu çerçevede, Türkiye karşıtı algı, Gürcistan'da bazı milliyetçi çevrelerin Türkiye'den toprak talepleri ile de güçlenmiştir.¹⁴³⁷

¹⁴³⁰ Kamil Ağacan, *Op.cit.*, p. 429.

¹⁴³¹ Kamil Ağacan, *Op.cit.*, p. 429.

¹⁴³² Kamil Ağacan, *Op.cit.*, p. 428.

¹⁴³³ For further information about the fear felt from Turkey in the independence period See: Fahrettin Çiloğlu, “Post-Soviet Consequences in Georgian and Turkish Policy” Ole Hoiris and Sefa Martin Yüksel (Eds.), *Contrasts and Solutions in the Caucasus*, Aarhus: Aarhus University Press, 1998, pp.318-324; Svante E.Cornell, *Small Nations and Great Powers*, Richmond: Curzon Press, 2001, pp.307-308., cited in Ağacan, *Op.cit.*, p. 428.

¹⁴³⁴ Kamil Ağacan, *Op.cit.*, p. 428.

¹⁴³⁵ Kamil Ağacan, *Op.cit.*, p. 428.

¹⁴³⁶ Abesalom İmedaşvili, “Türkiye- Gürcistan ilişkilerinde Yeni Aşama”, *Diyalog Avrasya*, No.3, February 2001, pp.86-91. cited in., Kamil Ağacan, *Op.cit.*, p.429.

¹⁴³⁷ Kamil Ağacan, *Op.cit.*, p. 429.

Tarihsel süreç, Gürcistan'ın, geçmişten beri bölgesel güçlerin mücadele alanını olduğunu göstermiştir. Bu durum, günümüzde de devam etmektedir ve tarihsel süreci incelemek buna ışık tutması açısından önemli olmuştur. Diğer yandan, hem Osmanlı yönetiminde hem de Çarlık Rusya'sı ve daha sonra Sovyetler Birliği idaresi altında gerçekleştirilen süreç, Gürcistan'ın günümüzde, Türkiye ve Rusya ile ilişkilerinin şekillenmesinde önemli olmuştur.

Bu çerçevede, Sovyetler Birliği sonrası dönemde Türkiye'nin Gürcistan ile ilişkilerini incelenirken politik realist bir yaklaşım benimsenmiştir. Teorik çerçevenin açıklanlığı üçüncü bölümde, temel olarak "Neden devletler işbirliği yaparken, çıkar çatışması yaşarlar?" sorusuna cevap aranmıştır. İşbirliği kavramı ve şekilleri liberal ve politik realist yaklaşımlara göre incelenmiştir. Uluslararası kurumlar ve rejimler, ittifaklar ve stratejik ortaklık işbirliği şekilleri olarak incelenirken, stratejik ortaklık kavramının liberal yaklaşımında belirtildiğinin aksine, mevcut uluslararası konjonktürde ortak değerler ve vizyon temelinde şekillenmediği belirtilmiştir. Liberalizm ve politik realizmin işbirliği kavramına bakışları incelenirken ise, liberal yaklaşımın iddia ettiğinin aksine, devletler arasında sürekli bir işbirliği olamayacağı, aksine, işbirliğini saglamanın devletler arasında güven eksikliğinin belirleyici olduğu uluslararası sistemde çok zor olduğu ve işbirliği ve çatışmanın aynı anda var olduğu belirtilmiştir. Politik realizmin işbirliği kavramına, uluslararası sisteme ve devlet davranışına bakışında, işbirliğinin, çatışma/uyuşmazlık kavramı ile doğrudan bağlantılı olduğu görülmektedir. Politik realizmde, işbirliği imkansız olmamakla birlikte, devletlerin davranışlarını ortak olarak şekillendiren ortak değerlerin ve kurumların eksikliği, işbirliği ile ilgili bir gelecek perspektifi olmasını engellemekte, uluslararası sistemdeki güven eksikliği ile birlikte, çıkar çatışmalarını beraberinde getirmektedir.

Bu teorik çerçeve ışığında, Türkiye'nin Gürcistan ile olan ilişkilerinin, her iki devletin Amerika Birleşik Devletleri ve Rusya ile olan ilişkilerinden bağımsız şekilde doğru incelenmeyeceği belirtilerek, Rusya ve ABD ile ilişkilere deinyinmiştir. Bu çerçevede, Türkiye'nin Rusya ile olan ilişkileri güvenlik, siyasi ve ekonomik boyutlarıyla incelenmiş ve Türkiye'nin Gürcistan ile ilişkilerine nasıl

yansıdığı incelenmiştir. Sovyetler Birliği dağıldıktan sonra, Türkiye'nin Rusya ile olan ilişkilerinde temel sorunsal Türkiye'nin Rusya'yı hala tehdit olarak algılamaya devam edip etmediği olmuştur. Bu sorunsal çerçevesinde, Türkiye şekil değiştirse de, Rusya'yı tehdit olarak algılamaya devam etmiştir. Türkiye, Rusya'nın Güney Kafyası'daki askeri varlığından ve bölgeyi denetimi altında tutma çabasından rahatsızdır. Bu suretle, bölgede bağımsızlığını yeni kazanmış devletlerin egemenliklerini koruma çabasını desteklemiş, onların Batı'yla entegrasyonunu desteklemek doğrultusunda politikalar yürütmüştür. Rusya ise, Sovyetler Birliği dağıldıktan sonra Türkiye'nin NATO üyesi bir devlet olarak bölgede etkili olmasından çekinmiştir. Ne var ki, her iki ülkenin bölgede birbirlerini rakip olarak görmeleri, çeşitli alanlarla işbirliği içinde olmalarını da engellememiştir. Türkiye ve Rusya çeşitli alanlarda çıkar tartışmaları yaşamalarına rağmen, ilişkilerdeki Rusya lehine olan dengesizlik, Türkiye'nin, Rusya'nın bölgede bazı kritik konulardaki hassasiyetlerine dikkat etmesine yol açmıştır. Türkiye'nin doğal gaz arzı açısından Rusya'ya olan yüksek orandaki bağımlılığı, Ağustos 2008 Savaşı'nda görüldüğü gibi, Türkiye'nin bölgede mevcut konjonktürde her zaman Rusya'yı dikkate alma gerekliliğini doğurmuştur. Türkiye'de bölge güvenliğinin sağlanması konusunda Rusya'yı dışlayıcı bir tutum içine girmemiştir. Türkiye, NATO üyesi bir devlet olarak dahi, Karadeniz'de doğrudan bir NATO ve ABD askeri varlığına karşı çıkmıştır. Bu durumun, Türkiye'nin Gürcistan ile ilişkilerine ise çeşitli yansımaları olmuştur. Ağustos 2008 Savaşı göstermiştir ki, Türkiye ve Gürcistan stratejik ortak olarak anılsalar da, Türkiye bir denge politikası yürütmekle birlikle, Gürcistan'ın arkasında tam olarak durmamış ve Rusya'nın hassasiyetlerine daha yakın bir dış politika yaklaşımı içinde bulunmuştur.

Türkiye'nin Amerika Birleşik Devletleri ile ilişkilerini incelediğimizde ise şöyle bir sorunsalla karşı karşıya kalmaktayız: "Türkiye'nin, Güney Kafkas'a bölgesindeki politikalarının her zaman Amerika Birleşik Devletleri'nin çıkarları ile uyumlu olduğu görüşü mevcut durumu ne kadar doğru yansımaktadır?". Türkiye'nin ve Amerika Birleşik Devletleri'nin, Gürcistan'ın Rusya'nın etkisi altına girmesini önleme, NATO üyeliğini destekleme ve Batı kurumlarıyla entegrasyonunu sağlama, bağımsızlığı ve toprak bütünlüğüne saygı konusunda uyumlu politikalar ve söylemler

geliştirdikleri doğru olmakla birlikte, Karadeniz'de güvenliğin sağlanması konusunda Türkiye ve Amerika Birleşik Devletlerinin güvenlik çıkarlarının örtüştüğü söylenemez. Bu durum Rusya ile ilişkilerinin niteliği ve seviyesi dikkate alındığında, Gürcistan'ı da yakından ilgilendiren bir durum olmuştur. Türkiye Karadeniz'de herhangi bir NATO ve/veya ABD askeri varlığına karşı olmasına rağmen, ABD, 11 Eylül terör saldırısından sonra, bölgede bir güvenlik boşluğu olduğunu iddia ederek, Akdeniz'de etkin olan Etkin Çaba Harekatını Karadeniz'de de uygulama girişimi içinde olmuştur.¹⁴³⁸ Gürcistan bu girişimi desteklemesine rağmen, Türkiye bunun Montrö Sözleşmesi'nin boğazlardan geçişle ilgili düzenlemelerine aykırı olacağı görüşüyle karşı çıkmıştır.¹⁴³⁹ Ne var ki, Türkiye'nin karşı çıkışını daha çok Rusya ile ilgili çekincelerine bağlamak yanlış olmayacağındır. Türkiye, bölgede, Rusya'nın tehdit olarak algılayacağı bir güvenlik girişimine karşı çıkmakta, Karadeniz'de güvenliğin kendi liderliğinde bölge ve sahildar devletlerin katılımı ile sağlanması gerektiği görüşünü desteklemektedir.¹⁴⁴⁰ Ağustos 2008 Savaşı'nda Türkiye'nin Amerikan gemilerinin boğazlardan geçişine, Montrö sözleşmesine aykırı olduğu için izin vermemesi aslında Türkiye'nin bölgede doğrudan bir ABD-Rusya çatışmasını engellemeye politikasının sonucudur.

Gürcistan'ın Amerika Birleşik Devletleri ve Rusya ile ilişkileri genel olarak incelendiğinde ise, Türkiye ve Gürcistan'ın farklı dış politika ve güvenlik yöneliklerinin olduğu görülmektedir. Her ne kadar, Gürcistan NATO'ya üye olmayı amaçlasa da, Gürcistan'ın Batı'ya yönelik, Türkiye'nin politikasının aksine, Rusya'yı dışlayan bir yaklaşım içinde olmuştur. Bu durum, Gürcistan'ın Rusya ile Çarlık Rusya'sı ve Sovyetler Birliği dönemi boyunca mevcut ilişkilerinin niteliğinin

¹⁴³⁸ Ayrıntılı Bilgi için Bakınız., NATO website, <http://www.nato.int>, cited in Kamer Kasım, *Soğuk Savaş Sonrası Kafkasya*, USAK Yayınları, Ankara, 2011, p. 204.

¹⁴³⁹ Kamer Kasım, *Soğuk Savaş Sonrası Kafkasya*, USAK Yayınları, Ankara, 2011, p. 204.

¹⁴⁴⁰ Kamer Kasım, "Türkiye'nin Karadeniz Politikası: Temel Parametreler ve Stratejiler", *Orta Asya ve Kafkasya Araştırmaları*, Yıl.3, Sayı.5, 2008, pp.172-180; Kamer Kasım, "Türk Amerikan ilişkilerinde Temel Parametreler", *Global Strateji*, Yıl.2, Sayı.7, Sonbahar, 2006, pp.39-49, Kamer Kasım, "ABD'nin Karadeniz Politikası", *Global Strateji*, Yıl.3, Sayı.12, Kış, 2008, pp.108-119., cited Kamer Kasım, *Soğuk Savaş Sonrası Kafkasya*, Op.cit, p.119.

doğrudan bir sonucu olsa da, Gürcistan'ın bölgede ABD'den ve Rusya'dan beklediği rol, Türkiye'nin bekentilerinden farklıdır.

Gürcistan'ın Rusya ile ilişkileri, Sovyetler Birliği dağıldıktan sonraki süreçte de, ilişkilerin tarihsel geçmişinden bağımsız gelişmemiştir. Gürcistan'ın Çarlık Rusya'sı ve Sovyetler Birliği yönetiminde kaldığı süre boyunca yaşadığı sosyo-politik dönüşüm, günümüz Gürcü milliyetçiliğinin şekillenmesinde ve Rusya'ya karşı olan mevcut algının oluşmasında doğrudan ve çok güçlü bir şekilde etkili olmuştur. Sovyetler Birliği dağıldıktan sonra, Rusya ile ilişkiler, karşılıklı güven eksikliği ve korkuya dayanmıştır.¹⁴⁴¹ Gürcistan'ın içinde bulunduğu kaotik politik durum, toprak bütünlüğünü tehdit eden Abhazya ve Güney Osetya'daki savaşlar bir güvenlik boşluğu oluşturmuş ve Rusya Gürcistan'ın bu durumunu çeşitli yöntemlerde manipüle ederek, Gürcistan'ı kontrol altında tutmak istemiştir.

Rusya'nın Gürcistan'a karşı bu politikası, Gürcistan'ı belli bir dönem zorunlu olarak Rusya'ya yakınlaştırsa da, Gürcistan'ın Batı'ya yönelmesini hızlandırmış ve bu durum zamanla bir kısır döngüye dönüşmüştür. Gürcistan'ın da Batı'ya yönelik onun Rusya ile ilişkilerini daha da olumsuz etkilemiştir. Bu kısır döngü Ağustos 2008 Savaşı ile en üst noktaya ulaşırken, savaştan sonra Gürcistan ve Rusya arasındaki ilişkiler en düşük diplomatik seviyeye gerilemiştir.

Gürcistan'ın Rusya ile ilişkilerinde temel sorun alanları her iki devletin örtüşmeyen ulusal kimlik arayışları ve bölgedeki güvenlik arayışlarıdır.¹⁴⁴² Gürcistan ulusal kimliği Rusya'dan bağımsızlık temelinde şekillenirken, Rusya için Sovyetler Birliği'nin dağılması devletin kimliğine karşı bir darbe olarak yorumlanmıştır.¹⁴⁴³ Rusya için eski Sovyet coğrafyası kendi etki alanında kalması gereken bölgeler

¹⁴⁴¹ Jaba Devdariani, "Georgia and Russia: The Troubled Road to Accommodation", Bruno Coppieters and Robert Legvold, (Eds.), *Statehood and Security, Georgia After the Rose Revolution*, The MIT Press, Cambridge, 2005, p. 154.

¹⁴⁴² Jaba Devdariani, *Op.cit*, p. 154.

¹⁴⁴³ Jaba Devdariani, *Op.cit*, pp.156- 160.

olarak görülmüştür. Bu çerçevede, birbirine karşı gelişen kimlik arayışı süreci, her iki devletin farklı güvenlik arayışlarında da kendini göstermiştir. Rusya için Güney Kafkasya bölgesi iç ve dış güvenlik açısından önemli olmuştur.¹⁴⁴⁴ Bu çerçevede, Bu devletlerin bağımsızlığı Rusya'nın güvenliği için tehdit sayılmıştır.¹⁴⁴⁵ Rusya, Gürcistan topraklarında Rus askeri üslerinin kurulmasını sağlayarak, Gürcistan'ı kendi kontrolü altında tutmak istemiş ve Gürcistan'ın Bağımsız Devletler Topluluğuna üye olmasını sağlamıştır. Bağımsız Devletler Topluluğu'na üye olan Gürcistan, 1990'lari ortalarından itibaren, Rusya'dan bağımsızlığın ancak Avrupa Atlantik kurumlarına entegrasyon sağlayarak sağlayabileceği öngörüsüyle, güvenliğinin sağlanması için Batı'ya yönelmiştir. Bu çerçevede, Gürcistan'ın NATO üyelik perspektifi, Rusya ile ilişkilerini olumsuz etkilemiştir. Gürcistan'ın NATO'ya üyelik amacı, NATO'nun doğuya doğru genişlemesi Rusya tarafından tehdit olarak algılanmıştır.¹⁴⁴⁶ Bu çerçevede, en kritik nokta, Gürcistan'ın 2008 Budapeşte zirvesi olmuştur. Zirvede, Gürcistan kendisine üyelik harekat planını sunulmamasına rağmen, gelecekte NATO üyesi olabileceği ifadesi¹⁴⁴⁷, Ağustos 2008 Savaşı'nın da en önemli sebeplerinden birini oluşturmaktadır.

Gürcistan'ın Rusya ile ilişkilerinde önemli dönüm noktalarından biri de 11 Eylül saldırılarından sonra, ABD'nin Güney Kafkasya bölgesinde ve Karadeniz'de etkinliğini ve varlığını artırması olmuştur. Rusya artan ABD varlığından rahatsız olmuş, bunu kendi güvenliğine karşı bir tehdit olarak görmüştür. Takip eden yıllarda, Rusya'nın Abhazya'da yaşayanlara Rus vatandaşlığı vermesi Gürcistan ile ilişkileri germiştir.¹⁴⁴⁸ Bu dönemde yine, Rusya Gürcistan'ı Pankisi Vadisinde Çeçenlere yardım etmekle suçlarken, Gürcistan da Rusya'nın Pankisi'deki faaliyetlerini

¹⁴⁴⁴ Jaba Devdariani, *Op.cit*, p. 168.

¹⁴⁴⁵ Jaba Devdariani, *Op.cit*, p. 168.

¹⁴⁴⁶ Jaba Devdariani, *Op.cit*, p. 170.

¹⁴⁴⁷ Jim Nichol, "Georgia (Republic) and NATO Enlargement: Issues and Implications, *CRS Report for Congress*, , March 6, 2009, p. 3.

¹⁴⁴⁸ Ömer Kocaman, "Russia's Relations with Georgia Within the Context of the Russian National Interests towards the South Caucasus in the Post-Soviet Era: 1993-2005, Vol.2, No.3,*OAKA*, 2007, p. 15.

egemenliğine karşı tehdit olarak yorumlamıştır.¹⁴⁴⁹ Saakashvili iktidara geldikten sonra da Gürcistan'ın Rusya ile ilişkilerinin niteliği değişmemiş gittikçe daha da gerginleşmiştir. Rusya, Gürcistan'ı kontrol altında tutmak ve kendine bağımlı kılmak için, Gürcistan'ın kendisine olan ekonomik bağımlılığını da kullanmıştır.¹⁴⁵⁰ Doğal gaz fiyatlarını ikiye katlamak, Gürcistan'a doğal gaz vermemeyi durdurmak, Gürcistan'ın ihraç ürünlerine engel koymak gibi uygulamalar, Gürcistan'ı Rusya'dan daha da uzaklaştırmış ve ilişkilerin gergin yapısının devamına neden olmuştur. Sonuç olarak, Gürcistan ve Rusya karşılıklı uygulanan politikalarla birbirlerinden iyice uzaklaşmışlar ve farklı dış politika ve güvenlik vizyon ve yönelimleri, ilişkileri bir çıkmaza sürüklemeştir.

Gürcistan'ın ABD ile ilişkilerini incelediğimizde ise, 1990'lı yılların ortalarına kadar ABD'nin Gürcistan ile ilişkilerini insani yardımla sınırlı tutmuş,¹⁴⁵¹ prensip olarak Gürcistan'ın bağımsızlığını ve toprak bütünlüğünü desteklese de, çok aktif ve müdahaleci bir politika izlememiştir.¹⁴⁵² 1990'lı yılların ortalarından itibaren, başta BTC boru hattı projesi olmak üzere, ABD'nin bölgede daha aktif bir politika izlediği görülmüştür. Hazar enerji kaynaklarının Batı'ya Rus tekeli altından olmadan güvenli geçişinin sağlanması ABD için Gürcistan'ı önemli bir ülke haline getirmiştir.¹⁴⁵³ Bu çerçevede, Gürcistan'ın NATO'nun Barış için Ortaklık programına katılması ve ABD ile de artan güvenlik ilişkileri Rusya için bir tehdit olarak algılanmıştır. Bölgede Rusya'nın gücünü denelemek ABD'nin de önemli amaçlarından biri olmuştur. Özellikle 11 Eylül saldırılarından sonra ABD'nin Gürcistan ile güvenlik

¹⁴⁴⁹ Ömer Kocaman, *Op.cit*, p.17.

¹⁴⁵⁰ Tracey German, "David and Goliath: Georgia and Russia's Coercive Diplomacy", *Defense Studies*, Vol.9, No.2, Taylor&Francis, 2009, p. 229.

¹⁴⁵¹ Halil Süddik Ayhan, "Dynamics of Alliance Between Turkey and the US: The Case of South Caucasus", Unpublished M.S Thesis, Bilkent University, Ankara, July, 2003, p.132.

¹⁴⁵² Svante Cornell, "US Engagement in the Caucasus: Changing Years", *Helsinki Monitor*, No.2, 2005,p.111.

¹⁴⁵³ Damien Helly Giorgi Gogia, "Georgian Security and the Role of the West", Bruno Coppieters and Robert Legvold (Eds.), *Statehood and Security, Georgia after the Rose Revolution*, the MIT Press, p. 277.

ilişkilerinin yoğunlaşması Rusya tarafından Gürcistan-Rusya ilişkilerine zarar verecek bir durum olarak ifade edilmiştir.¹⁴⁵⁴ Bu süreci, 2003 yılında Batı yanlısı lider Saakashvili'nin Gül devrimi ile iktidara gelmesi izlemiştir. Saakashvili iktidara geldikten sonra, Gürcistan'ın ABD ile ilişkileri daha farklı bir boyut kazanmıştır. Gül Devrimi, ABD'nin bir demokratikleşme girişimi olarak sunulurken, ABD'nin Gürcistan'ın demokratikleşmesi için verdiği yardımlar zamanla, Gürcistan devleti yerine Gürcistan hükümetine yapılan destekler haline gelmiş ve ilişkiler Bush ile Saakashvili arasında kişiselleşmiştir.¹⁴⁵⁵ Bu durum Gürcistan'ın Irak operasyonunda ABD'ye gösterdiği desteği de yansımıştır.

Gürcistan'ın ABD ile olan ilişkilerinde kritik dönüm noktalarından biri de ABD'nin Abhazya ve Güney Osetya çatışmaların çözümü için mevcut arabuculuk yapılarından duyduğu memnuniyetsizliği belirtmesi olmuştur.¹⁴⁵⁶ ABD, alternatif arabuculuk mekanizmalarının gerekliliğini savunurken, Gürcistan'ın toprak bütünlüğüne de vurgu yapmıştır.¹⁴⁵⁷ Bu süreç, Rusya'nın da bazı adımlar atmasına neden olmuş, Mart 2008'de Rusya Abhazya'ya Bağımsız Devletler Topluluğu tarafından uygulanan ekonomik ambargoyu kaldırılmış, Nisan 2008'de Abhazya ve Rusya arasında hükümetler arasında ilişki başlatılmıştır.¹⁴⁵⁸

Ağustos 2008 Savaşı konusunda ABD politikası değerlendirildiğinde ise, önemli bir sorunsal ortaya çıkmaktadır. ABD'nin Gürcistan'ı hiçbir şekilde Rusya'ya karşı bir

¹⁴⁵⁴ Kamer Kasım, *Soğuk Savaş Sonrası Kafkasya*, USAK Yayıncılık, Ankara, 2011, p. 188.

¹⁴⁵⁵ Alexander Cooley and Lincoln A. Mitchell, "No Way to Treat Our Friends: Recasting Recent US-Georgia Relations", *The Washington Quarterly*, January 2009, p. 29.

¹⁴⁵⁶ Mark David Simakovsky, "US Diplomacy Strives to Keep South Ossetia Conflict in Check", *Eurasia Insight*, 29 September 2005,
<http://www.eurasianet.org/departments/insight/articles/eav093005a.shtml>.

¹⁴⁵⁷ Jim Nichol, "Russia-Georgia Conflict in South Ossetia: Context and Implications for U.S. Interests", *CRS Report for Congress*, 24 October 2008, pp.24-25; Mark David Simakovsky, "US Diplomacy Strives to Keep South Ossetia Conflict in Check", *Eurasia Insight*, 29 September 2005,
<http://www.eurasianet.org/departments/insight/articles/eav093005a.shtml>.

¹⁴⁵⁸ Jim Nichol, "Russia-Georgia Conflict in South Ossetia: Context and Implications for U.S. Interests", *CRS Report for Congress*, 24 October 2008, p.25.

çatışmaya girmemesi gerektiği yönündeki güçlü tavsiyesine rağmen, Gürcistan'ın bir şekilde Rusya ile savaşa kalkışması Gürcistan-ABD ilişkilerinin niteliğini yansıtması açısından önemli olmuştur. Bazı çevreler, ABD'den Gürcistan'a resmi olmayan ancak savaşa girmeyi teşvik edici işaretler yollanmış olabileceğini söyleken, bazı çevreler ise durumu daha farklı yorumlamıştır.¹⁴⁵⁹ ABD'nin Gürcistan'ın kötüleşen demokratikleşme sürecini görmezden gelmesi, Saakashvili iktidara geldikten sonra hiçbir şekilde Gürcistan'ın eleştirmemesi sonucunda, Gürcistan'ın da ABD'nin uyarısını görmezden geldiği ve Rusya'ya karşı savaşa girme cesaretini gösterdiği ifade edilmiştir.¹⁴⁶⁰

Ağustos 2008 Savaşı boyunca ve sonrasında ABD'nin Gürcistan politikası önemli kırılma noktalarını da göstermesi açısından önemli olmuştur. ABD, Bush Başkanlığı'nda Rusya'nın Gürcistan'ın toprak bütünlüğü ve egemenliğini tehdit eden müdahalesini kınarken, Obama'nın ABD Başkanı seçilmesiyle, Gürcistan'a destek devam etmekle birlikte, ABD, Rusya'yı kışkırtmaktan kaçınmıştır. Bush dönemine kıyasla, Obama Başkanlığı'nda ABD'nin Gürcistan ile ilişkilerini kişiselleştirmekten kaçındığı ve Rusya ile ilişkilerde de bir denge yaratmaya çalıştığı görülmüştür. Bu durumun, Türkiye'ye yansımاسının da olumlu olacağı beklenmektedir. Zira, Türkiye de Gürcistan ile ilişkilerinde Rusya'yı kışkırtacak politikalardan uzak durmaktadır.

Bu genel çerçeveyi göz önünde bulundurarak, Türkiye'nin dış politika dinamiklerine baktığımızda, Türkiye'nin Gürcistan'a yönelik dış politikası, Gürcistan'ın bağımsızlık, egemenlik ve toprak bütünlüğüne saygı ilkeleri çerçevesinde şekillenmiştir. Bununla birlikte, Türkiye için, Gürcistan'ın güvenlik ve istikrarın sağlanması ve Gürcistan'ın Batı kurumlarıyla entegrasyonunun sağlanması öncelikli amaçlar arasında olmuştur. Ayrıca, Türkiye için, Gürcistan, Rusya'nın Güney Kafkasya'daki gücünün dengelenmesi açısından stratejik öneme sahip bir ülke olmuştur. Bu açıdan, Gürcistan'ın bir tampon ülke rolü oynadığı söylenebilir.

¹⁴⁵⁹ Alexander Cooley and Lincoln A. Mitchell, "No Way to Treat Our Friends: Recasting Recent US-Georgia Relations", *The Washington Quarterly*, January 2009, p.35.

¹⁴⁶⁰ Alexander Cooley and Lincoln A. Mitchell, "No Way to Treat Our Friends: Recasting Recent US-Georgia Relations", *The Washington Quarterly*, January 2009, pp.35-36.

Türkiye'nin Gürcistan ile diplomatik ilişkileri tezde çeşitli alt başlıklar altında incelenmiştir. Gürcistan'ın bağımsızlığını ilan etmesinin ardından, her iki ülke arasında var olan güven eksikliği devam etse de, Türkiye'nin Gürcistan'ın bağımsızlığını tanımması ile ilişkilerde olumlu bir başlangıç yaşanmıştır. Ne var ki, 1990'ların ortalarına kadar, ilişkiler yüzeysel bir şekilde olumlu seyretmiştir. Bunun Gürcistan'ın içinde bulunduğu kaotik politik süreçle de yakından ilgisi olmuştur. Abhazya ve Güney Osetya'daki çatışmalar ve Rusya'nın Gürcistan'ı kontrol altında tutma çabası, bu dönemde, Türkiye'nin de resmi olarak daha pasif bir politika izlemesine sebep olmuştur. Resmi politikanın ötesinde, bu dönemde Türkiye'deki çerkes diasporasının faaliyetleri Gürcistan'da rahatsızlığa neden olmuştur. 1990'lı yılların ortalarından itibaren enerji projelerindeki işbirliği, Türkiye'nin Gürcistan ile olan ilişkilerine derinlik katmıştır. Ne var ki bu dönemde, Türkiye'nin özellikle Acarya'daki durum ve Ahıska Türkleri'nin geri dönüşü konusunda izlediği politikalar incelenmiştir. Acarya konusunda, Türkiye'nin tutumu ve konumu zaman zaman Gürcistan'ı kaygılandırsa da, Türkiye Rusya'yı ve bölgedeki çıkarlarını dikkate alarak, daha pasif bir politika izlemeyi tercih etmiştir. Ahıska Türkleri'nin geri dönüşü konusu ise Türkiye ve Gürcistan'da farklı önceliklere sahip konular olmuşlardır. Gürcistan için, Ahıska Türkleri'nin geri dönüşü, Avrupa Konseyi'ne üyelik koşulu olarak gerçekleşmesi beklenen bir durum iken, Gürcistan bu konuda somut adım atmak konusunda isteksiz davranmıştır.¹⁴⁶¹ Türkiye, ise bu konu, söylemlerin aksine önemli bir dış politika gündemi oluşturmamıştır. Ahıska Türkleri'nin geri dönüşünün söz konusu olacağı Meskheti-Javakheti bölgesi Bakü-Tiflis-Ceyhan boruhattının geçiş güzergahı üzerinde olduğundan¹⁴⁶², Türkiye enerji transfer güvenliği konusundaki çıkarlarını önceliki tutmuştur. Kazakistan, Özbekistan,

¹⁴⁶¹ Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly, "Georgia's Application for Membership of the Council of Europe", text adopted by the Assembly on 27 January 1999, at http://assembly.coe.int/Main.asp?link=http%3A%2F%2Fassembly.coe.int%2Fdocuments%2Fadopted_text%2Fta99%2Feopi209.htm#1, cited in., Oskari Pentikainen and Tom Trier, "Between Integration and Resettlement: The Meskhetian Turks", European Center for Minority Issues, *ECMI Working Paper*, p. 34; Oskari Pentikainen and Tom Trier, "Between Integration and Resettlement: The Meskhetian Turks", European Center for Minority Issues, *ECMI Working Paper*, pp. 36-37.

¹⁴⁶² Uğur Akıncı, "Javakhetia: The Battle Neck of Baku- Ceyhan Pipeline", *Sik Road: A Journal of West Asian Studies*, Vol.1, December, 1997., cited in Ayşegül Baydar Aydıngün, Ahıska (Meskhetian Turks): Source of Conflict in the Caucasus" *Op.cit.*, p.52.

Kırgızistan ve Gürcistan ile ilişkilerini bozmamak için, Ahıska Türklerinin yaşadığı sorunlar Türkiye'nin resmi olarak gündemine alınmamıştır.¹⁴⁶³

2003 yılında Saakashvili'nin iktidara geldikten sonra, 2008 yılına kadar ilişkilerde çıkar çatışmalarının su yüzeyine daha fazla çıktıığı bir dönem olmuştur. Türkiye'nin Gürcistan ile ilişkilerinde işbirliği devam ederken, Saakashvili'nin iktidara gelmesi Gürcistan'ın Batı ile entegrasyonunu amaçladığı için olumlu bir gelişme olarak görülse de, iktidara geliş sürecinin getirdiği kaygı, Saakashvili'nin Abhazya ve Güney Osetya'ya referans vererek, Gürcistan'ın toprak bütünlüğünün sağlanacağı konusundaki saldırgan demeçleri, bölgedeki güvenlik ve istikrarın Türkiye için önemi dikkate alındığında, doğrudan olmasa da Türkiye'nin güvenlik çıkarları için tehdit oluşturmuştur. Bununla beraber, Saakashvili'nin iktidara gelmesiyle beraber, Türkiye sınırlarındaki Hristiyanlaştırma çabaları¹⁴⁶⁴, Türkiye'deki Gürcüler arasında aşırı milliyetçi duyguların teşvik edilmesi¹⁴⁶⁵ ve Kars Ardahan'dan Trabzon'a kadar olan toprakların Gürcü toprakları olduğu tezi¹⁴⁶⁶, endişe uyandırmanın ötesinde, göstermiştir ki, Türkiye'nin Gürcistan ile ilişkileri, ortak değer ve vizyon etrafında şekillenmekten daha çok, farklı ve birbirine karşı olarak tanımlanan çıkarlar etrafında şekillenmiştir.

Ağustos 2008 Savaşı ise Rusya, Türkiye, ABD ve Gürcistan arasındaki güvenlik ikilemini açık biçimde yansitan bir gelişme olmuştur. Türkiye'nin savaş boyunca uyguladığı diploması, göstermiştir ki, Türkiye Rusya ile ilişkilerinin niteliği ve yapısı göz önünde bulundurulduğunda, Rusya karşısında stratejik ortağı Gürcistan'ın

¹⁴⁶³ Aysegül Baydar Aydıngün, Ahiska (Meskhetian Turks): Source of Conflict in the Caucasus” *Op.cit.*, p.59.

¹⁴⁶⁴ Tomáš HOCH; Vincenc KOPEČEK, “Transforming Identity of Ajarian Population (Why the 1991-2004 conflict did not assume armed character)”, *The Annual of Language & Politics and Politics of Identity*, Vol. V., 2011, p. 65.

¹⁴⁶⁵ ““Kadife Lider” Saakashvili'nin Türk Dostluğu!!!”, *Diplomatik Gözlem* , 8 April 2005, <http://www.diplomatikgozlem.com/TR/belge/1-5863/kadife-lider-saakasvilinin-turk-dostlugu-.html>

¹⁴⁶⁶ ““Kadife Lider” Saakashvili'nin Türk Dostluğu!!!”, *Diplomatik Gözlem* , 8 April 2005, <http://www.diplomatikgozlem.com/TR/belge/1-5863/kadife-lider-saakasvilinin-turk-dostlugu-.html>

arkasında yeterince durmamıştır.¹⁴⁶⁷ Gerek, Türkiye'nin Montrö Sözleşmesine dayanarak, boğazlardan Amerikan gemilerine tonaj ve zaman kısıtını ileri sürerек izin vermemesi, gerekse, Kafkasya İşbirliği ve İstikrar Platformu önerisiyle ABD'yi dışlayıcı bir yaklaşım sergilemesi, bölgede, Rusya'yı tedirgin edecek ve daha saldırgan bir politika izlemeye itecek bir ABD askeri varlığını engellemek istedigini göstermektedir. Bununla beraber, NATO ve ABD, Rusya'nın Gürcistan'daki hareketlerini kınadığını belirtirken, Türkiye bir NATO üyesi ülke olarak Rusya'yı kınamamış, sadece bölgedeki gelişmelerden duyduğu endişeyi dile getirmiştir.¹⁴⁶⁸ Ağustos 2008 Savaş'ından sonra Cumhurbaşkanı Abdullah Gül'ün Amerika'nın tek başına küresel politikayı şekillendiremeyeceği ve başka ülkelerle güç paylaşımı yapması gerektiği ifadesi Türkiye'nin ABD'ye karşı duruşunu da göstermektedir.¹⁴⁶⁹ Bununla beraber, Türkiye, Rusya'yı bir tehdit olarak algılamakla beraber, Rusya'yı bölgede önemli bir partner olarak da görmektedir.¹⁴⁷⁰ Dolayısıyla, Ağustos 2008 Savaşı göstermiştir ki, Türkiye'nin Gürcistan ile çıkarları özellikle güvenlik alanında çok da örtüşmemektedir.

Ağustos 2008 Savaş'ından sonra Türkiye'nin Gürcistan ile ilişkileri için önemli gelişmelerden biri, Türkiye'nin kuzyeyinde bir Abkhazya şeklindeyle yüzleşmesi olmuştur. Rusya'nın Abhazya'nın bağımsızlığını tanımاسının ardından, Abhazya'da artan Rus askeri varlığı ve Türkiye'de etkisi gittikçe artan çerkes diasporasının da etkisi, Türkiye'nin Abhazya'ya karşı nasıl bir politika izleyeceği konusunda merak uyandırmıştır. Türkiye'nin Abhazya'nın bağımsızlığını tanıması söz konusu olmamakla birlikte, Abhazya ile artan iletişim yolları için çabaladığını söyleyebiliriz.

¹⁴⁶⁷ David Morrison, "Turkey Restricts US Access to the Black Sea", 18 October 2008, <http://www.david-morrison.org.uk/us/turkey-restricts-us-access.htm>

¹⁴⁶⁸ David Morrison, "Turkey Restricts US Access to the Black Sea", 18 October 2008, <http://www.david-morrison.org.uk/us/turkey-restricts-us-access.htm>

¹⁴⁶⁹ www.guardian.co.uk/world/2008/aug/16/turkey.usforeignpolicy.., cited in David Morrison, *Op.cit.*

¹⁴⁷⁰ Igor Torbakov, "The Georgian Crisis and Russian-Turkish Relations", The Jamestown Foundation, 2008, p.11. <http://www.jamestown.org/uploads/media/GeorgiaCrisisTorbakov.pdf>

Ne var ki, bu durum özellikle 2008 Ağustos savaşından sonra, Gürcistan ile Türkiye'nin hemfikir oldukları bir konu olmamıştır. Türkiye'nin içinde bulunduğu koşullar itibariyle Abhazya'ya kayıtsız kalamayacağı gerçeği, Gürcistan ile ilişkilerinde çok önemli bir başka çıkar çatışma alanını beraberinde getirmiştir.

Türkiye'nin Gürcistan ile güvenlik ilişkilerini incelediğimizde, güvenlik alanında ikili ilişkilerin son derece gelişmiş olduğu görülmektedir. İlişkilerin tesis edildiği ilk yıllarda, Abhazya'daki savaş ve Gürcistan'daki Rus askeri üsleri Türkiye'nin güvenliği açısından güvenlik tehdidi oluşturmıştır. Shevardnadze'nin Gürcistan'ın toprak bütünlüğünü koruma ve devletin çöküşünü önlemek amacıyla, Gürcistan topraklarında Rus askeri üslerinin kurulmasına izin vermesi, Türkiye'nin güvenlik çıkarları ile örtüşmemiştir. 1990'lı yılların ortalarından itibaren, güvenlik alanında, ilişkilerin temelini Gürcistan'ın NATO üyelik sürecine, Türkiye'nin hem NATO çerçevesinde hem de ikili ilişkilerde gösterdiği destek oluşturmıştır. Diğer yandan, Türkiye çeşitli bölgesel güvenlik örgütleri yoluyla da bölgede güvenliğin tesisine katkıda bulunmak istemiştir. Ne var ki, Türkiye, Gürcistan'dan farklı olarak, bölgedeki herhangi bir güvenlik yapılanmasında Rusya'nın dahil olmadığı bir yapıyı desteklememiştir. Saakashvili'nin iktidara geldiği 2003 yılından 2008 yılına kadar ise, Türkiye Gürcistan ile güvenlik ilişkilerini sürdürmesine rağmen, Türkiye bölgede daha çok Gürcistan, ABD ve Rusya arasında bir denge oluşturmaya yönelik bir politika oluşturmuştur. Karadeniz'de herhangi bir ABD–Rusya gerginliğini önlemek, bölge güvenliğinin sağlanması açısından Türkiye'nin önceliğini oluşturmuştur. Türkiye ayrıca Rusya ile ilişkilerinde kendisine bir hareket alanı sağlamak istemiştir. Türkiye'nin Rusya'nın etkisini ve gücünü denelemek politikası, Gürcistan'dan farklı olarak, Rusya'nın bazı hassasiyetlerini de göz önünde bulundurarak yürütülmüştür. 2009 yılından 2012 yılına kadar, Türkiye'nin Gürcistan ile güvenlik ilişkileri yüksek düzeyde devam etmiştir. Türkiye Gürcistan'ın NATO üyeliğini gerekli koşulları karşılaması halinde desteklemektedir. Ne var ki, Türkiye'nin Gürcistan ile güvenlik ilişkilerindeki süreç göstermiştir ki, Türkiye ve Gürcistan'ın farklı güvenlik yönetimleri vardır. ABD'nin NATO'nun Akdeniz'de faaliyet gösteren Etkin Çaba Harekatı'nın görev alanını Karadeniz'e de

genişletme girişimi ve Ağustos 2008 Savaşı bu farklı güvenlik yöneliklerini açığa çıkarmıştır. Türkiye için bölgede güvenliğin tesisi ve korunması Rusya'nın dahil olmayacağı hiçbir yapıyla sağlanamaz. Diğer bir ifadeyle, Rusya, Türkiye için hem önemli bir rakip hem de önemli bir partnerdir. Türkiye'nin Rusya ile ilişkilerinin niteliği, Türkiye'nin bölgede Rusya'yı dışlayıcı bir politika izlemesini engellemektedir. Gürcistan için ise durum farklıdır. Gürcistan güvenlik konusunda Batı'ya yönelmekle birlikte, Rusya'yı bölgede güvenliğin tesisi için katkıda bulunabilecek bir ülke olmaktan çok, güvenliğin tesisini engelleyici bir devlet olarak görmüştür. Ağustos 2008 savaşıyla beraber Rusya ile Gürcistan arasındaki ilişkilerin en düşük diplomatik seviyeye indiği göz önünde bulundurulduğunda, Gürcistan ve Türkiye'nin Rusya algısının ne kadar farklı olduğu net olarak görülmektedir. Algılamadaki bu farklılık, Türkiye ve Gürcistan'ın ABD'nin bölgedeki rolü konusundaki bekłentilerinde de farklılık göstermiştir. Gürcistan ABD'nin bölgedeki varlığını kendi güvenliği için bir garanti olarak görürken, Türkiye, ABD'nin bölgedeki doğrudan varlığını, Rusya ile gerginlige neden olacak ve bölge güvenliğini tehdit edecek bir unsur olarak görmüştür.

Mevcut güvenlik ikilemi çerçevesinde, Türkiye'nin Montrö sözleşmesine bağlı kalınması konusundaki hassasiyeti bölgedeki güvenlik politikaları açısından önemli olmuştur. Gerek ABD'nin Etkin Çaba Harekatını Karadeniz'e genişletme çabası gerekse, Ağustos 2008 Savaşı'nda boğazlardan ABD gemilerinin geçişi konusunda, Türkiye Montrö sözleşmesinin boğazlardan geçişle ilgili düzenlemelerine bağlılık konusunda kesin bir tavır içindeyken, Rusya da ABD ve Gürcistan'a karşı Türkiye'nin yanında yer almıştır.¹⁴⁷¹ Gürcistan ise ABD ile birlikte, Karadeniz'de NATO varlığını desteklemiştir. Gürcistan'ın NATO üyesi olması halinde, Montrö Sözleşmesinde gerekli değişikliklerin yapılması için baskı yapacağı görüşü de baskın bir görüş olmuştur.¹⁴⁷²

¹⁴⁷¹ "Russia Objects to NATO Plans for Patrolling Black Sea," www.mosnews.com, June 10, 2005., cited in, Stephen Blank, "Black Sea Rivalry", *Perceptions*, Vol.17, No.2, March-April 2007, <http://www.bu.edu/iscip/vol17/blank.html>

¹⁴⁷² David Morrison, " Turkey Restricts US Access to the Black Sea", 18 October 2008, <http://www.david-morrison.org.uk/us/turkey-restricts-us-access.htm>

Türkiye'nin Gürcistan ile ekonomik ilişkilerine baktığımızda ise, Gürcistan'ın bağımsızlığının ilk yıllarda içinde bulunduğu ekonomik buhranın Türkiye ile olan ekonomik ilişkileri önemli ölçüde etkilediğini söyleyebiliriz. 1989 yılında Sarp sınır kapısının açılması Gürcistan için önemli bir fırsat olmuştur. Takip eden yıllarda ise, Sovyet ekonomik yapılanmasının bir parçası olmuş Gürcistan'ın kendi ayakları üzerinde duran bir ülke olabilmesi için komşu Türkiye ile ekonomik ilişkiler önemli olmuştur. Türkiye'nin Gürcistan ile ekonomik ilişkileri, ikili ticari ilişkiler ve Gürcistan'ın batı pazarına entegre olmasını sağlama amacıyla bölgesel seviyede yürütülmüştür. 1990lı yılların ortalarına kadar Türkiye'nin Gürcistan ile olan ikili ticaretinde ilerleme olduysa da, ticaret hacmi, Gürcistan'ın içinde bulunduğu sosyo-politik ve ekonomik durumdan dolayı beklenilen seviyede olmamıştır. Bununla birlikte, Türkiye'nin bölgede ekonomik işbirliğini sağlama ve bölge devletlerinin kalkınmasına katkıda bulunmak için ortaya attığı Karadeniz Ekonomik İşbirliği Örgütü de bölge devletlerinin farklı sosyo-ekonomik seviyelerde olmaları ve farklı dış politika önceliklerine sahip olmaları nedeniyle istenilen başarıyı göstermemiştir.¹⁴⁷³ 1996 yılından itibaren ise, Türkiye'nin Gürcistan ile olan ekonomik ilişkilerinde önemli bir faktör, enerji projelerinde her ikisi ülkenin oynadığı transit ülkesi rolüdür. Bakü-Tiflis-Ceyhan Boru Hattı projesiyle iki ülke arasında enerji işbirliği ilişkileri farklı bir seviyeye taşımıştır. Ne var ki, Bakü-Tiflis-Ceyhan boru hattı projesi ekonomik kazanımdan çok stratejik ve politik kaygılarla gerçekleştirilen bir proje olmuştur.¹⁴⁷⁴ Türkiye için bu projenin, ciddi bir ekonomik getirişi olmadığı göz önünde bulundurulduğunda, Gürcistan için transit gelirleri dikkate alındığında, ekonomik açıdan daha önemli olmuştur.

Enerji projelerindeki işbirliğinin, Gürcistan'ın bağımsızlığının güçlenmesine ve üzerindeki Rusya etkisinin azalmasına yol açması beklenirken, Türkiye için bölgedeki enerji projelerinde Rus tekelinin kırılmasını sağlamak açısından önemi

¹⁴⁷³ Okan Mert, *Op.cit*, p. 236.

¹⁴⁷⁴ Zeyno Baran, "The Baku-Tiflis Ceyhan Pipeline: Implications for Turkey", p. 108. www.silkroadstudies.org/BTC_6.pdf

olmuştur. Ne var ki, BTC ile Gürcistan üzerindeki Rus etkisinin azalması beklenirken, aksine, Rusya etkisi artmış, bölgede enerji hatlarının geçiş noktalarında güvenliğin tesis edilmesi önemli hale gelmiştir. Bu çerçevede, Türkiye'nin Gürcistan ile enerji projelerindeki işbirliği, iki ülke arasında potansiyel yaratabilecek birçok sorunun görmezden gelinmesine ya da başka bir ifadeyle ikinci plana atılmasına sebep olmuştur. Türkiye'nin Ahıska Türklerinin geri dönüşü konusundaki tutumu söz konusu bölgelerin enerji geçiş hattı üzerinde olmasından dolayı pasif kalmıştır. Bu dönemde ikili ticaret ilişkilerinde ise, Gürcistan'daki istikrarsızlıkların ve bölgedeki güvenlik boşluğunun olumsuz etkilerinin olduğunu söylenebilir. Saakashvili'nin iktidara geldiği 2003 yılından 2008 yılına kadar ise, Türkiye'nin Gürcistan ile ikili ticaret ilişkilerinde Gürcistan aleyhine olan dengesiz durum belirginleşmiştir. Gürcistan için Türkiye önemli bir ticaret ortağıyken, Türkiye için Gürcistan çok da önemli bir ticaret ortağı olmamıştır. Gürcistan'daki istikrarsızlığın ekonomik ilişkilere olumsuz yansığının en somut örneği Ağustos 2008 savaşı olmuştur. Bu durum da göstermiştir ki, bölgede istikrarlı bir güvenlik yapılanması olmadan, enerji projeleri de dahil olmak üzere, ekonomik ilişkiler istenilen seviyeye ulaşamayacaktır. Ağustos 2008 Savaşı'ndan sonraki dönemde ise, 2011 yılına kadar savaşın ekonomik ilişkiler üzerindeki olumsuz etkileri görülmüştür.

Sonuç olarak, Sovyetler Birliği sonrası dönemde Türkiye'nin Gürcistan ile ilişkileri bölgesel konjonktür de dahil edilerek incelenmiş ve stratejik ortaklıktan çok, ilişkilerde hem işbirliği hem de özellikle güvenlik ile ilgili alanlarda çıkar çatışmalarının olduğu görülmüştür. Türkiye'nin Gürcistan ile ilişkilerinde en temel motivasyon bölgedeki güç dengesini koruma amacı olmuştur. Bununla beraber, Türkiye'nin Gürcistan ile ilişkilerinde belirleyici unsurların en önemlisi Türkiye'nin Gürcistan'ı Rusya karşı bir tampon ülke olarak algılamasıdır. Bu unsur, Türkiye'nin Gürcistan ile ilişkilerinde hem işbirliği hem de çatışma özelliklerini barındırmaktadır. Her iki devlet de bölgede Rusya'nın etkisini dengeleme amacını taşısalar da, diplomatik ilişkilerin başladığı ilk yillardan itibaren, çeşitli konularda fikir ayrılıkları olmuş, zaman zaman, bu fikir ayrılıkları stratejik ortak söylemini tehdit edecek düzeyde olmuştur. Türkiye ve Gürcistan arasında bir stratejik ilişki ya da işbirliği olsa da, ilişkilerin düzeyi ve içeriği, söylemin aksine liberal yaklaşımın

tanımladığı bir stratejik ortaklık ilişkisinin özelliklerini yansıtımamaktadır. Türkiye'nin Gürcistan ile ilişkilerinde değişmeyen ortak çıkarlar yerine farklı tanımlanan çıkarların varlığı, ilişkilerin mevcut konjonktüre bağlı olarak değişimini göstermektedir. Bu çerçevede, Ağustos 2008 savaşı göstermiştir ki, ilişkilerde değişmeyen bir gelecek perspektifi oluşturmak güçtür. Göründüğünün aksine, ortak bir dış politika ve güvenlik vizyonuna sahip olmayan Türkiye ve Gürcistan kendi çıkarları doğrultusunda hareket etmektedir.

Tezin temel sorusuna geri döndüğümüzde, Türkiye'nin Gürcistan ile ilişkileri stratejik ortaklık olarak adlandırılırken, iki ülkenin önemli çıkar çatışmaları yaşamalarının sebebi, Türkiye'nin ve Gürcistan'ın, büyük bir oranda ABD, Gürcistan ile Rusya ve Türkiye arasındaki güvenlik ikileminin bir sonucu olan, farklı güvenlik yönelikleri ve vizyonlarına sahip olmalarıdır. Bu farklılık, özellikle ABD'nin ve NATO'nun Karadeniz'deki güvenlik girişimleri ve Ağustos 2008 Savaşı'nda ABD boğazlardan gemilerini geçirmek isteyince su yüzüne çıkmıştır. ABD, 11 Eylül saldırılarından sonra Karadeniz'de bir güvenlik boşluğu olduğu iddiasıyla, bölgeye NATO'nun Etkin Çaba Harekatını sokmak isteyince, Türkiye, kendi liderliği altındaki Karadeniz Uyum Harekatı gibi bölgesel güvenlik yapılanmalarının güvenliğin tesisi için yeterli olduğunu iddia ederek karşı çıkmıştır.¹⁴⁷⁵ Gürcistan ise Karadeniz'de NATO varlığını desteklemiştir. Türkiye'nin Gürcistan'ın NATO üyeliğini desteklediği göz önünde bulundurulduğunda, Gürcistan'ın NATO üyesi olması halinde, bölgede NATO varlığı için ısrarcı bir tutum içine olacağı tezi, iki ülke arasındaki güvenlik ikilemini açıkça göstermektedir. Ağustos 2008 Savaşı önceki paragraflarda belirtildiği gibi, Türkiye'nin güvenlik çıkarlarının Rusya'yı dışlayıcı bir yaklaşımı izin vermediğini göstermiştir. Türkiye, bölgedeki güvenliğin, Rusya'yı bölgeye çeşitli bölgesel yapılandırmalarla müdahale ederek sağlanacağını düşünürken, Gürcistan Rusya'nın varlığını kendi güvenliği için tehdit olarak görmektedir.

¹⁴⁷⁵ Kamer Kasım, "Türkiye'nin Karadeniz Politikası: Temel Parametreler ve Stratejiler", *Orta Asya ve Kafkasya Araştırmaları*, Yıl.3, Sayı.5, 2008, p.p172-180; Kamer Kasım, Türk Amerikan ilişkilerinde Temel Parametreler", *Global Strateji*, Yıl.2, Sayı.7, Sonbahar, 2006, pp.39-49, Kamer Kasım, "ABD'nin Karadeniz Politikası", *Global Strateji*, Yıl.3, Sayı.12, Kış, 2008, pp.108-119., cited Kamer Kasım, *Soguk Savaş Sonrası Kafkasya*, Op.cit, p.119.

Türkiye tarafından Gürcistan'ın bağımsızlığının tanındığı zamandan itibaren, bölgede ABD ve Rusya'nın da politikalarıyla şekillenen bölgesel dinamikler, bölgedeki istikrarsızlığın kaynağı olan etnik çatışmalar, Türkiye'de gün gittikçe politize olmaya başlayan çerkes diasporası, tarihsel hassasiyetler ve algılar, Rusya'nın bölgeye müdahalesi ve bölgedeki askeri varlığı, ABD'nin Gürcistan ile ilişkileri ve bölge politikası, Gürcistan'ın bölgede ABD'ne ve Rusya'ya bakışı, Gürcistan'daki iç dinamikler ve Türkiye'nin ve Gürcistan'ın farklı şekillenen dış politika ve güvenlik vizyonları ve yönelimleri, Türkiye ve Gürcistan arasında gerçekte kırılgan, sağlam temeller üzerinde oturmayan bir ilişki oluşmasına neden olmuştur. Ne var ki, Türkiye'nin Gürcistan ile ilişkileri bütün boyutlarıyla göz önünde bulundurulduğunda görülmektedir ki, Türkiye'nin Gürcistan ile ilişkileri hem işbirliği hem de çıkar çatışmalarını bir arada barındırmaktadır.

APPENDIX C: TEZ FOTOKOPİSİ İZİN FORMU

ENSTİTÜ

Fen Bilimleri Enstitüsü

Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü

Uygulamalı Matematik Enstitüsü

Enformatik Enstitüsü

Deniz Bilimleri Enstitüsü

YAZARIN

Soyadı : Kızılbuğa

Adı : Esra

Bölümü : Uluslar arası İlişkiler

TEZİN ADI (İngilizce) : TURKEY'S RELATIONS WITH GEORGIA IN
THE POST-SOVIET ERA

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: